

## **LIFE Group Leader Handout**

January 10, 2016

### **My God—He's Alive!**

Pastor Michael O'Connor

### **Scripture—I Timothy 3:15**

*...you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth. (I Timothy 3:15)*

### **Main Idea—The Living God Holds the Keys**

#### **Is the God I serve the "Living God"?**

- 30 times in Scripture our God is called the living God.
- The names of God make no sense if our God is not a living God.  
He is "Jehovah Shammah" the God who is there.
- He holds the keys—"Don't be afraid! I am the First and the Last, and the Living One. I was dead, but look—I am alive forever and ever, and I hold the keys of death and Hades. (Revelation 1:17b-18)

#### **He holds the keys, therefore I am an overcomer--**

When life is confusing (Psalm 73:21-28)  
When I am tempted (I Corinthians 10:13)  
When life is tough (Job 19:25-26)

#### **Three Powerful witnesses--**

- God revealing Himself in nature and providence
- The word of God which abides forever
- His people, and we build our testimony through: answered prayer

#### **Ten Indicators that We Are No Longer Serving the Living God**

- #1 Our faith has become about learning more rather than being changed. Academic pursuit rather than a passionate quest.
- #2 We pray little to God and think little of the answers that we receive from God.
- #3 We don't think often about God or speak often of God in our ordinary course of life.
- #4 Our future plans and priorities differ little from the secular world around us.
- #5 Worship is dutiful not delightful
- #6 God is someone we will give an account to one day (and we will!) not someone we walk through life with each day.
- #7 We do not persevere in any spiritual endeavor that is difficult.
- #8 We are seeking the blessing of the Almighty on our plans more than seeking the plans of the Almighty that are blessed.
- #9 Our view of God is less shepherd and more like an accountant or auditor whose function is to keep track of things (i.e., how often we get to church, etc.).
- #10 When we are empty we seek a book or a seminar rather than seeking the living God.

## **Application—**

- Has God convicted me that I am living as if He is not living?
- What area am I thanking God for holding the keys to?
- What God-sized, God-glorifying prayers am I praying?

## **PRESCRIPTIONS FOR A HEALTHY GROUP**

By Michael C. Mack

When it comes to good health, small groups are a lot like people. We have to take care of the body or something can go wrong. Here are seven tips to keep your group in great shape.

**Eat balanced meals.** Your group needs a good balance of proteins (Bible study), starches (fellowship and support), vegetables (training and equipping), fruit (of the Spirit, that is--ministry to others and outreach). Too much of one category while neglecting the others can eventually cause sickness. You can't live on fast food or junk food. A fast food diet consists of five minutes of prayer and ten minutes of Bible study.

Fellowship is necessary in a group, but it should not crowd out the essentials. Junk food consists of "careless words" (Matthew 12:36), "meaningless words" (1 Timothy 1:6), "Godless chatter" (2 Timothy 2:16), and all kinds of foolish talk (Proverbs 10:14, 19-21; Ecclesiastes 10:12-14); Ephesians 5:4). Those contain too much fat and not enough nutrients for a healthy body.

**Get your RDA of vitamins and minerals.** A healthy group gets its recommended daily allowance of Bible study and prayer. That means that for a group to continue to grow, the individual group members must practice these disciplines daily. As each person grows stronger in his or her relationship with God, the whole body is strengthened.

**Get plenty of exercise.** If all you do is eat, you'll eventually get so fat you can't get out of your chairs. A group that consistently eats is an inward-focused group. That focus feels good for a while, but it's an unhealthy habit in the long run. You've got to put the food you eat--especially those proteins--into action. There are several types of exercises that will give your group a healthy outward focus. One type is isometric. This includes worship and prayer. The other type of exercise--serving others--is horizontal in nature. One warning: do not try to exercise without eating a good, balanced meal first. In other words, you need to have the meat of the Word and prayer, the nutrients that come from training and equipping, plus the support you get from fellowship before you can effectively minister to others.

**Get plenty of rest.** Even a healthy group needs to take a break once in a while to rest, rejuvenate, and refresh. A group that does not get enough rest will burn out. Rest is an essential function in a healthy body.

**Practice good hygiene.** A group that doesn't take care of itself begins to stink. Group hygiene--planning for the future, talking about problems, working on schedules, determining what the "rules" are--may seem like little things, but if things aren't taken care of on a regular basis, the group is susceptible to all kinds of diseases.

**Get regular checkups.** That is, group evaluation. It can help a group avoid problems later. When you conduct a group checkup, you examine all the parts of the body to be sure everything is in good health. You ask questions and allow group members to talk about how they feel the group is progressing and what it is lacking.