

how will they hear?





LIVINGHOPE

baptist church

*Blessed be the God and Father
of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who according to
His abundant mercy
has begotten us again to a
Living Hope
through the resurrection of
Jesus Christ from the dead.*

1 Peter 1:3

Community Group Purpose Statement

We, as smaller gatherings of one family, will practice with our lives the gospel truths that we confess with our mouths. Together, we will allow our lives to be challenged by the gospel and one another; we will live lives of boldness and purpose. As we walk in the light of the gospel, we will point to the grace of God and its power to set lives free from sin and death. We will continue praying, teaching, making disciples, and bearing one another's burdens. Following the pattern set before us by Jesus, we will bring joy to our family (the church) and glory to his name.

What is a Community Group?

Community groups are small gatherings of people that meet regularly for friendship, accountability, study and prayer, laughter, and occasionally tears. Community groups are an essential expression of the mission of Living Hope Baptist Church. They're a place where we learn more about Jesus and life together. They're the place where we wrestle with the truths of the Bible and encourage one another toward the life that God intends for us.

Each community group is unique, shaped by its neighborhood and the people who attend. However, you can expect a weekly gathering in a residence that involves food, conversation, prayer, discussion for applying the Bible to practical living, and service in the neighborhood. At the heart of each community group is the desire to see an authentic community marked by love for Jesus, one another, and the neighborhood.

Why Should I Join a Community Group?

The God of the Bible is a Trinitarian God who is one and three persons: Father, Son, and Spirit. God has made us in his image, which means we are made for community and friendship. And when we are not living in community we suffer because life in a sinful world is too complex and tempting to journey alone. Therefore, community groups are a place where we can live in relationship with one another through the ups and downs of life.

Community Group Study Guide

- S – SUMMARY:** A summary of the lesson's passage.
- O – OBSERVATION:** A list of questions related to the biblical context of that lesson's passage.
- A – APPLICATION:** A list of questions for applying that lesson's passage to one's personal life and experiences.
- P – PRAYER:** A time to spend in communication with God in response to His word and it's application to your life.

how will they hear?

- | | |
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week 1

the only hope for the world

week 1

selected scriptures

summary:

The thought of telling another person about Jesus can be very intimidating. Most of us know we should be doing this, but most of us know we fail time and time again. Fear takes over and we rarely share the Gospel to an unbeliever. This study is so important because we are dealing with real people, a real Savior, a real heaven, and a real hell. We are talking about people who are destined to face the wrath of God as a result of their sin for an eternity without end. In our lesson today we are going to examine an overview of the Bible to see what God is doing in history and then consider some implications of that in our lives.

observation:

1. As you read Genesis 1:1, why do you think God created the world, especially the creation of humans? (Hint: Answering the question, “Who is God?” will guide you in this answer)

2. In Genesis 1:26,27, who were humans made to be like?

3. In Genesis 2:16, what freedom do you see in their relationship?

4. In Genesis 2:17, what boundary do you see in their relationship?

5. In Genesis 2:17, what consequence is promised if they cross the boundary?

6. As you read Genesis 2:25, what things come to your mind as you consider what kind of life they must have had together in the Garden. (Note: this was before sin)

7. Answer the following questions from Genesis 3:1-6

- Who is the new character that bursts on the scene?

- What things do you think this new character is trying to convince Eve of?

- In verse 6, what did the woman and the man do?

8. As you look at verse 7, did things get better for them? How is it now different from chapter 2 verse 25?

9. Look at Genesis 3:8-11, and answer the following questions

- As God came in the garden, what did they do?

- What was God's first question to them?

- What was God's second question to them?

10. According to Genesis 3:12,13, what do you see that has happened to their

how will they hear?

relationship with each other?

11. Look at Genesis 3:14-19 and answer the following questions:

- What did God proclaim concerning:

The Serpent:_____

The Woman:_____

The Man:_____

- What promise from God do you see in verse 15 and what does this verse promise is going to happen between Satan and the offspring of Eve?

12. What picture of the promise of Gen. 3:15 did God show Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:21?

13. As Adam and Eve were told that a person is coming to defeat the serpent who led them into sin, what do you think occupied their mind as they started their new life outside of the Garden?

