



Dear LifeGroup Leader,

How are you doing? How's your LifeGroup going?

I'd love to hear from you. I pray for you, and think about you and your group. As the Summer approaches, this is a good time to take stock of where your group has been throughout the Spring, and where you sense God's leading as you look forward to the next school year.

Many LifeGroups change pace for the Summer. Instead of the traditional Bible study format, they change things up - Summer evenings at a park for a BBQ, serving together, or eating out together.

Groups are a bit like soil. In order for growth to happen, there is a necessity to seasons. While BBQs in the park might seem like a "break", or something less important, the contrary is true. These changes of pace are exactly the mechanisms that enable you to continue meeting.

Many groups, not listening to their impulse to slow down or change pace, find themselves exhausted, and interpret it as a need to "step away" or stop the LifeGroup. While of course there's a time for this as well, it might go a long way to give yourself permission to lean into this intuition: "Wouldn't it feel nice if we were to just...." fill in the blank.

I want to give you permission to change things up this Summer. Do something fun, do something enriching and relaxing. Something that reminds you that you really do just love spending time with the people in your group. What would that be?

-Connor



(in)Formation

Forming our Spirit

In our complicated lives, it's hard to find solutions. We often turn to something "new" in hopes that this will give us the clarity to move forward. Yet instead we can get mired in a sea of equal and frustrating paths. For James, the way forward is in raw practicality forged from Biblical idealism. If we lean in too closely to do's and don'ts, we miss the spirit at the heart of James's practicality. We are to be formed into a people who embody the every-day spirit of accountability, fallibility, integrity, responsibility, and dependability.

FOCAL POINT: For us to be salt and light, we need to carry with us a spirit that helps us engage in Kingdom work together for the long-haul.



Getting Started

Catch up together about how your week has been, possibly also revisit last week's meeting.

- ▶ What was the most fun you had on a team? What was special or different about this team, members, and leaders?



Exploring Scripture

Read the following passage together.

James 3:1-12

- ▶ What words stick out to you?
- ▶ Where do you hear God's heart in this passage?



Reflection

Take time to reflect together about the passage.

- ▶ James speaks of the importance of a stable and dependable spirit. Why might such a spirit been essential to the early church? What kind of community might arise if people are unable to be dependable?
- ▶ Sometimes it's easier to identify other's failures than our own: can you identify with what it's like to have an untamed tongue? How so?
- ▶ What is hard about taming your tongue?



Praxis

With the understanding that we gathered here are the body of Christ, let's allow the truth from today's scripture to impact us as a LifeGroup.

- ▶ This passage is about carrying with us a spirit that enables us to work together in a loving and safe community. It's hard to do God's work or to be salt and light if we don't feel safe and dependable. Some of us have experienced the results of when someone isn't dependable, or when they say one thing to us, and another thing to someone else. Let's take time talking about this as it pertains to our LifeGroup.
- ▶ Have you been hurt by others being undependable? Instead of telling details of the story, talk about the hurt this caused you, and the fears you might still have from that relationship.
- ▶ Let's set some boundaries that will help us feel confident with each other. Below are some areas we can discuss together:
 - ▶ How should we handle information that is talked about in this room?
 - ▶ How should we handle one-on-one conversations about others in the group?
 - ▶ Is there anything else that would help you feel more open and confident in the way you share in this group?



Moving Outward

Challenge each other to live out God's truth this week.

- ▶ Use your words tomorrow to bless someone.

Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. We all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check.

When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.

All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind, but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.