

For the Sake of the Gospel

Life Group Leaders Guide

Objective

This guide contains the information and questions you will need to lead a life group study during our current sermon series. Our aim is to spark Spirit-led, Bible-centered conversations that anyone can participate in regardless of how biblically literate they may or may not be. **The win** that we want you to experience is when your group members **connect** more closely with each other and with God so that they are encouraged to move forward in living out their faith.

Directions

The *Purpose* and *Move* sections are for the leader to read to the group to provide clarity. **Do not feel pressured to cover all the questions.** Decide which ones may work best for your group. You will see brief notes interspersed between groups of questions to help give the group context for their answers. The *Notes and Commentary* section (when included) is optional reading for the leader to get background information and better understanding of the passages before leading the discussion.

Series Overview

Everyone's lives are propelled by something that motivates them. What should motivate followers of Jesus is the salvation of everyone around us. If that is what motivates us, we will lay down our preferences and step into the story of others, that they might enter the story of Jesus. We do all of this FOR THE SAKE OF THE GOSPEL.

For the Sake of the Gospel Series Schedule

Week	Sermon Date	Topic of sermon and life group
1	7/1/18	Gospel Motivation (no LG study--socials)
2	7/8/18	Gospel Heart

The Point Church Life Group Curriculum

Gospel Heart

Purpose of Study

To better understand the gospel in order to live for it.

Flow of Study

Icebreaker: Divide into pairs (or 3). Try to pair up with someone you don't know as well. Tell the other person just your job title and the name of the company you work for. If you aren't currently employed, tell them a job title you've held in the past or a job title you'd like to hold some day in the future. Then, give them 60 seconds to imaginatively describe what they think your job is like (what your typical day might look like). Then, reverse roles and you tell them your job title and let them describe your job. Afterwards, take a few minutes to share a laugh about what you got wrong about each other's jobs.

1. Based on the above activity, how hard was it to describe something you didn't know much about?

Move #1: Before we get into the scripture, let's see where we are as a group in our current understanding of the gospel.

2. How would you describe the gospel to someone unfamiliar with scripture?

Move #2: Next we'll dive deeper into the passage from the sermon and see what Paul says is of first importance.

Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-8 (NIV)

1 Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. 2 By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

3 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. 6 After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. 7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, 8 and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.

3. What stands out to you from this passage, or from what you heard in the sermon?
4. When you think about Christ dying for our sins, do you tend to think about your own sins first or the sins of others? Why?
5. If you believe Christ died for you personally, how should that change the way you live?
6. What is the significance of Christ's resurrection in your life?

7. Paul taught the church many things. What does it mean to you that he declared Christ's death, burial, and resurrection "of first importance"?
8. What are some things that compete with the gospel for first importance in our faith?

Paul says (verse 2) that we are "saved" by the gospel. Salvation has two aspects. It is a one-time event in which our sins are forgiven and we are born again as one of God's children. Yet salvation is also an ongoing process of being released from the bondage of the lies we believe and act on.

9. If you're a Christ-follower, describe how you personally have experienced being saved by the gospel.
10. Paul passed on what he received, and he called us to take our stand with him in passing this on to others. How do you intend to pass it on this week?

Note to Life Group Leaders: Please take this opportunity to remind your group of a great strategy we use to pass on the gospel by **B.L.E.S.S.**ing others:

- B** - Begin with prayer
- L** - Listen to them
- E** - Eat with them
- S** - Serve them
- S** - Share your story (as you just did--question 9!)

Next Steps:

Invite one person to our upcoming "At the Movies" series. This series will be attractational and relevant for unchurched people, and a great opportunity to share the gospel!

Prayer: End your study with a time of praying with and for each other. Take requests, but be sure to pray also about what you've discussed today.

Notes and Commentary

The following are pieces of commentary, facts, and links based on the passages of this study in order. Use them optionally to help supplement your personal preparation.

Although the enumeration of appearances might suggest otherwise, Paul is not here setting out to prove the resurrection of Jesus. Rather, he is reasserting the commonly held ground from which he will argue against their assertion that there is no resurrection of the dead. To do so he appeals to "the tradition" of the whole church, which he preached and they believed, namely that Christ died, was buried, and was raised on the third day. The emphasis is threefold: First, he reiterates both at the beginning (vv. 1–2) and the end (v. 11) that this tradition is something they have indeed believed. Two points are made here: (a) In keeping with the emphasis at the end of the preceding argument (14:33, 36), what Paul preached and they believed is the common ground of the whole church (cf. vv. 3–5, 11). (b) Alongside that emphasis is the reminder that their very existence as believers is at stake on this matter. That is, any deviation from this gospel which "saved them" and "in which they stand" puts them in danger of "believing for naught."

Second, beginning with v. 3, Paul reiterates the tradition itself. For several reasons it is generally agreed that in vv. 3–5 Paul is repeating a very early creedal formulation that was common to the entire church, to which he adds other traditions about several resurrection appearances. Paul’s use of this material seems to have a twofold concern: (a) The combination in the creed of “buried” and “raised on the third day” emphasizes the resurrection of a dead corpse, not the “spiritual” renewal of life after death. Whatever the precise nature of the Corinthian view, this citation of the creed is a reminder that the nature of Christ’s resurrection is genuine and corporeal. (b) So also with the catalogue of resurrection appearances (vv. 5–7), the like of which there is nothing else in the early literature. Since this catalogue is unlikely to be part of the creed itself, its inclusion seems emphatic. Christ was seen by all these people, meaning he was corporeally visible this side of the grave.

Third, the catalogue of appearances concludes with his own experience (v. 8), which leads him to a brief word about his apostleship (vv. 9–10). Since these words are otherwise unnecessary to the argument, one must ask what caused them to appear here. The best answer seems to be that they reflect the conflict between him and them last addressed in 14:36–38. In relating his own experience of the Risen Christ he describes himself as “one who is ekrōma,” a word that means “miscarriage” or “abortion” and probably refers to his “lowly” status as “least” among the apostles, which was perhaps hurled at him as an epithet by some of the Corinthians. In any case, as in 4:8–13 where he also sets forth his own view of apostleship over against theirs, he capitalizes on his lowliness in order to exalt the grace of God in his life—not the least of which is evidenced in their coming to faith through such an ekrōma as he (v. 11)!