

# **Leadership Training Session for Group Leaders**

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Colonial Presbyterian Church  
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# LIFE Groups!

Jesus said,

"I have come that they may have LIFE,  
and have it in its fullest!" John 10:10

WHY Join a LIFE Group?!

We are designed for Community!

- ❖ Communion with God, and community with others  
(Matthew 22:37-40)
  
- ❖ We fulfill the Great Commission by
  - Sharing life together
  - Studying God's Word together
  - Praying together
  - Serving together



What does that look like?! A LIFE group is growing. People are being *transformed*! "It is in authentic community that people find real hope in the midst of pain, loss, loneliness, depression, and sin in their lives. God gave us the gift of community to meet our needs. The real need of our culture is to *meaningfully connect* with a few other people. When we do, we are able to change, to grow, and to heal" (Michael Mack). As a result, the group does not just meet, it is actively involved in something outside itself – it has a heartbeat, a mission and a purpose! It reaches out to those beyond themselves to invite others on the sanctification journey, and reaches out to serve others in the name of Christ!

## WHY DO WE HAVE LIFE GROUPS AT COLONIAL?!

In early 2007, the Pastors and Session of Colonial voted to become a church OF small groups, not a church that has small groups. Why and what's the difference?

The Church is God's chosen vehicle for the operation of His love and grace in the earth. The power and work of the Holy Spirit through a dynamic church is how God gets things done - it's how He builds His kingdom. Though the world does not see or know it yet, the Church has what the world is looking for.

How do we get that message out? Scripture and church history have taught us that the most effective model for a dynamic church body, which consistently administers the love of God, comes in the form of small groups that will pray, share, study and serve together – all four components. As a result, these groups are, in many ways, the "life" of the church, and that is why we have decided to call this four-component model LIFE Groups. Colonial is a big place, and on two campuses, so if we are serious about making an impact in our community as a truly dynamic force of Gods love, power and grace, we have to take seriously the model of Church that the scripture presents.

- Jan Neisess, Associate Director of Connection and Care  
and Coordinator of the LIFE Groups

## **A Letter from Pastor Paul about the Lent LIFE Group Series: The Suffering Servant**

Dear friends,

Few figures in the Bible are shrouded in such mystery as the man at the center of this LIFE study. "The Servant" is unveiled in Isaiah, chapters 40-55, as a crucial part of the Lord God's redemption of His people. There has been much confusion over whether the Servant was the nation of Israel, a part of Israel, or a person. Some have wondered how the Servant and the Messiah are related. Some voices have assumed that the Servant's work was for Israel alone, others that it included the Gentiles (you and me), and still others that it was all wishful thinking. Our questions are, "Who is this man?," "What did God intend to do through him?," and "What difference does it make to us today?"

The work you are about to engage in is actually threefold. You will begin by understanding the Scriptures in their context: that is, through the eyes and ears of the ones to whom it was originally written. Only then do we dare to move to the New Testament to see more clearly what God was/is doing. And then, finally, we will dare to translate what we've learned into the 21<sup>st</sup> century setting where you and I live.

This is an exciting adventure, one that holds promise in providing an adequate model for doing Old Testament study far beyond this series. It also offers to all of us a deepening devotion to the one, true living God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Perhaps more than we anticipate, it will speak volumes to what God wants from us in this technological, bewildering age that we are living in. As we come to know the Servant, we come to know the heart of God today for all of His creation, and our part in what He is doing. We will certainly see that He is externally focused in all that He has been doing for thousands of years.

May this study prompt you to become a more thorough and inquisitive student of Scripture. May it draw you into greater closeness with the members of your LIFE group. And may it involve you in some life-changing mission, where your focus turns increasingly outward, like that of the Servant.

With love and care,  
Pastor Paul

## About the Study Guide

**QUESTIONS:** The title says it all. This is a study *guide*. It is meant to facilitate discussion, but the leaders and members of the group will most certainly come up with your own questions during the study. This means you may do one question from a section, or none, or all of them. It is up to each group and their leader to decide. Leaders are most welcome to bring their own questions and ideas to the group from your personal preparation for this study.

**SONGS:** When there are songs mentioned for group or individual use, if you don't own the CD, you can purchase the song for download at Wal-Mart.com, Rhapsody, i-Tunes, etc. usually for \$1 or less. If you would like to listen to the entire song first, or do not wish to purchase it, see the information in the next paragraph.

**INTERNET LINKS:** When an internet link is listed to a place like You Tube, you can have the group listen to the song via a computer. To add another fun dimension, if you have the ability to hook your computer up to your TV\*, you can allow the entire group to view the video of the song. Some songs in this study guide have the words with them so the group can sing along if they wish. If that is the case, you can increase the size of the You Tube video by clicking on the icon in the bottom corner of the video.

