

# LEADER GUIDE



March  
2016





My fellow disciples:

I play squash. For the uninitiated among you, squash is like racquetball with a badminton racquet and a dead ball...in a smaller court. Squash is both a “marker” and a “shaper” of my fitness. After one game, I can tell what kind of shape I am in by how much I bend over and wheeze between each point. Squash is a “marker”...an indicator... of my fitness.

But after a couple weeks of regular play, when I am wheezing less and enjoying it more, I realize that my squash regimen is also a “shaper” of my fitness; by playing it faithfully, it makes me a healthier person.

You would not be reading this LifeGroup guide if you weren’t interested in being a better disciple of Jesus. What if there was something in your spiritual life that could serve as both a “marker” and a “shaper” of your discipleship?

Good news! There is such a thing. Generosity. Jesus, who taught a great deal about money, told his disciples, “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” No less than Billy Graham once said, “Give me five minutes with a person’s checkbook, and I’ll tell you where their heart is.”

For part of the season of Lent, we are going to ask a simple question of ourselves: **Am I a generous disciple of Jesus?** If you are, praise the Lord for his work in your heart. If the question makes you feel squirmy, ask the Holy Spirit to make you more like Jesus in this area of your life.

I know we’re not accustomed to talking about money in community. But let me encourage you— while you will likely steer clear of talking about actual numbers, don’t miss the opportunity to talk about the state of your hearts as it regards money. Generosity is a discipleship issue, and we hope your LifeGroup is a place where you are growing as a disciple of Jesus.

The process might make you wheeze a little bit...but in the end, you’ll be in better shape! See you on the other side.

Pastor Mark

# Generous Disciples Schedule

[FEB. 26-27]

## ○ **GENEROUS DISCIPLES**

*Bible Passages covered: Nehemiah 2*

[MAR. 5-6]

## ○ **GENEROUS DISCIPLES: INTENTIONAL**

*Bible Passages Covered: Deuteronomy 26: 1-11*

[MAR. 12-13]

## ○ **GENEROUS DISCIPLES: GRATEFUL**

*Bible Passages Covered: Joshua 24:11-15*

[MAR. 26-27]

## ○ **GENEROUS DISCIPLES: SACRIFICIAL**

*Bible Passages Covered: Matthew 21*

# The Purpose of LifeGroups

## Our Mission

Working together to present everyone mature in Christ.

At Chapel Hill we believe in striving together as a community towards growth in Christ. As we have explored how to pursue our mission, we've learned that maturity means disciple-making. As we grow more and more like Jesus, we do as he did: make disciples. That was his mission. We want to join in it.

What does disciple-making look like? We believe it needs three important pieces:

- First, disciple-making doesn't happen without an intentional leader. An intentional leader is someone who is strategic and intentional about walking with others in their journey with Christ.
- Secondly, disciple-making happens in relational environments. A relational environment is a place where people feel safe to be themselves, and also accountable to be like Jesus. This most often is a small group.
- Third, disciple-makers need to be equipped with a reproducible process. In other words, they must recognize that people can be in different stages of their spiritual journey, and then be able to point them towards the steps they can take to grow in their journey.

An intentional leader, relational environment, and reproducible process all comes together best in a LifeGroup. Thus, disciple-making happens best in LifeGroups. And ultimately, our mission as a church is fulfilled best in LifeGroups.

So what is the purpose of a LifeGroup? Disciple-making. A LifeGroup that is committed to this purpose is very different from a LifeGroup whose purpose is, for example, studying Scripture or fellowship. Those may be a part of a LifeGroup that is about disciple-making as well, however, the end result of a LifeGroup whose purpose is *not* disciple-making may not necessarily be disciples. So we invite you to consider, what is the purpose of *your* LifeGroup?

If you want to grow as an intentional leader, or learn more about what a disciple-making LifeGroup can look like, consider taking a Multiply seminar. Much of the principles and structure in this guide are expanded on in the seminar. These one day learning experiences could revolutionize your LifeGroup.<sup>1</sup>

Contact Carole Hughes at [chughes@chapelhillpc.org](mailto:chughes@chapelhillpc.org) or, call the church office at 253.851.7779 to sign up for the next seminar.

