

LIFE Group Leader Handout

June 11, 2017 Baccalaureate Sunday

Title: Salt & Light to the Generation to Come

John Cragg, Executive Director of Long Island Youth Mentoring

Scripture—Matthew 5:13-16

13 “You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet.

14 “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

Main Idea—God Uses His People to Stop Spoilage and Bring Light

42% of children born today go home to a home without a father present. This figure was 3% in the early 1950's.

This epidemic of fatherlessness is strongly impacting our nation and our community. God uses mentors to bring His light and salt to these situations.

The key is not our gifting, but God's enablement. If He is calling you to respond, He will give what is needed.

Applications—

- Think about someone who has been instrumental in your growth in life and as a Christian—maybe they were called a mentor, maybe they never took a role like that yet God used them in your life. What was it about them that enabled God to use them in your life?
- What was God leading you to do as a result of the message this morning?

CELEBRATING WHAT GOD HAS DONE

By Sara Keiper (InterVarsity)

Whether you've been together for ten weeks, or an entire year or somewhere in between, your small group will eventually have to face its final meeting. Most of us don't know how to say good-bye well or easily. Here are some ways to plan a good wrap up to your time together. It's a time to step back, evaluate, appreciate and celebrate what God has been doing. Whether your group will meet again next week, or won't be together again until heaven, you'll want to make the most of this phase of small-group life.

The ending of a group will mean something different to each person and to each group. It can be a painful and sad experience, as well as a celebration, all at the same time. For some it will bring a sigh of relief. For others, endings may be more matter of fact. But no matter how people feel, there are some universal questions that should be asked in this phase: "Was it worth it? How have I changed? What did God teach me through these relationships about Himself and others? About myself? Is there any unfinished business or the need for reconciliation?"

The aspects of wrap-up:

Evaluation. Evaluation looks at what worked and what didn't. How well did our meeting time work out for most people? What about the place we chose to meet? How about the topic? What was most appreciated? What could have been done differently? The leader must be prepared to invite and welcome honest, helpful comments, even those that may be critical. Thank people for their honesty.

Appreciation. This involves telling one another what you've valued most about becoming friends and being in community together. This could be a time for individual affirmation for the members of your group, with each sharing about ways they've seen each other grow or how they've helped or encouraged them.

Celebration. Celebration is remembering what God has done within the group and among the members. Plan time for group members to tell of God's faithfulness and work--even work that is still very much in progress. Send each other out in joy if your group will not be together again.

Remember that it is God who began a good work in the lives of each person in your small group, and it is He who will be faithful to complete it. Be sure to value what people say and to affirm where each is in his or her journey with the Lord and with the group members. Remember, too, that God knows where each one is in the process of knowing and following Him. You will always live in the tension between planning to help your group move along and waiting on the Holy Spirit to initiate personal growth and spiritual friendships. Pray for and love your group! Delight in God's love for you and your friends. It will be worth it!