\* To hook up your computer to a TV, check out the back of your PC or the sides of your laptop for an S-Video port. (If you don't have one, video cards with S-Video ports are available for under \$100.) Then, check your TV's inputs. Many TVs have S-Video ports in so you'll need an S-Video to S-Video cable. If not, an S-Video to RCA cable will work. Connect the computer to the television while the computer's off and the TV's on. Then turn on the computer to give your machine the chance to detect it has an external display available. If it does not detect it, go display properties>settings>advanced>displays. There you will see three things: PC, laptop and TV, turn on the button on tv and apply it. If only two options are shown, choose box 2 and choose apply. If you have any questions, go to <http://www.techlore.com/article/10061/> for a more detailed answer.

**WEBSITES:** Any websites mentioned are not supported by Colonial Presbyterian Church and do not represent the views of the church. They are for informational purposes only.

### **VIDEOS and MOVIES:**

Hint! As with any technology, music or video, it would be good to test them out before the group meets.

Additional materials will be provided on-line during the course of these six weeks. Please check at [www.colonialkc.org](http://www.colonialkc.org) under the resources tab for "Sermon Based LIFE Group Study Questions."

For further study and preparation, these sites have a list of commentaries and dictionaries to choose from that will aid in the biblical study and understanding of each passage

<http://bible.crosswalk.com/Commentaries/>

<http://www.studylight.org/>

This entire study guide, complete with hyperlinks, will be posted on the Colonial website under LIFE Groups. If you don't like to type in the address links, you could open the week's study session and click on hyperlinks for lyrics, videos, and songs.

# Leadership Training Section

## VIDEO TRAINING SESSIONS:

### “ReGroup” led by Henry Cloud, Bill Donahue and John Townsend

**HENRY CLOUD** is a clinical psychologist, author, speaker, and cofounder of Cloud-Townsend Resources. He has written or cowritten nineteen books, including *Making Small Groups Work*. His most recent books are *How to Get a Date Worth Keeping* and *Integrity: The Courage to Meet the Demands of Reality*.

He is a graduate of Southern Methodist University, having earned a B.S. in psychology with honors. He completed his Ph.D. in clinical psychology at Biola University and his clinical internship at Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health. He lives with his wife and two daughters in southern California.

**BILL DONAHUE** is the executive director of Group Life for the Willow Creek Association. As one of the leading voices in the small groups movement worldwide, Bill consults, teaches, and writes extensively about groups and leadership. Bill also works with the Neighborhood Life Ministry at Willow Creek Community Church. An active practitioner of leading and living in community, he is the author of many books, including *Leading Life-Changing Small Groups* and *In the Company of Jesus*, and the co-author of *Building a Church of Small Groups*, *Walking the Small Group Tightrope*, and *Coaching Life-Changing Small Group Leaders*.

Bill has a Ph.D. in adult education from the University of North Texas, a master's degree in biblical studies from Dallas Seminary, and a bachelor's degree in psychology from Princeton University. Bill, his wife, and two children live in the northwest suburbs of Chicago.

**JOHN TOWNSEND**, clinical psychologist, speaker, and cofounder of Cloud-Townsend Resources, has authored or coauthored eighteen books, the most recent being *Rescue Your Love Life* and *Boundaries with Teens*. He has sold over four million copies of his books, including *Making Small Groups Work*.

Born and raised in North Carolina, Dr. Townsend earned his B.A. in psychology at North Carolina State University, graduating with honors. He went on to obtain his Master of Theology degree from Dallas Theological Seminary, again with honors, and then his master's degree and Ph.D. in clinical psychology from Biola University in California. He lives in Southern California with his wife and sons.

# Cast of Characters for the Videos

## God's Purposes for Small Groups

"A church that is changing lives is organized around small groups, where people can find friendship, be mentored in the faith, understand and discuss the Word, identify and use their spiritual gifts in service, and provide care for one another." - Bill Donahue

Why?

1. CARE: A church's ability to provide care and a personal touch is often lost as it grows, therefore, the care needs to come from all members, not just the pastors or other staff of the church. With small groups, someone is in charge of caring for 6-12 people, and each person knows that not only is someone there for them, but an entire group!
  2. LEADERSHIP: Small group ministry at a church thrives on the ability to identify and develop qualified leaders to shepherd little flocks of believers, who then reach out to the strays who need Christ. It works best when each group has an apprentice leader who is trained by the leader, who can then go out and develop another group.
  3. MULTIPLICATION: The kingdom of God advances one life at a time, beginning with the command: "Go and make disciples". Keeping open places to welcome new people, and sending others on to share the values and excitement of the group experience. One group, over time, developing leaders and multiplying groups has the potential to reach hundreds of people over a few years time.
  4. SHEPHERDING THE LITTLE FLOCK: The best discipleship is group discipleship. Jesus practiced it, spending much of His time with no fewer than three of the twelve. Group learning has distinct advantages in that all learn from the wisdom and experience of many people. We act like the body of Christ as we grow together in the knowledge and application of God's Word, as well as in bearing one another's burdens.
- The goal of small groups is spiritual growth: to grow in our love for God and one another.
  - Small groups are God's delivery system of care – He uses all of us!
  - The most strategic person in the life-change process of the church is the small group leader.
  - Groups must expand and multiply so that eventually every believer can be connected to others.
  - Effective ministry happens in an atmosphere of prayer and celebration – together!