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<sup>1</sup> Chapel Hill is grateful to Real Life Ministries in Post Falls, Idaho, for sharing the principles and materials that are used in this guide.

## Intentional Leader: Your Role

<b>The Roles of the LifeGroup Leader: INSIDE THE GROUP</b>	<b>The Roles of the LifeGroup Leader: OUTSIDE THE GROUP</b>
<b>Abide</b>	<b>Abide</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spend time in God’s Word, prayer and fellowship during your LifeGroup meeting.</li> <li>• Encourage others to spend time in God’s word, prayer and fellowship.</li> <li>• Be aware of where the group members are in their daily walk.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pursue your relationship with God throughout the week.</li> <li>• Encourage others to spend time in God’s word, prayer and fellowship.</li> </ul>
<b>Reach the Lost</b>	<b>Reach the Lost</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite the lost to your LifeGroup.</li> <li>• Encourage the group to invite their seeking family, friends, coworkers etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look for opportunities to invite the lost to group.</li> <li>• Encourage the group throughout the week to be aware of people they could invite.</li> </ul>
<b>Connect the Unconnected</b>	<b>Connect the Unconnected</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connect new people to your group through personal invitation and phone calls.</li> <li>• Encourage others to spend time in God’s word, prayer and fellowship.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call new people throughout the week to connect to group.</li> <li>• Encourage the group to connect people throughout the week to group and church.</li> </ul>
<b>Chase the Strays</b>	<b>Chase the Strays</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize who is missing from group.</li> <li>• Encourage others in group to recognize who is missing from group.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call the missing from group each week to check on them.</li> <li>• Look for opportunities to connect with those missing throughout the week.</li> <li>• Encourage group members to connect with those missing throughout the week.</li> </ul>
<b>Intentionally Shepherd to Spiritual Maturity</b>	<b>Intentionally Shepherd to Spiritual Maturity</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a safe environment for the group to thrive.</li> <li>• Ask good questions for the purpose of understanding where each group member is.</li> <li>• Be transparent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intentionally create opportunities to spend time with group members outside group time at coffee, home etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Identify, Equip, Release Disciple-Making Leaders</b>	<b>Identify, Equip, Release Disciple-Making Leaders</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify where each group member is at in their spiritual maturity. (Spiritually Dead, Infant, Child, Young Adult, Parent.)</li> <li>• Identify an apprentice.</li> <li>• Equip your apprentice by sharing different components of group.</li> <li>• Release your apprentice when the group is ready to branch.</li> <li>• Equip additional group members with leading different components of group.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with Coach to discuss group and training.</li> <li>• Meet with Apprentice regularly to raise up and release.</li> <li>• Create or Equip someone in group to create service opportunities.</li> </ul>
<b>Function as a Team</b>	<b>Function as a Team</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk with your coach weekly.</li> <li>• Talk with your apprentice weekly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create opportunities to serve outside the group to grow as a team/ family.</li> </ul>

## Relational Environment: Group Rules

Setting some basic group guidelines for how we will honor one another in our group discussions is important. We recommend reading these before your discussion begins each week.

- Ground rules give boundaries for people to operate within.
- They help with the flow and pace of the discussions.
- They help us value one another.
- They help people to be more comfortable sharing deep and meaningful things.

**SAFE GROUP:** We will strive to create an environment where everyone can be real, open, and honest with their struggles and victories.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** What is said in the group stays in the group.

**LISTEN:** Let's value one another during the discussions by really listening to what is being shared. Try to avoid thinking about how you are going to respond, or what you are going to say next.

**PAUSE:** Allow a pause in conversation after someone shares. Give the person sharing the chance to finish and the group the opportunity to consider what was just shared before responding.

**SILENCE:** It is important to allow silence in the group as it provides an opportunity for someone to share and for members in the group to process the topic or question being considered.

**NO "CROSS TALK":** Be considerate of others as they are sharing. No side conversations.

**SHARING:** Be sensitive about the amount of time you share.

**NO FIXING:** We are not here to fix each other. Jesus does that part.

**NO RESCUING:** When people are sharing something deeply personal, there can be a tendency to try to make them feel better about themselves or the situation by providing immediate condolences. This will often cause them to stop sharing. Resist the temptation to rescue people.