14. Based on Genesis 3:15 and the promise, what do you think the entire Old Testament is about?

15. When that Person finally came, what did God's people do according to John 1:11?

the only hope for the world

16. As you read Hebrews 2:14, did the promised seed of the woman suffer and also crush Satan as Gen. 3:15 promised?

17. Read Matthew 27:51. This thick curtain kept sinful man from approaching a perfect God. Cherubim were embroidered on this curtain (Exodus 26:31), the same that were put in the Garden to keep Adam and Eve out. What is the significance of this curtain ripping when Jesus died?

18. Right before the Promised Seed (Jesus) went back to heaven, what task did He give to His followers? See Matthew 28:18-20

19. As you read Revelation 19:11-16 and 20:11-15, does God's mercy last forever?

20. Read Revelation 22:1-4. In the very end, where do the followers of Jesus end up? How is this related to our study in the first chapters of Genesis?

application:

1. As we begin this study, it might be good to take an honest look at ourselves in this area of sharing the gospel with others. Take a few moments with your group, and share with others your fears, disappointments, struggles, and concerns that you see in your own life.

2. The only hope for the world is Jesus, the promise of Genesis 3:15. What

how will they hear?

then, should be your great purpose in life?

3. Take an honest look at your life and evaluate how you are doing in matching your purpose with God's. Share this with your group.

4. Spend some time in prayer related to your answers to the above questions. It would be great to do this as a group. (Note: Overcoming fear in your church family can be a great help to overcoming fear when talking to those who are outside the faith)

prayer:

A time of confession and seeking the power of God to change your life to match His great purpose is in order. Be honest with God and depend on Him to grow you and change you and give you a love and burden for those who do not Jesus.

the only hope for the world

notes:

week 2

tell people and trust God

week 2

selected scriptures

summary:

There is always tension in the relationship between the sovereignty of God and man's responsibility in salvation. While the Scriptures teach that salvation is of God, it also teaches that man must believe and it calls on man to repent and believe. We will never solve this tension this side of heaven – it exists and always will exist. However, we know that it is not a tension with God. Some go to the extreme and even say that “Since salvation is all of God, there is no need to witness or share our faith.” We certainly do not believe that statement. This lesson will attempt to show how God's sovereignty and man's responsibility fit together.

observation:

1. Read Romans 8:29,30. Is God sovereign and in complete control from start to finish when it comes to our salvation. How do these verses prove your answer?

2. According to John 1:12,13, who receives all the credit and all the glory for causing men to become children of God?

3. What three principles do you see in Colossians 4:2-4 related to our responsibility in praying for the lost?

- Colossians 4:2

- Colossians 4:3

- Colossians 4:4

4. Read the following verses and look for a theme related to man's responsibility related to the lost.

- Luke 19:10

- John 17:18

- Matthew 28:19

- * Common theme related to man's responsibility

5. Read the following verses and look for a theme related to man's responsibility related to the lost.

- Acts 2:36-38

- 2 Cor. 5:20,21

- Romans 10:13 - 15

- *Common theme related to man's responsibility

how will they hear?

6. After studying the above questions, determine which statements are true or false:

- Our job is to share the gospel and save sinners.

True_____ False _____

- Our job is to share the gospel, God's job is to save sinners.

True_____ False _____

- Success in evangelism depends on how many are saved.

True _____ False _____

- Success in evangelism rests solely on speaking the gospel to the lost

True _____ False _____

- Believers are to share the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit and leave the results up to God.

True_____ False _____

application:

1. If salvation completely rests in the hand and power of God, why is it wrong for us to not share the gospel with others?

2. Would you say that you are being devoted to prayer for the lost? In what ways can you improve this in your life? (Remember, the emphasis is on "being devoted", and don't forget the principles in the Colossians passage you already looked at)

3. In what ways can you pursue the lost with the gospel? Here are some hints to help you:

- What can you do to be sure you are around lost people?

tell people and trust God

- What can you do to establish and build relationships with lost people?
- What ways can you show love to those lost people around you...at work...in family...in neighborhood?

