

I. Introduction

- A. This breakout is regarding thinking Biblically in leading your life group discussion
- B. Why is this a big deal?

1. Hebrews 4:12 - For the Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.
2. 2 Timothy 3:16 - All Scripture is breathed out by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

- C. My hope for this session is that you are able to be encouraged by what the Bible is and equipped to effectively lead LG discussion through Scriptures

II. Explanation

- A. Two sides of the LG conversation spectrum

1. One side - All Bible, no relationships/life
 - a) If this happens, you grow in your understanding of the word, but not in your relationships with one another and the ability to apply Scripture to your real life situations or those in your life group
2. Other side - No Bible, all relationships/life....we just hang out
 - a) If this happens, you grow in your interpersonal relationships and understanding of culture, but not in your ability to know what the Word says
3. We need to be somewhere in the middle of this spectrum
 - a) We need to lead our groups in understanding the value and treasure we have in God's word, and that it is necessary to read and apply in our every day lives

- B. So how do we do that in the context of our LG discussion?

- C. I am a list person, so I came up with a list of things we should strive for in our LG discussion

- D. Regarding the Bible, people in your LG should have a correct understanding of.....

1. What the Bible is
2. The authority of the Bible
3. How to read the Bible well

E. What the Bible is

1. In your LG, it would be really helpful to discuss what everyone believes the Bible to be
 - a) Some may say that it is the inerrant word of God
 - b) Some may say it is a mixture of old sayings, proverbs, and helpful tips about life
 - c) Some may say it is an outdated book filled with contradictions
2. How do you ask this question?
 - a) Depends on your group
 - (1) Some groups would just throw the question out there and people would talk about it
 - (a) How you do this is you just ask the open-ended question....if someone were to ask you what the Bible is, how would you answer? What would you say?
 - (2) Some may write answers down anonymously then all read them
3. You must start with this because if people view the Bible differently on a foundational level, that will change how people read it and apply it in their lives
4. Answering the “what the Bible is” question will lead well into the next important point.

F. The Authority of the Bible...

- G. Where does the Bible rank in your life as to how you live? How much weight does it have?
 1. A good answer to this question is when do you go to the Bible when issues come up in your life?
 - a) Have people list out where they go
 - (1) Family members
 - (2) Their own common sense, wisdom
 - (3) Close friends
 - (4) Counselors
 2. You can clearly see how the how much authority the scriptures have in your own life by how it changes your lifestyle
 - a) Selfishness vs generosity
 - b) Pride vs humility
 - c) Anger vs patience
 - (1) It is the Holy Spirit sanctifying us through trusting in the Word of God
 3. Again, this is closely tied to how one views the Bible
 - a) If your view is that it is a collection of archaic sayings that don't apply to today, it will have no authority in how you live

- b) But if you really believe it is God's words, that is profitable, that it is living and active, that it equips us for every good work, it will have authority or "weight" in your life
 - (1) And this comes out in your LG conversation
 - (a) Because we share how the Bible is intersecting with real life
 - i) How it changes how we view our money, our neighbors, our time
 - (b) When the Bible provides the reasoning for our decisions, that proves to bring forth meaningful LG discussion

H. How to read the Bible well

1. Understanding how to read, study, understand and apply God's word is imperative to having Biblical LG discussion
2. The Resurgence...various wrong methods of Bible reading
 - a) Gold Mine Approach
 1. The Bible is a vast, cavernous, dark mine in which one may stumble upon a nugget of inspiration
 1. Result? Confused reading
 2. Hero Approach
 1. The Bible is a moral hall of fame that gives us examples of spiritual giants to emulate
 1. Result? Depressing reading
 3. Rules Approach
 1. The Bible is a bunch of commands to obey which reinforce personal superiority
 1. Result? Legalistic reading
 4. Artifact Approach
 1. Bible is an ancient document about events that happened in the Middle East thousands of years ago and is irrelevant to my life today
 1. Result? Bored reading
 5. Guidebook Approach
 1. Bible is a road map to tell me where to work, who to marry, and what deodorant to use
 1. Result? Anxious reading
 6. Doctrine Approach
 1. Bible is theological ammunition for my next theology debate at Biggby
 1. Result? Cold reading
 7. Best approach: Biblical Theology Approach
 1. The bible is one book composed of many genres of text
 1. Narrative, poetry, prophecy, and letters

2. The Bible is not uniform, but it is unified
3. The Bible is an autobiographical account of his personal rescue mission to restore a lost world through his Son.

III. Application

A. Some practical things you can do to foster an environment of Biblical life group discussion

1. Encourage everyone to actually bring their Bibles to life group

- a) Have everyone use them in the discussion

2. Start with Scripture, end with application and life

- a) How we do our life group is as follows:
 - (1) Updates, life, prayer reports
 - (2) Content and Scripture
 - (3) Application
 - (4) Prayer requests

3. Actually open it up and read the Scripture together

- (1) Ask open-ended questions out loud
 - (a) What stuck out from the passage?
 - (b) What was repeated?
 - (c) What does the text say? What does it mean?
 - (d) Why is this important to the original audience?

4. Make it a point to encourage one another with Scripture in and out of LG

- a) Challenge people to memorize verses together
- b) Use a Facebook group to share encouraging Scriptures
- c) Ask direct questions about how people grow, study and read

B. How to lead good discussion (general thoughts)

1. Be selective in when you speak...pause before answering

- a) Great LG leaders are ones who facilitate good discussion, not preach another sermon
 - (1) Let questions sit for a bit.....people are thinking!
 - (2) Certain times it is wise to step in and get the ship back on course
 - (3) But most of the time, it is best to have various people interjecting with questions, thoughts, insights

2. Be an encourager

- a) When people speak up, encourage them for doing so
 - (1) Examples: That was a great insight....thanks for sharing that.....I have never thought about that verse in that way before....great question.

3. Connect on the level of the group

- a) Be wise in what you share and how you share it regarding theological and life issues
 - (1) Find the medium that can challenge people in their understanding and transparency, but don't leave them behind with your understanding

C. What if _____ comes up?

- 1. Conversation moves to a Bible topic that I am untrained or not qualified to answer?
 - a) Go to your Team Lead
 - (1) This is why they do what they do....they love helping life group leaders
 - b) Be honest and transparent with the group
 - (1) "I am not sure where that is in the Bible.....lets look it up."
 - (2) "Lets come back next week after we have thought about this some more."
 - (3) Use good resources
 - (a) Pastors at Riv
 - (b) Study Bibles
 - (c) gotquestions.org
- 2. Disagreement on big issues?
 - a) Create an environment where people can disagree and share their thoughts
 - (1) Lovingly and respectfully call out untruth based on the truths of Scripture, not your opinion

IV. Questions/Answers