**CONFLICT:** We will commit to resolve conflict Biblically. When conflict or sin issues between group members arise, we want to make sure that we are honoring God and each other in the way we deal with these issues. The following are a few key Scriptures in this regard (there are many others).

- If someone sins against you  
(*Matthew 18:15-20*)
- Restoring someone in sin  
(*Galatians 6:1-5*)
- Forgive a sinner  
(*Colossians 3:12-13*)
- Reconciling differences  
(*Matthew 5:23-24; Matthew 7:1-5*)

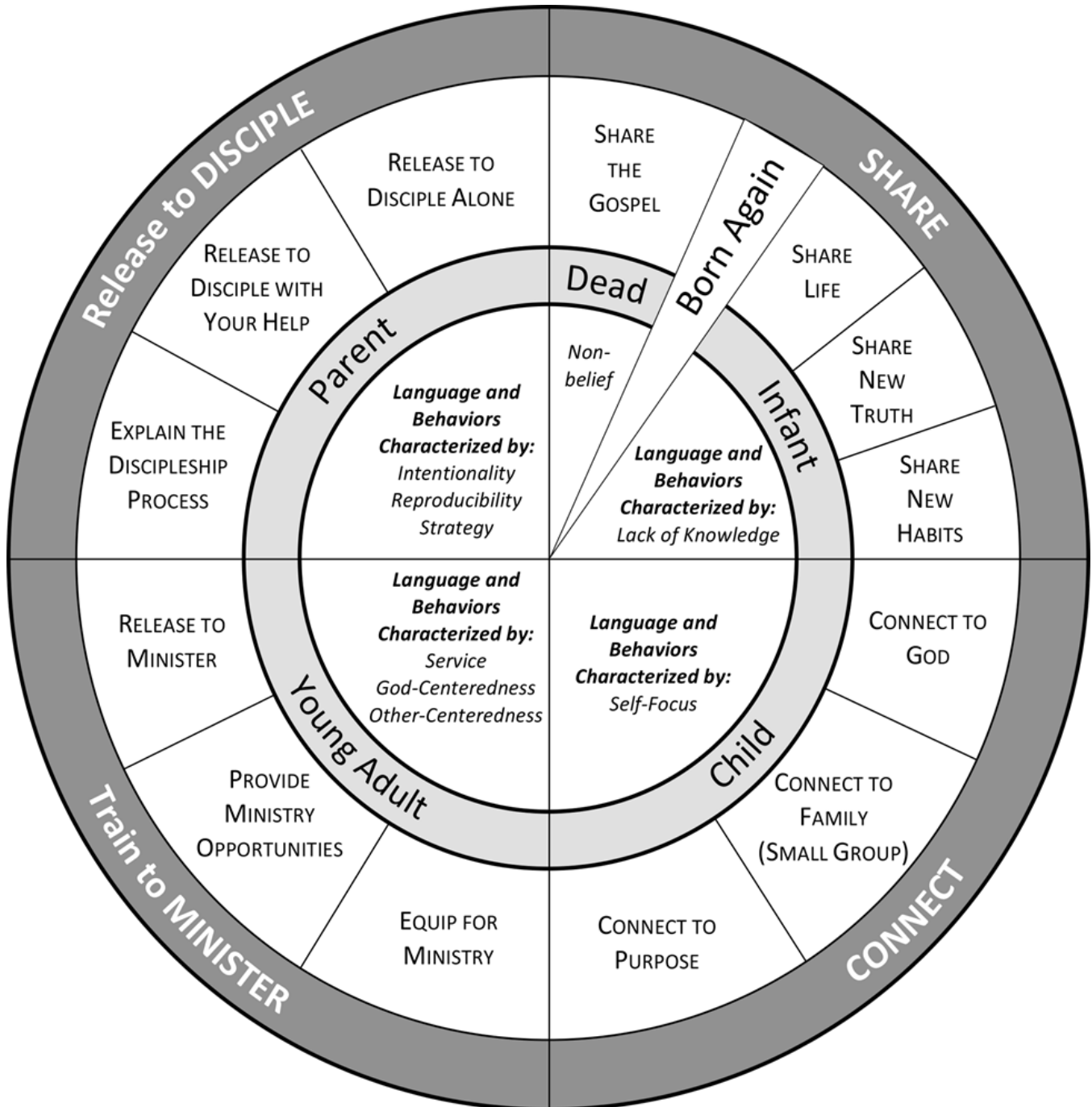
**BE SELF-AWARE:** Be self-aware of how you are personally effecting the environment through your words, actions and non-verbal communication.