4. In what ways can you become more confident in actually using your mouth to speak the gospel? (What can you do to prepare yourself better?)

prayer:

It will be common in this series to spend much time confessing where we have failed. Examine your life and confess sin where you have failed to pray for the lost, pursue the lost, and proclaim the gospel. Ask God for the burden and strength to make wise decisions in regard to praying, pursuing, and proclaiming the gospel. Determine in His strength to obey those decisions that are consistent with His love for the lost and to fulfill your responsibility to be a faithful witness.

notes:

week 3

**the message
God has given
the world**

week 3

selected scriptures

summary:

This lesson will examine what it is we are supposed to be saying as we share the gospel with unbelievers. We must have a clear understanding of what God's saving message to the world really is. We will see that the gospel is good news! We must reject any message that adds to the gospel that rescues sinners from death.

observation:

1. What does Romans 1:16,17 say about the gospel? Why was Paul not ashamed of it?

2. Is the gospel dependent upon our human wisdom? See 1 Cor. 1:17

3. According to Galatians 1:6-9, is our world flooded with "false gospels"? How do you determine what is true and what is false?

4. Read 2 Thessalonians 1:8. Which gospel brings punishment if it is rejected? God recognizes which gospel message?

5. Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 and answer the following questions:

- (V.3,4) What two things did Christ do?

the message God has given the world

- (V.3) What did Christ die for?

- (V.1,2) We are saved if we.....?

6. Look at the following verses and see what response God requires from sinners:

- Mark 1:15

- Acts 2:37,38

- Acts 3:18-20

7. Is it possible, after having told someone that Jesus died for sins and rose from the grave, that they may need more details to make sense of that message? Answer the following questions related to the topics of God, Man, Jesus, and Man's Response:

- Who is God? _____

- Genesis 1:1 – God is the _____.

- Psalm 24:1 – God owns _____.

- Psalm 99:3 – God is _____.

- 1 Cor. 1:9 – God desires _____ (but does not need it from humans)

- Who is man? _____

how will they hear?

- Romans 5:12,13 – Sin resulted in _____ to all men.
- Romans 6:23 – Sin earns _____ for all men.
- Romans 1:18 – Man has God's _____ upon him.
- Revelation 20:11-15 – Without forgiveness man will face the _____.
- Who is Jesus? _____
- John 1:1 – 14 – Jesus is the _____.
- Romans 5:9,10 – The only way to be _____ to the Father.
- What must man do? (Response) _____
- Acts 3:22 – Man must _____.
- Acts 17:30 – Man must _____.

8. When a person believes and repents of their sin, what does God do? See Acts 13:38 and Ephesians 1:7.

9. Can man ever earn God's favor? According to the following verses, what does man receive that enables him to receive salvation?

- Acts 15:11

- Romans 4:5

- Ephesians 2:8,9

application:

1. What fears do you face when you think about talking to an unbeliever about the gospel?

2. What do you believe are some contributing factors for those fears?

3. What are some practical things you can do to help you overcome those fears?

4. Do you ever find yourself not knowing what to say or being afraid that you will not know what to say? Since the gospel is God's message to the world, what should you be able to tell others? Write out the gospel in a short statement as you would tell an unbeliever.

(*Note: This short statement does mean that is all you will say. However, it will give you a solid foundation and help you stay on the message of good news. You will have to answer other questions, but all answers should come back to the gospel)

how will they hear?

prayer:

Pray that you will not be ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it alone is the power of God unto salvation. Pray that God will help you to share the gospel message to others and that God will bring people along your path to hear the good news from you..

notes:

the message God has given the world

week 4

telling others what happened to you

week 4

selected scriptures

summary:

This lesson will examine the importance of sharing your personal testimony while making a distinction between your personal testimony and the gospel. We will see the benefits of sharing with others what Jesus has done in our lives. We will discover that this can actually be used to help fight fear and doubt, help to encourage other believers to share the gospel, and also help to steer conversations toward the gospel message of Jesus Christ and the cross.

observation:

1. Read Psalm 66:16 and write out in your own words what the Psalmist is saying.

2. Read Ephesians 2:12. What does Paul urge the believers at Ephesus to remember?

3. Read Ephesians 2:13. What did God do to change you when you were without hope?

4. Fill in the blanks in the following statement:

“If God can save you and _____, then He can save _____.”

5. In what ways can it be profitable and encouraging to hear other Christians talk about what God had done and is doing in their lives?

