

Life Group Leader Handout

May 8, 2016

“Putting on Love”

Pastor Joe Garofalo

Scripture— Col 3:12-17

“Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, 13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. 14 And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. 15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. 17 And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”

Main Idea— “Putting on love” is a response to what God has done for us in Christ— and the expected characteristic of a Christ follower.

Paul reminds believers, that because we are **chosen, holy and beloved**, we need to act in a way representative of those things, by **putting on: Compassionate hearts, Kindness, Humility, Meekness, Patience, Forgiving, Forbearing.**

And what binds those things together, is **putting on love**— which bridges the shift from individual attributes to how the church should operate: in the **Peace** of Christ, the **Word** of Christ and in the **Name** of Christ. Giving thanks in everything!

Application-

- How can you see, as we keep endeavoring to “put on love,” that we will come to love?
- Did the visual of putting on the coat help you to see that as a daily activity in your life?
- Is there someone in your life with whom you need to put on love? If so, what might be a next step in demonstrating love to that to the person?

3 THINGS MOMS WANT SMALL GROUP LEADERS TO KNOW

By Scarlet Hiltbidal

I've been both a small group leader and a small group goer. I've been a non-mom grouper and now I'm a mom grouper. So if you're a small group leader who is not a mom, or if kids are creatures that make you uncomfortable, I get it.

But here's the thing. If you hold the title of small group leader, unless you are leading a student group or a men's group, chances are your group will contain moms. Moms have a unique set of needs. They function not just as small group members but as small group members with entourages that are very much part of every part of their lives.

So here are a few things to keep in mind when leading and interacting with the moms in your group:

Loving My Kids=Loving Me. Before I had kids, I avoided kids. They made me nervous. I didn't know what to say to them, and I'd always guess that they were five to ten years older or younger than they actually were. That was me. But now I'm a mom, so I can tell you, whether or not you are a kid person, how you interact (or don't interact with) my kids is of extreme importance to me. I, a former non-kid person, have an extra measure of grace when non-kid people ignore my children, but I'd be lying if I said that how someone treats my kid doesn't directly affect how I feel about that person. As a small group leader, try to give some attention to the kids in your group: Learn their names and ages, and ask them what they're into. Moms in your group will be more likely to follow you as a leader (and stay in your group) if you love their kids well.

Wait Until I Ask Before Offering Parenting Advice. Apply this to your small group, and also maybe to all of life. Parenting is an extremely important thing, so understandably, most moms are extremely serious about the way they do it. If you ever want to see an actual mommy melee, just casually ask how everyone feels about co-sleeping, toddler sugar quotas, or nursing in public. Your job isn't to convince Mommy Smith that it's time her toddler kicks his pacifier habit. Your job is to pray that the gospel will grow and shape each mom, dad and non-parent in your group into the likeness of Jesus more each day. Don't dole out advice unless you're asked.

Think Kid-Friendly. Moms are in small groups for the same reason everyone else in your group is there. They want to live in obedience by doing life with other believers. They want to grow in their knowledge of Scripture and be part of a Christ-centered community. But there's another reason moms are in small groups. Moms want their kids to see the gospel lived out and advanced too. As a mom, I'm always requesting/looking for/hoping my group will be involved in kid-friendly service projects. As a leader, factor the moms into your service plans. If your group wants to minister in an environment where a mom doesn't want to bring her kids, be proactive in thinking of ways she can be involved even if she's not there. Maybe she and her kids could prepare food or write letters. Moms will appreciate options like this. Be mindful of a mom's unique perspective and she will love you forever.

Happy Mother's Day to all of you who are both Moms and Small Group Leaders! You balance your commitment to family and group so well, and I am honored and blessed to serve with you! --Cindy

