

Re-Engage

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

If you're married, would you rate your marriage as a 2 or a 10? Maybe even a 0? You are not alone. Whether your marriage needs to be reignited or resurrected, chances are that your marriage needs you to re-engage. Re-engage is a four-week series designed for couples who want a closer walk with their spouse – and with God. For singles, it will help prepare you for possible marriage in the future and also help you strengthen other important relationships.

Re-Engage Series Schedule

Week	Sermon Date	Topic
1	2/9	Give Up
2	2/16	Give In
3	2/23	Give Grace
4	3/1	Group Socials

The Point Church Life Group Curriculum

Give Up

The Big Idea

You are powerless to love like you need to love.

Flow of Study

Icebreaker: What is one habit you have given up or wish you could give up?

Move 1: All marriages can be better. And marriage in America has been struggling. Let's go back to the main sermon text from this weekend, to the first two Beatitudes. As we look to Re-Engage in our marriages, the solution to our problems begins with emptying ourselves so that we can be filled with the love of Christ.

Read Matthew 5:3-4 (NIV)

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted."

1. What do you think it might mean to be "poor in spirit"?
2. In verse 3, we see that Jesus connects spiritual poverty with his kingdom-- an unusual juxtaposition. Why is the kingdom of heaven promised to the poor in spirit?
3. Why is understanding our spiritual inadequacy so liberating?
4. In marriage (or other relationships), if you are "poor in spirit," how will this change your focus? What will your attitude towards God be? How will you view the other person?
5. In verse 4, what does the word "mourn" refer to? What kind of mourning do you think he is referring to?

NOTE: The Beatitudes build on each other. Read verse 4 in light of verse 3. The Greek word translated "mourn" in Matthew 5:4 conveys the idea of deep inner agony. Mourning is not only an action but also an attitude, a change of thinking (repentance).

6. What role does "mourning" or repenting of sin play in a healthy relationship with our spouse or another person? Why can't a marriage thrive without repentance?

Move 2: Let's jump to a later part of Jesus's sermon and consider how it further unpacks the idea of being "poor in spirit."

Read Matthew 7:1-5 (NIV)

"Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye."

7. In this text, what is Jesus saying about human nature in the context of relationships?
8. When we're experiencing dissatisfaction or conflict in our marriages or other relationships, where do we generally assign blame? Why?
9. What happens when two people in a relationship only see the faults of the other?
10. Going back to the Beatitudes, how does genuine humility and sorrow over our own brokenness open up the possibility of a great relationship?

Move #3: Let's let the Apostle Paul weigh in on how the qualities we've discussed are necessary for a lasting love.

Read Ephesians 4:1-2 (NIV)

1 As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. 2 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

11. According to Paul, what are the keys to walking in love with each other? Which of these is most difficult for you in your relationship?
12. How can Jesus help us to love each other as we are called to?

Next Steps:

1. If you are married, choose to Re-Engage in your marriage. We can start by focusing this week on our own part in whatever problems we might currently be experiencing. If you are not married, think about other relationships in which you may need to allow Jesus to help you to love that person better.
2. Sign up for the Re-Engage Class. It's a limited-time class designed to really help you take your marriage, no matter how good or strained it may be, to the next level. Get the info and register at pointchurch.com/reengage.

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 to help supplement your group time or for your personal preparation.

On Matthew 5

Beatitudes (statements of the form "Happy is/are ...") occur in both pagan and Judeo-Christian literature. For some OT examples see Pss 1:1; 32:1–2; 40:4; 119:1–2; 128:1.... The Greek adjective *makarios* ("happy"; see below) has spawned the verb *makarizō*, "to call happy" (Luke 1:48; Jas 5:11; the verb occurs frequently in classical Greek) and the derivative noun *makarismos*, a "calling happy," a beatitude (Rom 4:6,9). Such "macarisms" are normally single statements, and there is no close parallel to Matthew's carefully structured set

of eight beatitudes.... “Macarisms” are essentially commendations, congratulations, statements to the effect that a person is in a good situation, sometimes even expressions of envy. The Hebrew equivalent of *makarios* is *’ašrê* rather than the more theologically loaded *bārûk*, “blessed (by God).” The traditional English rendering “blessed” thus also has too theological a connotation in modern usage; the Greek term for “blessed (by God)” is *eulogētos*, not *makarios*. The sense of congratulation and commendation is perhaps better conveyed by “happy,” but this term generally has too psychological a connotation: *makarios* does not state that a person *feels* happy (“Happy are those who mourn” is a particularly inappropriate translation if the word is understood in that way), but that they are in a “happy” situation, one which other people ought also to wish to share. “Fortunate” gets closer to the sense, but has inappropriate connotations of luck. “Congratulations to ...” would convey much of the impact of a “macarism”, but perhaps sounds too colloquial.... Beatitudes are descriptions, and commendations, of the good life.

“Poverty in spirit” is not speaking of weakness of character (“mean-spiritedness”) but rather of a person’s relationship with God. It is a positive spiritual orientation, the converse of the arrogant self-confidence which not only rides roughshod over the interests of other people but more importantly causes a person to treat God as irrelevant. To say that it is to such people that the kingdom of heaven belongs means...that they are the ones who gladly accept God’s rule and who therefore enjoy the benefits which come to his subjects....

To say simply that those who mourn are “happy” (see above section 2) would clearly be nonsense. Their “happiness” consists in the fact that they will be comforted. The echo of Isa 61:2–3 (following the echo of Isa 61:1 in the “good news to the poor” in v. 3) indicates that the “mourning” envisaged is not primarily, as modern use of the verb might suggest, that of personal bereavement, but rather of those whose situation is wretched. For those who, as God’s people, find their current situation intolerable and incomprehensible, there are better times ahead. (R.T. France, *New International Commentary on the New Testament: Matthew*)

Those who are bankrupt are also those who mourn. The loss of anything that a person counts valuable will produce mourning, whether it’s one’s financial support, or loved ones, or status in society, or even one’s spiritual standing before God. The psalmist understands this latter kind of mourning, for he says, “Streams of tears flow from my eyes, for your law is not obeyed” (Ps. 119:136). Those who are self-satisfied are tempted to rejoice in themselves and their accomplishments, but those who have reached the bottom of the barrel, whether it is spiritual or emotional or financial, or those who see the bankruptcy of those around them, will mourn.... We mourn over personal sin and social evil, because we mourn the things that God mourns. But as we mourn, we become instruments of the good news of the kingdom of heaven as we bring the comfort of God with which we ourselves have been comforted (2 Cor. 1:3–7). (Michael J. Wilkins, *NIV Application Commentary: Matthew*)