6. Look at John 4:28,29 and answer the following questions:

- Where did she go and who did she talk to?

- Who did she direct the people to?

- What amazed her about Jesus?

- Can you summarize in a brief statement what this woman did after she met with Jesus?

- Look at verses 39-42. Did God use her testimony and if so, how did God use it?

application:

Think about your testimony and in the space below (or a separate piece of paper), write it out. You may have to think through this to formulate your thoughts in order to share it in a way that is to the point and doesn't take too long. You may end up re-writing it a few times.

Here are a few tips to help you:

- What was your life like before Christ
- How you came to repent of your sins and believe the gospel
- What your life has been like since knowing Christ
- How the person you're sharing with can experience the same

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

telling others what happened to you

prayer:

Thank God for changing your life and ask Him to use your testimony as an encouragement to other believers and as a stepping stone to the lost in order to share with them the gospel.

notes:

week 5

**the church
as a whole
proclaiming
the gospel**

week 5

selected scriptures

summary:

We have mostly been talking about sharing our faith one on one in our previous lessons. This week we will examine how the church as a whole may participate together in being a witness for Jesus.

observation:

1. Read 1 Corinthians 14:23-25. What happened to the unbeliever who entered into a meeting of the church congregation upon hearing a clear biblical message of the life changing gospel?

2. What benefit can the public prayers of God's people in a church service be to an unbeliever who might be in attendance? What things should this unbeliever hear in those prayers?

3. Read Palm 119:172 & Colossians 3:16. What does this verse say about the church singing together that can be used by God in the life of an unbeliever?

4. When an unbeliever is in attendance, what will they see about the gospel as they observe the following?

- The Lord's Supper

the church as a whole proclaiming the gospel

- Baptism

5. Read John 13:34,35. What are believers to be displaying in all genuineness so that unbelievers will see the gospel?

6. Read 1 Peter 2:12. How should we conduct our lives in front of lost people and what may be the result of that conduct?

7. How does the unity of the church help unbelievers to see the gospel is true and life changing? See John 17:20-23

8. How do the principles taught in Hebrews 10:24,25 apply to the church as a whole to be evangelizing?

application:

1. What do you think unbelievers think when they hear Christians complain about their church?

2. How can it be profitable for unbelievers to hear you talk about what you have experienced at church or from being a part of a church?

how will they hear?

3. Sometimes we feel guilty like we are failing in witnessing by only inviting unbelievers to church. The church is not to be a substitute for our sharing Christ, but is it a good thing to invite the unsaved to the church service? Explain your reasoning for your answer?

4. How could God use your testimony, even if the members of the church have heard it before, in the life of an unbeliever who is in attendance?

5. Have you ever stopped to think that when people are asked to give testimonies, that it is a way to witness the gospel to the unsaved that are there in a church service? Have you ever thought, when there is nothing but silence, or just one or two share, what is going on in the mind of that unbeliever in attendance? Write down your thoughts about this.

prayer:

Ask God to help you be active in inviting unsaved people to the church services or even over to your house to be around other believers. Ask God to help you speak highly about your church and what God is doing in your life through it. Confess any sin where you have given unbelievers no desire to come to Christ by the actions of your life or the words of your mouth, especially related to your church family.

the church as a whole proclaiming the gospel

notes:

week 6

**telling the gospel to
different kinds of people
who live in different
kinds of contexts**

week 6

selected scriptures

summary:

This week's lesson will focus on sharing the gospel message to people who live in different kinds of contexts. While all people are sinners and in need of the gospel, not all people come from the same backgrounds, cultures, and places. We will see that the gospel message never changes and is the same life giving gospel to every person no matter what. We will also see that we can use the knowledge we have of a person's background, thinking, and culture, to help us in conveying the gospel message. The gospel needs no help, but we should do all we can, without ever compromising Scripture, to be aware of who we are speaking to, in order to know the best way to share the gospel message.

observation:

1. Read John 1:1,14,18. Answer the following questions:

- In the beginning, where was Jesus?

- Where did Jesus go?

- What did Jesus show those people that he came to?

