

# LIFE Group Leader Handout

June 28, 2020

## ***True Normal--Keepin' It Real--Against the Current***

Pastor Michael O'Connor

### ***Scripture--Romans 12:14-16***

*Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. 16 Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight.*

### ***Main Idea--Jesus Gives A Radical Approach for Influencing the World--Bless Your Persecutors***

Jesus sets expectations for his followers then and now: *"If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you.* (John 15:18)

### ***Against the Current--***

*Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.* (v. 14)

- Jesus--Matthew 5:43-48
- Paul--I Corinthians 4:12-13
- Stephen--Acts 7:58-8:1

### ***Against the Current--***

- Empathy--*Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.*
- Engagement--*Live in harmony with one another.*
- Esteem--*Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight.*

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

What persons or kinds of persons have you added to your "bless' list?

God instructs us here to treat others with empathy, to engage with them and to esteem them. Which of these three is stretching you right now?

# What Should Small Groups Do Over the Summer?

3 things all groups should consider

*By Amy Jackson*

For many, summer is all about taking a break. But summer can be a unique time of growth for small groups, so don't be too quick to call it quits for three months. Take some time to consider the options and what's best for your group. You might also consider a different schedule for the summer. You could meet every other week, or you could meet once a month for a social activity. Some groups meet once a month for a study and sharing and meet another time each month for an outreach activity. It doesn't have to be all or nothing. Whatever you decide, consider these three things for summer:

## **1. Stay Connected—Even If You Take a Break**

You've spent months building up your relationships. Don't let all that work go to waste! The good news is that even if you do take a break, or if your schedule changes somewhat, you can still stay connected. In fact, a smooth transition into fall requires that you stay connected at some level.

## **2. Try Something Different**

Summer is a natural time to try something new with your group. Whether you try out a new, less frequent schedule, drop your study during the summer, or take time to tell your stories, you can introduce your group members to new experiences that can help them grow as individuals and as a group.

Now's the time to spend time telling your personal stories, trying out spiritual disciplines, or planning a fun retreat for your group. You can also plan fun barbeques, sporting events, and more outside. It's also a great time to involve the kids in your meetings or activities. Plus, the warmer weather opens up lots of opportunities to engage your community. See what service projects you might be able to participate in, or walk around and get to know your neighbors.

## **3. Assess Your Group**

Summer provides the perfect time to take a hard look at your group and assess. Where are you at? Where do you want to be? What changes can you make for the fall?

Consider what God has done in and through your group this year and celebrate! But also take a look at what might be holding you back from experiencing more growth. Assess your leadership and have group members assess their group experience. Is your group accomplishing its mission, or have you strayed from it?

If you find any areas that need improvement, spend time brushing up on training. As you head into fall, you'll be situated for success.

Enjoy these warmer months as a group, and think outside the box to connect in unique and meaningful ways.