

life groups

NLC Life Group Through the Bible Study
CWY & GLR

Week of October 15, 2017

Sermon: The Church God Sees



NEW LIFE
CHURCH

Life Group Schedule

15 MIN Eat, Meet & Greet

15 MIN Ice Breaker Game: **Two Extremes**. Create an imaginary line from one end of the room to the other. Instruct people to move to a point on the line to show where they stand on an issue. For example - move to the left hand side of the room if you like chocolate, the right hand side if you like strawberry. If people don't have a strong opinion, they stand in the middle. When everyone chooses a position, ask the next one and everyone moves again. (Please avoid political issues!) Other examples:

- › Fold toilet paper or scrunch? Sleep in or get up early? Big party or intimate dinner? Country or Hip Hop? Would you rather go to a Razorback game or a concert? Vanilla or Chocolate ice cream? Sweet or spicy? Work on your car or have someone else do it? Instagram or Snapchat? Summer or winter? Run/jog or bike? Would you rather be beautiful/handsome or smart? Be taller or shorter? "So You Think You Can Dance" or "The Voice"?

OPENING PRAYER

45–60 MIN The Church God Sees

- George Bernard Shaw was asked if he could do life again, who would he want to be? He said, "I would like to be the man I never was."
- We want New Life to be a church that is aiming to be Christlike.

TAKE TURNS READING EPHESIANS 2:19-22

- Since New Life's inception, we've had over 70,000 decisions for Christ, and over half that number were baptisms.
- God told us to love the people who came like they have never been loved before. Soon after, the Lord started growing this church.
- Our vision is to reach the state of Arkansas with some other friends.
- We didn't think about being fast-growing and innovative. We just wanted to please God.
- We never knew...
 - › ...the enormity of what is now happening.
 - › ...we would help plant close to 800 churches nationwide with ARC.
 - › ...70,000+ decisions for Christ and over half that number baptisms.
 - › ...different denominations would use us to train them.
 - › ...churches from other cities would beg to merge with us.
- We never saw...
 - › ...God giving us the keys to cities in Arkansas.
 - › ...campuses growing too fast, with standing room only, and no room to grow.

- It's weird to have over 400 people in Beebe and 700 in Greenbrier.
- Arkansas is a *small* state. The largest city is Little Rock with 196,000.

THE CHURCH GOD SEE SEES...

1. Is for people to respond to the call of SALVATION.
 - Look at Paul's heart for the people of Israel who are far from God:
TAKE TURNS READING ROMANS 9:1-3
 - He's saying, "There's nothing I wouldn't do to see my friends saved!"
 - › But some of us won't turn off Netflix to see our friends saved.
 - One of our core values is that we believe in the value of a soul.
 - It's common at New Life for people to ask, "Do you think, after all I've done wrong, that God could ever love me again?"
 - › Yes! He loves you! The Bible says He forgives us when we repent of our sins.
 - › The Bridegroom is waiting for the lost, watching whose hands are raised, rejoicing with "That's my boy! That's my girl!"
 - TAKE TURNS READING 1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-4**
 - Our world needs the true Gospel of Christ.
 - › In our world, honor is lost, values are lost, and people are shooting each other and calling each other names.
 - READ 1 JOHN 5:12-13**
 - This verse says, "So that you may know you have eternal life." You can *know* that you have eternal life!

THE CHURCH GOD SEES...

2. Is for you to find your identity in JESUS.
 - If you don't know who you are in Christ, you will wear your soul out trying to please everyone else.
 - › Jesus never let anyone else define who he was. He was totally secure in that. He would tell people, "I AM the vine... I AM the bread...I AM the door."
 - › He doesn't let you tell Him who He is; He tells you!
 - People have said, "I'm just gonna focus on me for awhile and find out who I am."
 - › You can't find "YOU" by focusing on you, because you are not created in your image. You are created in the image of God.
 - › You find out who you are by focusing on GOD!!

- Years ago, in order to spot counterfeit money, authorities would study the real one, so that when fake money came around, they could spot it.
 - › When you study Jesus, you can tell who is not like Him.

HAVE SOMEONE READ JOHN 13:3-5

- › Jesus knew where he came from, and he knew where He was going.

Q1. Do you know where you came from? Are you confident where you're going? Explain.

- We don't compare ourselves to any other church. We are all on the same team, filling our role to win cities for Jesus!
 - › But you need to know where we came from: we started humbly.
 - › We always want to be on the cutting edge of what God is doing. We don't ever want to rely on past successes, living off what God did way back when. That can never be us! But God helps us as long as we stay humble.
- It takes guts to find your call with Jesus.
 - › Example: When Pastor Rick and Michelle moved to Arkansas, with no church members yet, they had to sign a five-year lease for \$6,000/month! That took boldness; it took guts.
- We've heard people say New life Church just snaps their finger and great things happen, but they have no idea the sacrifices people have made and continue to make:
 - › The work, the effort to train leaders, the prayers, the phone calls, the design work, the doctrinal questions, the demonic attacks, the overwhelming deep gut checks.
- Shallow and Deep Water
 - › We must have a shallow end for people to get in with us, and we must have deep water, so people can grow in God's Word.

THE CHURCH GOD SEES...

3. Is a church you LOVE.
 - A church you'd want to come to and bring your friends.
 - Our purpose statement has never changed: "bringing your friends to be fully devoted followers of Christ," loving God, loving life and loving people.
 - But you need to love the bride of Christ again.
 - › It's not strong yet, though it's getting there, but this only happens under heat and pressure.

PS 92:13 "Those who are planted in the house of the Lord will

flourish in the courts of God.”

- Your life can only flourish when you are planted. We can't come in and spectate.
- We have a lot of talent here, but talent doesn't change lives. The Presence of God changes lives.
 - › We have to let His Presence change; you have to let Him inside.
- Jesus traveled 26 miles to Caesarea Philippi. The people there worshipped goats and practiced bestiality.
 - › Jesus brought Grace, Mercy, and truth to the worst of these!
 - › Funny! If I were God for a day and the Angels said “What should we do to Caesarea Philippi?”
 - › Jesus didn't destroy them; He loved them. We want a church that loves people.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE VISION OF NEW LIFE CHURCH

- Pray about this vision every day and your role in it!
- Pray for Pastor Rick, your campus pastor, and the staff. We need it!

PLEASE SERVE THE VISION OF NEW LIFE CHURCH

- Start simple but help. At the very least, get in a life group.

PLEASE GIVE TO THE VISION OF NEW LIFE CHURCH

- Q2.** Spend some time discussing how your city group or life group can go deeper in prayer.
- Q3.** Discuss what you expect from God when you pray. Do you believe He hears you and that He answers? Explain.
- Q4.** How has God used NLC to change your life?
- Q5.** Dream about how you can individually serve and contribute in a unique way at NLC and as a life group.

SPEND SOME TIME PRAYING OVER:

- Government leaders (national to local).
- Pastors and leaders at New Life Church.
- That God would continue to use NLC to spread His Presence, His love, His truth and His grace throughout Arkansas and now Florida.
- Individual needs as expressed within the group.

ANNOUNCEMENTS