**USE "I" STATEMENTS:** It's easy to talk about the issues of others, but for our purposes, we want you to put yourself on the table. Try to use "I" statements rather than "them", "the church", "us", "we", etc.



# The Reproducible Process

Everyone goes through a process of spiritual growth. As the leader of a LifeGroup, you are tasked with how to recognize where someone is in that process, and how to help them continue in the process. The wheel below gives some great guidelines in how to identify where someone is in that process (dead, infant, etc.), and what an intentional leader can do to help that person (share life, share new truth, etc.).





## Leader's Prep Guide

**BEFORE GROUP:** Your role as a leader before group starts

- Read through the curriculum: This will help if you need to re-word any questions to better suit your group. Choose the questions you want the group to discuss.
- Read the assigned passages each week. Prepare to story the passage assigned under “Tell the Story” or designate a story-teller in your group.
- Recognize what God is showing you. Think through how this impacts your own life.
- Do you know where each person in the group is spiritually? (Spiritually dead, infant, child, young adult, parent.)
- What is your part as you walk with them?

**MEN/WOMEN BREAKOUT:** If you meet with a co-ed group, have your LifeGroup breakout into men's and women's groups 1-2 times a month and answer the chapter questions together. If this is the first time doing a breakout in your group, try breaking out for about thirty minutes for prayer requests and prayer time together. Be sure to communicate with your men's and women's breakout leaders ahead of time when you are planning to do a breakout during home group time. This will give your breakout leaders time for prayer and preparation. This time in break out may allow for deeper, heart-level sharing.

**SERMON:** Awareness & Preparation

- What is God showing me in this week's sermon?
- How might this week's sermon impact each person in my group?

**AFTER GROUP:** Your role as a leader after group

- Who am I intentionally praying for this week? Who needs me to pray with them?
- Who has God put on my heart this week? What needs can I or others meet?
- Do I need to have a follow-up conversation with someone from group this week?
- Who was absent from group or from service? What might they need from me/our group?
- Is my group growing a heart for lost people?
- How are our relationships deepening?

## Suggested Group Format

### **DURING THE WEEK:**

We want to continue to encourage the individuals in your group to daily being with Jesus and studying his Word.

### **GROUP TIME**

This hasn't changed. For your review:

- Opening prayer
- Vision cast
- Review group guidelines.

### **REVIEW LAST WEEK'S STORY AND OPPORTUNITIES YOU HAD TO SHARE IT:**

What was the story from last week? What caused you to think about it this week? How did it help you abide in Christ, in your family, with fellow believers or in your world? When did you have the opportunity to share the story?

Also in your glance back to last week, ask members of your group when they had a chance to share last week's story as they went about their life. After all, learning God's story isn't just for our own head knowledge—it's to make God known to the whole world and in doing so, make disciples.

### **SUMMARIZE THIS WEEK'S CHAPTER:**

Use the provided summary to get the big idea of that chapter. Fill in with the context of the story – who the character will be, where they are, what they are doing, etc.

### **WHAT TO LISTEN FOR IN TODAY'S STORY:**

Before telling the story for the day, help engage the group in listening more deeply by letting them know what one of the "Heart questions" is before you start. For instance, if you were studying the parable of the prodigal son, you might say, "As you listen to the story today, consider which character you find yourself relating to the most."

### **TELL THE STORY:**

Instead of simply reading the passage for that week, re-tell the story in your own words. Do not memorize it word for word, but make sure to include important details and quotes. For more guidance, see "Becoming a Bible Story Teller" on the LifeGroup page of the Chapel Hill website.

### **REBUILD THE STORY THEN READ THE PASSAGE**

Engage your memories by rebuilding the story by walking through it slowly. This sounds like, "Where did we start? Who was there? What happened? And then...? What question was asked? How did he answer? How did it conclude?..."

Follow this memory jog with having everyone open their Bibles. Have someone read the passage out of the Bible.

