

The Story Of My Life

WEEK 3 - QUICK TEST
LEADERS GUIDE

COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR GROUP

TEXT MESSAGES

SEND THIS TO EVERYONE IN YOUR GROUP: Hi! Hope you're having a fruitful week! (See what I did there?) I'm praying that God will help you see how you can live more in step with His Spirit.

SEND THIS TO ANYONE WHO MISSED GROUP THIS WEEK: Hey—we missed you at group this week! Here's the link to the audio so you can catch up on the teaching. Can't wait to see you next week —group isn't the same without you!

SEND THIS TO ONE OR TWO PEOPLE IN YOUR GROUP, JUST BECAUSE:

Hi! Just checking in. How's your week going? How can I pray for you?

EMAIL:

SEND THIS TO EVERYONE:

Hope you all are having a great week! I wanted to send out a quick email to let everyone know what we'll be talking about in small group this week. We're in the third week of "The Story of My Life." Have you ever wished that there was a "faith indicator"—like a step counter or a calorie tracker—that could tell you how you're doing in your relationship with God? Believe it or not, God gave us one. This week's message is about the standard by which we can measure our lives—God calls it the fruit of His Holy Spirit. We're going to talk this week about the "fruit" our lives are producing. It should be a fruitful time! (Awful pun intended.) Here are the details for our meeting: *Date/time: Address:* Our weekly Bible Reading Plan and the questions for this week are attached. See you guys soon!

BIBLE READING PLAN

If you're looking for a more personal way to encourage your group members to read Scripture, try texting each day's Scripture and prompt to the group. Or, EMAIL THEM out each week. That way they have each day's reading as the week begins.

MONDAY (Day 1) Galatians 5:22-23

Do you see evidence of God's fruit in your life? For the rest of this week, pick one aspect of the fruit of God's Spirit per day and ask Him to show you how He wants to develop it more.

TUESDAY (Day 2) John 15:1-2

It's easy to think that it's our responsibility to bear fruit, but it's not. Today, remind yourself that the fruit of the Spirit is just that—the fruit of God's Holy Spirit. And He is responsible to grow it in you. Your job is just to follow Him.

WEDNESDAY (Day 3) Matthew 12:33

What fruit is your life producing? What fruit do people see when they look at your life? Ask God to help you be rooted more in Him to grow His fruit.

THURSDAY (Day 4) John 13:34-35

Do people in your life feel loved by you? Who in your life can you show more love to? Ask God to fill you with His love, so that others may experience His love through you.

FRIDAY (Day 5) John 15:8

Look back at the list of the fruit of the Spirit from Galatians 5:22-23. Does your life show more of this fruit than it did at the beginning of the week? What can you do to continually be mindful of the fruit you're producing?

SUMMARY

We all love the idea of having an indicator or a measurement of how we're doing. We track how many steps we take each day. We count calories. We monitor our spending habits. Do you ever wish you had a way to know whether you're doing well or poorly in what really matters in life? Like in your faith and in your relationship with God? Fortunately for us, God gave us an indicator. He told us that one of the best ways to know whether we're experiencing the better life He promised is to look at the fruit we're producing. He taught that those who follow His Spirit and His ways will produce the fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, and self-control. He also shared that those who are living on their own will produce something different—hatred, discord, and anger. This week we'll learn how to tell what our lives are producing and what we can do to produce more good fruit—more love and less hate. Ultimately, our stories are either moving toward love, toward joy, toward peace, or away from it. And it's up to us to discern the direction we're going.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are a guide to get the conversation started in your group—don't feel like you need to ask everything you see here! As long as you're having a conversation, you're on the right track. Also, feel free to adjust the questions for the needs of your specific group.

- WHAT'S SOMETHING IN YOUR LIFE THAT YOU'RE CONSTANTLY MEASURING OR CHECKING UP ON?
- HOW WOULD MOST PEOPLE MEASURE OR DEFINE SPIRITUAL GROWTH?
- GIVE AN EXAMPLE IN THE PAST WEEK WHERE YOU HAVE DISPLAYED THE FRUIT OF GOD'S SPIRIT IN SOME WAY.
- ULTIMATELY, WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY IS IT TO PRODUCE THE KIND OF FRUIT PAUL TALKS ABOUT IN GALATIANS? READ JOHN 15:4 AS A GROUP. WHAT DOES THIS VERSE SAY ABOUT OUR RESPONSIBILITY WHEN IT COMES TO PRODUCING FRUIT?
- PRACTICALLY SPEAKING, WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE FOR SOMEONE'S LIFE TO MOVE TOWARD LOVE? WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE FOR A LIFE TO MOVE AWAY FROM LOVE?
- WHAT ABOUT THE OTHER ATTRIBUTES OF GOD'S FRUIT THAT PAUL MENTIONED IN GALATIANS? WALK THROUGH EACH ATTRIBUTE AND TALK ABOUT WHAT IT MIGHT LOOK LIKE TO MOVE TOWARD KINDNESS, PEACE, SELF-CONTROL, ETC. THEN TALK ABOUT WHAT IT MIGHT LOOK LIKE TO MOVE AWAY FROM THE ATTRIBUTES THAT COME AS A RESULT OF NOT FOLLOWING GOD.
- HOW COULD YOUR LIFE STORY BE BETTER IF YOU MOVE TOWARD LOVE (AND PEACE AND PATIENCE, ETC.) IN YOUR RELATIONSHIPS?

CONSIDER THIS - LIFEGROUP APPLICATION

Read this before you meet. Then, take a moment after your discussion to go over this application with your Life Group. How does this relate to your Life Group? Is it something you are already doing? If so, how can you do it better? If not, what steps can your group take to make this application happen?

It's easy for life groups to turn into a place where people feel like they need to have it all together in order to attend every week. Remind your group this week—and maybe every week—that they're free to come as they are. It's your responsibility as a group to set the expectation for what people's lives should look like when they arrive at life group every week. If each of you try to make it look like you have no doubts, no questions, no struggles, no sticky situations, others in the group will feel the need to do the same. Since no one has it all together, drop the façade and encourage others to do the same. Make sure everyone is aware that you're all in the midst of a journey together and no one has "arrived" at any sort of spiritual destination. We're all in the process of living our life stories. No one has it figured out, but guess what? That's okay! Remind each other that we're all works in progress and they should simply come to group ready to share honestly what's going with them in life and in their faith journey. When we maintain our own humble spirituality, we enable others to do the same.

WRAPPING UP

PRAY

Praying for one another is an essential part in growing in community and in our faith. Take some time at the end of each session to allow your group to offer any prayer requests they may have. Then, allow someone to lead the group in prayer. One person may do the entire prayer or you may have someone open the prayer, allow for others to pray and then someone to close.

MAKE PLANS TO MEET AGAIN

Remind everyone that you will be meeting again next week. If you need to make plans regarding location or meals, now is a great time to do that. This way, you can include the info in your reminder email.

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LEADER NOTES