

LIFE GROUP BIBLE STUDY

SOUTH BURLESON BAPTIST CHURCH

FIRST MEETING NEW GROUP

Your first meeting sets the tone for the rest of the semester. Take some time to work through the material, get on the same page, and pray for Jesus to minister among you during your time together.

MAIN IDEA: A Life Group's purpose and ground rules lay a good foundation for spiritual growth.

— CONNECT

Choose any number of these questions to start your time together.

In the last 12 months, where have you experienced some spiritual victory?

What is one thing you want to be different 1 year from now?

If you could know the answer to one question about the future, what would it be?

In the last 12 months, what have been some of your biggest spiritual frustrations?

What would you want your spiritual life to look like in 5 years?

What has been one of the biggest spiritual lessons you have ever learned?

If you could learn a lot about one area of Christianity, what would it be?

What are three words you would use to describe your spiritual journey recently?

— INTRODUCE

Our church's mission is to **encounter Jesus as we invest in people's spiritual journeys**. Life Groups accomplish this mission in three ways.

1 - Life Groups encourage each other to encounter Jesus personally. Without a fresh word from Jesus, our hearts grow cold and our routines grow stale. Life Groups push each other to listen to Jesus for **direction**.

2 - Life Groups train each other to invest in other people's spiritual journeys. Jesus came to make disciples, and Jesus is still doing that today through us. Our part is finding creative ways to invest in other people's spiritual journeys as we live on **mission**.

3 - Life Groups invest in each others' spiritual journeys. Everyone is on a journey, and we all need prayer, support, and even a kick in the behind. Life Groups build trust and mutual respect through **confession**.

Discuss

Of the Life Group purposes numbered above, which one are you most apprehensive about? Which are you most excited about? Why?

— GROUND RULES

Cover these ground rules together.

Life Groups have *negotiable parts* (italic) and **non-negotiable parts** (bold).

Life Groups are closed and secure. Opening up to people takes time, trust, and depth of relationship. What people say in Life Group is not for anyone else to hear.

FAQ: Where should we meet? Choose a location that offers some privacy. This could be a public space like a coffee shop or cafe, or it could also be a private space like a house. Life Groups should choose one default location, with a backup in mind.

Life Groups meet for five months, take one month off as they decide what's next.

Every Life Group follows the 5-on-1-off cycle for a healthy rest schedule and natural stopping points. Cycles typically start in January and July (making December and June the “off” months).

Life Groups meet with everyone present every time. If one person cannot make a meeting, your Life Group reschedules to include everyone.

FAQ: Why is meeting with everyone non-negotiable? Although it seems easier to meet more often and allow for people to miss, this tends to be more destructive to the rhythm of a Life Group, and they are much more likely to stop meeting.

Life Groups meet every other week. If one person cannot make a meeting, your Life Group reschedules to include everyone.

FAQ: Why not meet every week? Although meeting every other week might not seem often enough, Life Groups can easily supplement the time apart with texts, phone calls, or just hanging out. Meeting every other week keeps meetings focused.

Life Groups consist of 2 to 4 people. Adding more than 4 can hurt your Life Group by making conversation too scattered, and by schedules becoming too difficult to align.

Life Groups consist of people of the same gender. Making Life Groups gender-specific allows for more openness with issues specific to men or women.

FAQ: What do we do about childcare? In double-parent homes, a solution would be to trade off weeks with your spouse's Life Group. In single-parent homes, a solution would be to partner with another Life Group that meets on an alternate schedule as yours. Another solution would be to pool money for childcare among the Life Group members.

Discuss

Do you have any questions about the ground rules?

— MEETINGS

When you meet, you move through all three purposes.

1 - Direction through Bible study. Life Groups discuss and study the Word when they are together.

2 - Mission through updates + prayer. Life Groups encourage each other as they invest in the spiritual journey of someone disconnected from the Lord. During prayer, your Life Group lifts these people up specifically.

3 - Confession of specific struggles. Life Groups concentrate on confession and repentance so you can fight spiritual battles together. Every meeting you pray for the specific battles you are fighting.

For your first meeting, work through these things first:

□ **Choose what your group will study together.**

Choose 2 Life Group Bible Studies to cover for the semester, or use another method of Scripture study for the semester.

□ **Choose a good time to meet.**

Establish the default day, time, and location of your Life Group meeting, including a backup day and time. Write it below.

□ **List out 1-3 disconnected people (each).**

Disconnected people can either be disconnected from Jesus, the church, or both. This list can change, but it's good to get a start on your first meeting.

□ **Set a Life Map presentation schedule.**

Part of our time together will be everyone presenting a Life Map. Set a schedule for everyone, and keep them early in the semester. *You can find a Life Map Worksheet on the church website.*

— PRAYER

Pray for spiritual power to hear and connect with Jesus.

Pray for healing as you confess sin.

Pray for the people whose spiritual journey you're investing in.