

# **LIFE Group Leader Handout**

October 28, 2018

## ***Pray with a Global Focus***

Rev. John Whitemore

### ***Scripture--Ephesians 6:18-20***

*...praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.*

### ***Main Idea--God's Direction for Local and Global Prayer***

**The local part**--our prayer should be:

- Urgent
- Continuing
- Spirit filled

**The global part**--pray that God's servants in other lands and other cultures:

- Would speak with clarity--especially with language and cultural barriers
- Would minister in boldness
- Would live as Ambassadors--not their own message but the Message of the Sovereign whom they represent and serve

### ***Application--***

Let our application be in prayer:

- Praying for those who are serving (and don't forget Anna Hamblen and Bryanna Geisen) for learning language and overcoming cultural barriers
- For ourselves and those ministering as global partners in other lands that we would be bold in our witness
- That we would serve as Ambassadors--not our values and message but that of Jesus Christ (see 2 Corinthians 5)

# **Permission to Be Real**

By Seth Widner

Helping people open up is a valuable skill for small-group leaders. Our small groups must be safe places for people to remove their masks. They must have the permission to be authentic, to be real. A healthy small group contains people who live transparent lives before Christ and one another. 1 John 1:7 says, "If we walk in the light, as he (Jesus) is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin."

Here are some practical tips to help your group to be real:

1. *Be the example.* If you want your group to live transparent lives with one another, you must pave the way first. No matter what type of day you are having, tell your group about it, whether it is good or bad. If you never pick up a mask to cover your sins or struggles, you will be giving them permission to be real.
2. *Let them see your weaknesses.* Never allow your group to think you are perfect.
3. *Allow you group to see you being real with God through prayer.* For a greater understanding of our freedom to express our emotions to God, read through the Psalms.
4. *When you sense someone being real with your group, thank them for it.* It takes courage to be real!
5. *Ask great follow-up questions.* If someone requests prayer, ask them how they want you to pray. If someone states their perspective on a topic of question, ask them to explain their point of view more.

## **Following Up**

Let's follow up on that last point: follow-up questions. They are a great way to help your group members open up and apply what they are learning through your group. In small groups, it is crucial to ask the right questions. This begins with the discussion questions from whatever material we are studying, but we shouldn't stop there. Those questions are designed to stimulate conversation. But once the conversation begins, we must keep things flowing.

We can do this by asking great follow-up questions. A great follow-up question places people in a position to conform their lives more to Christ, and prevents a group from staying on the surface level in their walks with God. Follow-up questions give the needed details that offer explanations for our answers. These can come during our group discussions, casual conversations, or while sharing prayer requests together.

Here are some tips to help you begin asking great follow-up questions:

1. *Request an explanation for an answer.* This will help provide more details and background for a given answer.
2. *Ask open questions and avoid closed questions.* An open question requires more details, while a closed question simply requires a "yes or no" answer.
3. *Create the expectation for your group's discussion.* Once you use follow-up questions with your group, they will catch on quickly. Soon they will learn that it is important to provide details to their answers and prayer requests. Eventually, you will ask fewer follow-up questions because your group will begin giving more details beforehand!