**Your Notes from the Video:**

# The Five Habits of Life-Changing Groups

The five habits that create a group where spiritual growth and transformation occurs are:

## **CARE**

- ✓ Being “for” each other
- ✓ Encouraging each other
- ✓ Coming alongside one another

## **SAFETY**

- ✓ Having a “come as you are” culture
- ✓ Feeling safe enough to be yourself
- ✓ Accepting each other unconditionally

## **AUTHENTICITY**

- ✓ Being “real” with each other
- ✓ Taking relational risks with one another

## **GROWTH**

- ✓ Hebrews 10:24 – spurring one another on
- ✓ Pushing each other to take growth steps
- ✓ Naming the areas where growth needs to happen

## **HELP**

- ✓ Providing resources others may need
- ✓ Can be practical: helping move, filing tax returns, etc.
- ✓ It's also about asking for help when it's needed

## **Your Notes from the Video:**

### **For Discussion and Personal Reflection:**

1. What habit resonates the most with you?
2. Are the healthy habits present in your group? Whether or not, what habit(s) could there be some growth?
3. As a leader, do you feel you can address these healthy habits with your group?

## Setting the Ground Rules

Definition:

Ground rules are rules agreed upon by all members of the group that ensure the group process works.

Ground rules provide the "guard rails" for a group

- Clear expectations are essential for a good outcome
- Ground rules ensure that the five healthy habits flourish in the group

The role of the leader

- Responsible for making sure the ground rules work
- Stewards the process and purpose of the group

Examples of ground rules held by most groups:

- Begin and end on time
- Attend the meetings
- Call when you can't come
- Appoint a timekeeper

Other ideas of ground rules:

- The kind of food and beverage served (dietary needs, appetizer v. dinner food, etc.)
- No interrupting or carrying on separate conversations
- Participation from everyone
- Confidentiality/safety (even with e-mails!)
- Bring up issues or dissatisfaction right away
- Set up how one leaves the group

### Your Notes from the Video:

### For Discussion and Personal Reflection:

1. Does your group have ground rules? If not, how can you approach the group about setting up some ground rules as a group?
2. A handout is available at the back of this packet for you to use as a guideline for your group to work through setting up ground rules. Remember, the entire group needs to agree together!

# Telling Your Story (without going on and on...)

## Definition:

Telling your story means telling people about those significant events and relationships that have shaped you in the past and continue to shape you today. It includes feelings or reactions to past and present experiences.

A healthy group gives adequate time for everyone to share his or her story, but it doesn't mean everyone is going to share equally every week.

Philippians 3:1-4 is Paul's story of coming to faith and his spiritual growth  
2 Corinthians 6:11 is Paul's challenge to the Corinthians to open up

## Why is telling your story important?

1. We need to share so we'll continue to grow
2. If we don't share:
  - a. People won't get to know one another
  - b. People will remain cautious
  - c. People will lose interest in the group
  - d. The ability to grow in relationship skills will be lost
3. Share your story early in the life of the group
4. Real transformation happens when our story intersects with God's story, and our story becomes like His.

## The two elements of sharing:

1. Balance of sharing: how much each person shares must be monitored
  - a. "traffic cop" method
  - b. Structured method – assign times
  - c. Feedback method – everyone needs to be attentive
2. Quality of sharing: going deeper with each other
  - a. What you share – share about significant things
  - b. How you share – get into the vulnerability of experience

## Note:

As a leader, lead the way and be aware of the balance of sharing and choose to share on a level you haven't before. Take a risk or go one degree past your comfort zone in the sharing of your life or story.

## Your Notes on the Video:

# How to Respond to Someone Who is Hurting

Responding to someone who is hurting means allowing them to express and process their pain in the context of the group.

Emotional pain is a normal part of life, and therefore a normal part of group life. It's okay to express hurt, grief, or other negative emotions, and the group needs to give permission for members to do this.

Proverbs 19:17 "He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord."

1 Corinthians 12:26 "When one part of us suffers, the rest of us suffer together."

## **"True community begins at the edge of suffering."**

- People feel cared about when we respond
- It presents an opportunity for growth
- We learn how to respond to others

## **How do we respond?**

Validate (identify with) an individual's pain

- Draw out negative feelings
- Empathize
- Avoid
  - Minimizing
  - Spiritualizing
  - Ignoring/denying
- Offer comfort
- Offer prayer
- Confidentiality!

## **Your Notes on the Video:**

## **Additional Notes from Group Discussion:**

### **What is Coming Up for You as Group Leader:**

- 1. Leadership Training Opportunities**
- 2. The development of coaches**
- 3. Growth and multiplication of leaders and groups**

## **Evaluation Form – Help us keep improving!**

**(Please turn off and return to front table – thank you!)**

1. Overall, the material presented today was helpful to me as a leader, either as a reminder or to use as tools for my group to grow. Circle Answer:

1 – No      2 – Somewhat      3 – Most of it was helpful      4 – All of it was helpful

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

2. I most appreciated the following (circle all the apply):

1 – Handout    2 – DVD teaching    3 – DVD dramas    4 – group discussion time    5 – the food

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Anything else you would like to comment on, as a suggestion to include next time, or to improve upon?

**Thank you!**