2. Read Philippians 2:4-11. Who did Jesus become like (without sin), and what does that mean?

3. Read 1 Corinthians 9:19-23 and answer the following questions.

- What 4 categories of people does Paul mention in these verses?

telling the gospel to different kinds of people who live in different kinds of contexts

- Is Paul taking the gospel to all kinds of people?

- Five times in these verses, Paul repeats his desire for these people. What is this great desire?

- As you read these verses, do you believe Paul is aware of who he is speaking to and what cultural things may stand between them and the gospel?

4. Read Acts 17:16-34 and answer the following questions

- In verse 16, was Paul aware of the particular sin these people struggled with? What was it?

- As you read verse 22, was Paul respectful as he spoke to these people in preparation to present to them the gospel?

- Look at verse 23. How did Paul transition from their practice of idolatry to the One he wanted to talk about?

- As you read through verses 24-31, what key truths stand out as he spoke to these people?

how will they hear?

5. What three responses from Paul's witnessing do you see in verses 32-34?

- Some _____ (32)
- Some _____ (32)
- Some _____ (34)

application:

1. Why is the Gospel relevant to all people no matter what their background or culture or lifestyle may be?

2. What is the danger of “dumbing down” the Gospel and changing the message even just a little bit?

3. How would you answer this objection? “I don’t want to offend them with the Gospel, because I may not have another opportunity to talk with them – they may get upset and may never have another opportunity.”

4. What does Revelation 5:9 and 14:6 say about the gospel being effective to every kind of person no matter where they live and what they are like?

5. Do you think it is OK to sin if it will help you reach certain people? For example: The one at work you are trying to witness to is a person who par-

telling the gospel to different kinds of people who live in different kinds of contexts

ties and drinks and lives a sensuous life style. He or she invites you to go with them to party. Do you do this in order to establish a relationship and show them you care? Do you go but not participate? Do you graciously turn them down? Where do you draw the line in situations like this? Read Romans 12:2 as a guiding principle and command for all decisions and actions. Be prepared to discuss this question with your group. There is a simple and firm answer to the very first part of this question. However, as you discuss other situations, you might find yourself being stretched a bit. Listen to others with grace and understanding and share your input with the same spirit. It is important to note that Jesus ate with “sinners” and made sure he was where “sinners” were, but He never participated in their sins. They knew clearly where He stood, but they also knew He loved them. In fact, the religious leaders hated the fact that he “hung around” those sinners.

prayer:

A prayer for a burden for the lost and for wisdom on how to reach them is appropriate after this lesson. Also pray for boldness to never compromise the Gospel message no matter who you are speaking to. Pray for a sensitivity to others to accompany the boldness of the message of hope for those God brings into our life who need Jesus.

notes:

week 7

being intentional and strategic in telling the gospel

week 7

selected scriptures

summary:

Usually we do not do something unless we intentionally plan to do it. The same is true in sharing our faith with the lost. This lesson will examine some common barriers that keep us from sharing the Gospel, some common ways to help us move from conversations to Gospel conversations, and common ways to live strategically for the sake of the Gospel.

observation:

1. Read Haggai 1:1-5, 7-8 and answer the following questions:

- What were the people saying? (V2)

- What were the people distracted with instead of building God's house? (V4)

- What did God challenge them to examine? (V5)

- What did God command them to do? (V7,8)

2. How would you describe Mary and Martha in Luke 10:38-42?

- Martha

- Mary

3. Read Matthew 5:13-16. In your own words, what is Jesus trying to get across to His followers in these verses?

4. Read Colossians 4:5,6. In your own words, what is Paul saying here about our lives and wisdom in relation to talking to lost people?

5. What are we commanded to do and prepare for on purpose as seen in 1 Peter 3:15? Also, in what kind of spirit should we do this?

application:

1. Since you are to be purposed in sharing your faith, what are some things you should be praying for?

2. What things can you do to help you grow in your compassion for the lost so that you speak to them with grace?

3. What are some practical things you can do to “plan” to share the gospel? (Don’t forget to include your family, neighbors, and co-workers)

how will they hear?

4. What are some questions you could ask someone to help point a conversation towards the Gospel?

Examples:

- “If you could ask God any question, what would it be?”
- “Have you heard about Jesus? What have you heard about Him?”
- “How long have you lived in Evansville? What do you normally do on the weekend?”

