



LIFE GROUPS 2019

NLC Life Group Study

Week of September 22, 2019

CAN WE HAVE A CHURCH THAT PLEASES GOD?

Life Group Schedule

30 MIN Eat, Meet & Greet

15 MIN Ice Breaker: **Name That Person.** Divide into two teams. Give each person a blank card and ask each person to write five little known facts about themselves on their card. Include all leaders in this game too. Ex: I have a pet iguana, I was born in Iceland, my favorite food is Spam, my grandmother is called Doris and my favorite color is red. Collect the cards into two team piles. Draw one card from the opposing team pile. Each team tries to name the person in as few clues as possible. Five points if they get it on the first clue, then 4, 3, 2, 1, 0. The team with the most points wins. (Note: if you select the most obscure facts first, it will increase the level of competition and general head scratching!)

TRANSITION: As you're gathering, spend some time in **WORSHIP & PRAYER.**

45 MIN | CAN WE HAVE A CHURCH THAT PLEASES GOD?

- Visiting pastors always what to know what we do and how we do it, but I have to first teach the why, because if you don't know the why (scripturally) you may not like the how and what.
 - > All NLC campuses have weekend services, but not everything happens during church.
- I see our church as a believer service but fully aware of lost people everywhere.
 - > This dictates everything we do: how we greet in the parking lot, how long our services are.
 - > We must win souls.
- Bro Larry Stockstill wrote a book, "25 Lines Around," to help people understand souls. Today it would be 40 lines around, 4.9 billion people not Christians.
 - > If the lost died today. – its over for them. Forever. That is the reason every church needs to get this right. So, at NLC we really try to answer this need. Why?

REACHING THE LOST IS THE BIBLICAL MANDATE.

SEE ROMANS 10:13-14, MATTHEW 28:18-20

- The most important thing a church/Christian can do is get lost people saved.
 - > Ex. Why? Because you can go to heaven with a bad attitude, a bad marriage, a bad temper, a bad devotional life, but you cannot go to heaven without Jesus.
 - > The church needs to be a place that teaches the word, is excellent in what they do, is relational, that is loaded with integrity, and that values souls.
 - > We must loved the unchurched if they are saved or not, without compromising the Word. Everything we have is to help us communicate the word. It is all about *souls*.
- Three ways to disciple people—disciple means learner—in church, in small groups, and in mentoring.
 - > Ezekiel says if we do not tell the truth to the world then their blood is on our hands.

SEE PROVERBS 11:30, JOHN 14:6

- The purpose of the Church isn't to have worship services for ourselves. We exist for the world to find Christ.

SEE 2 COR 5:14-15, ACTS 1:8

HEAVEN AND HELL ARE REALITIES.

- Sometimes people will say...that church is so big...getting too big, but it has to be big as long as heaven and hell are real.
- Btw. We must get smaller too, because every individual matters.

INVITING UN-CHURCHED PEOPLE TO A LIFE-GIVING CHURCH SERVICE IS STILL AN EFFECTIVE METHOD.

- Barna Institute survey: 47% of all people in America says they would go to a church service if they were invited.

SEE MATT 24:12

- From The builder generation – born 1927-1945, where 65% are Bible-based believers, to The Millennials – born 1986 - 1995, where only 4% are Bible-based believers.

TWO WAYS TO KEEP A CHURCH DOING THE GREAT COMMISSION

1. WE FOCUS ON A LIFE-GIVING CULTURE.

- **Tree of Life vs. the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil**
 - › There are two mindsets that all of us still have: Tree of Life or Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.
 - One is about rules and regulation. The other about loving God.
 - Pitiful to avoid a movie because its bad. Strong to avoid a movie that could grieve the life giving holy spirit within me
 - Pitiful to hate someone who doesn't do what I know is the knowledge of good and evil. Powerful to love someone who doesn't know the tree of life.

SEE JOHN 14:15

- Focus on the loving me.....then you will obey because you want to.

2. TO CREATE SERVICES WITH THE UN-CHURCHED IN MIND.

- From the second they enter your parking lot, guests begin making impressions about your ministry. Churches that understand the lasting nature of first impressions understand that people matter.
- Know why the unchurched are unchurched. People make a decision to stay or leave within the first five minutes.

HOW DO WE HAVE A LIFE-GIVING CULTURE THAT REACHES THE LOST?

- **BY BEING AUTHENTIC LIKE JESUS**
 - › I hate listening to a pastor who tries to act perfect
 - › Every pastor we have....one thing – they are real, authentic, life-giving pastors, with sincere, godly character.
 - › Jesus was so sincere, no pretense, pomp & circumstance.
- **BY BEING RELEVANT LIKE JESUS.**
 - › Relevant means – something they can use on Monday-Friday
 - › 8 things we put in every sermon: Academic, revelation, application, practical, inspiration, humor, authenticity, quotes/illustrations.
 - › Jesus gave them real things they could use: shepherds, fig trees, seeds, wells, water. Jesus today would talk about neighborhoods, Facebook, shopping, cooking, sports.
 - › Warning! When you make things relevant, don't change the message. The Word is sacred – not the method.
- **BY BEING ENJOYABLE AND INSPIRING LIKE JESUS**
 - › People loved to be around Jesus – children, sinners, skeptics, etc
 - › The only people who did not enjoy Jesus were inauthentic, religious people.

SEE PSALM 122:1

- › The house of the Lord is not a building. You are the temple of the holy spirit. You are the sanctuary of the Spirit. That's what needs to be clean!
 - › The goal is not to force a truth on people; it's to get them to come back. Let joy be around – They will tell others to come
- **BY BEING ACCEPTING BUT WITH STRONG CONVICTION LIKE JESUS**
 - › I wrote a book – “Real Love in an Angry World.” Jesus was holy but not afraid to talk to unholy people. His holiness didn't drive people away; it drew people to Him!

- **BY SEEKING THE PRESENCE OF GOD LIKE JESUS**

SEE PSALM 16:11, JER 29:13, MATT 5:8, 1 COR 10:23-24

- This is all about Jesus. Let's keep our attention on him. He made the blind see and the lame walk. It's more than a belief system. It's changed lives.
- We use to say, “We are spirit filled but non spooky.” That is just a fancy way of saying – we are not showing off.

Q1. In light of this message, what is the main thing you learned?

Q2. What is the Holy Spirit showing you is a one percent adjustment you can make today?

TAKE PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAY OVER NEEDS