5. As you examine your life, in what ways do you need to grow and change in order to be like the salt and light that Jesus spoke about? (As an unbeliever observes you, what would distract him from the Gospel?)

prayer:

Confess any sin that is taking away your ability to be salt and light to the lost around you –maybe even your family. Pray for compassion and wisdom and boldness to be intentional in sharing the gospel.

being intentional and strategic in telling the gospel

notes:

week 8

dealing with rejection

week 8

selected scriptures

summary:

As you are faithful to witness to the lost you will face rejection, ridicule, and suffering. This lesson will examine how we are to respond to rejection. There may be times that rejection comes as a result of something we did, but that will be discussed in another lesson. Today we are talking about rejection that comes from faithfully sharing the Gospel.

observation:

1. Read Luke 19:10 and John 6:63. How do these verses prove the following statement is false?

“They didn’t believe because of your poor Gospel presentation; if only you would have said it this way or that way, they would have believed.”

2. In man’s natural state, are they opposed to God or for God? See Romans 3:10-12

3. If the Gospel offends and might put our relationships in jeopardy, why then should we persist in sharing a message that has this potential of bringing rejection? See 1 Corinthians 1:18

4. In what ways can we be offensive to others in sharing the Gospel? (These

should be avoided)

5. Look at Ephesians 2:1. Is rejection worth it in order to tell the life changing message? How does this verse support your answer?

6. How do the following verses encourage you as you face rejection?

- John 15:20,21

- 1 Peter 4:12-14

- Isaiah 53:3

7. What do the following verses say about how you are to act when being rejected?

- 1 Peter 2:21,24

application:

1. Would you say that the fear of rejection, at times, keeps you from sharing the gospel?

how will they hear?

2. What things do you perceive in your mind will happen when you are rejected? In other words, what are you afraid of?

3. If you fear rejection, would you say that being accepted by someone is more important to you than pleasing God?

4. Have you ever blamed yourself for someone not believing? How is this untrue?

5. We know salvation is of God, but does that mean we have no responsibility in the way we act or talk toward unbelievers? Explain your answer.

prayer:

Look to Jesus as your ultimate example whose life was devoted to the Father. He came to His own and His own did not receive Him. Pray that God will help you to fear Him more than you fear man. Pray that God will enable you to see the need of those who are indeed spiritually dead and use you to be a faithful witness. Ask God for grace to handle rejection and praise Him for the privilege of being able to suffer as Jesus did.

notes:

week 9

answering objections about the gospel

week 9

selected scriptures

summary:

You can be sure that you will face opposition to the Gospel message. One great fear you may face is that someone may ask a question that you will not be able to answer. This lesson will focus on how to answer people's objections to the Gospel.

observation:

1. What does 1 Corinthians 1:18 say about how unbelievers view the gospel?

2. Are unbeliever's able to understand on their own the gospel? See 1 Corinthians 2:14

3. Should anticipated objections stop us from sharing the Gospel? See 1 Peter 3:15

4. Colossians 4:6 tells us to be ready to do what?

5. Are there times to not answer some questions? What are some questions you might steer away from answering? See Proverbs 26:4,5

6. When the woman asked Jesus questions in John 4:19-26, did He answer them?

7. If someone asks you a legitimate question, and you do not know the answer, what should you say?

application:

1. Why do you fear being asked a question you may not be able to answer right away?

2. What are some benefits of saying to someone, "That is a great question, can I get back with you on that?"

3. What things can you do to help you be prepared to answer objections from lost people? (Note: You will find that most lost people have the same questions and in their mind this is reason to reject the Bible.)

how will they hear?

4. Even if you give them the best and clearest answer to any question, does that mean they will believe? (Hint: Who saves them and what does He use to open their blind eyes?)

prayer:

Ask God for insight and understanding of His Word. Ask God for boldness and trust in His Word rather than trust in your ability to answer questions. Make some commitments to be in the Word in order that you may answer the basic questions that most all unbelievers bring up. Thank God for the Gospel and His power that changes lives.

notes:

prayer requests:



LIVINGHOPE
baptist church

For a digital copy of this booklet, please visit:

<http://www.lhbcevv.org/CommunityGroups/PDFs/HWTH.pdf>