**ASK:** Was anything added or left out of the story?

Self-explanatory. but important for several reasons. We want to stay true to God’s Word, firstly. But it’s also interesting what we are further able to draw out of the story by noticing anything that has been added or left out.

## QUESTIONS:

The intention with storying is that we would know, be transformed by, and share God’s Word. So the questions we ask should be challenging questions that help equip us through God’s Word as his disciples. The storying structure involves you, the leader, writing and asking questions of the head, the heart, and the hands. The basis for these 3 categories of questions comes from how we define a disciple. Look at Matthew 4:19. Jesus said, “Follow me, and I will make you, fishers of men.” Being a disciple of Jesus isn’t a formula or a program, it’s a relationship—a relationship of an individual with Jesus. Help your group encounter Jesus.

Following this verse, you could say that a disciple is someone who first, has made a decision to follow Jesus; this is a “head” decision, a belief. So the first questions we ask are head questions, questions of belief.

Jesus said “I will make you...” that is, we are transformed by Jesus to be people we otherwise would not be. So the second questions are directed at what only Jesus can transform—our heart. These are questions of our emotions, our will, our motives, and our character.

Finally, Jesus makes his followers into “fishers of men,” that is, people who are on mission with him to make disciples. So the third set of questions are directed at our hands, that is, what we are going to do and what action we take with this Word.

We want you to write these questions because you are privy to how the Holy Spirit is working in your specific group. Here are some generic examples that can help you get started. Please come and talk with a pastor or with your LifeGroup coach if more guidance would be helpful.

### Head questions:

- What do we learn about God?
- What do we learn about people or a particular character?
- How does this story point to Jesus?

### Heart questions:

- Who do you relate to?
- Where do you see yourself in this story?
- What do you find convicting?

### Hand questions:

- How will your life be different as a result of this story?
- What one thing will you change in your life?
- Who will you share this story with?

**NEXT WEEK'S READING:**

This is an opportunity to look ahead. Plan ahead with your group. Does someone else want to try storying? Will you meet in another members' home? Are you raising someone else to be a leader in your group? Do they want to take the lead next week?

**CLOSING PRAYER**

"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective." James 5:16

**LIFEGROUP LEADER DEBRIEF:**

Connect with your apprentice and discuss: How are the individuals in your group connecting with God? Are there any life circumstances either of you need to address? Who needs prayer? Do any need encouragement to take the next step on the wheel? Who is going to follow-up with people new to the group? Pray for your group together.

**TIPS FOR LEADING DISCUSSION:**

- Don't be afraid of silence
- Have something prepared to say but don't feel you always have to share it
- Don't worry if the discussion goes in a different direction
- Don't let it get off topic
- Don't be afraid to repeat the question, or ask follow up questions.

**DURING THE WEEK:** Make time daily with God to know Him and His heart through time in his Word, prayer and reflection. Read the chapter after the sermon and before LifeGroup.

**GROUP TIME**

- Opening prayer
- Vision cast
- Review group guidelines.

**REVIEW LAST WEEK’S STORY AND OPPORTUNITIES YOU HAD TO SHARE IT:**

**SUMMARIZE THIS WEEK’S CHAPTER:**

- Nehemiah responds to the call of God to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. He inspects them and finds that it is time to rebuild the wall for the sake of God’s reputation in the world.

**WHAT TO LISTEN FOR IN TODAY’S STORY:**

**TELL THE STORY:**

**REBUILD THE STORY THEN READ THE PASSAGE**

**ASK:** Was anything added or left out of the story?

**QUESTIONS:**

Head questions:

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Heart questions:

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Generous  
Disciples

**INTENTIONAL**

[MAR. 5-6]

**DURING THE WEEK:** Make time daily with God to know Him and His heart through time in his Word, prayer and reflection. Read the chapter after the sermon and before LifeGroup.

**GROUP TIME**

- Opening prayer
- Vision cast
- Review group guidelines.

**REVIEW LAST WEEK’S STORY AND OPPORTUNITIES YOU HAD TO SHARE IT:**

**SUMMARIZE THIS WEEK’S CHAPTER:**

- God calls for his people to offer him their first fruits: an offering that requires both sacrifice and faith that more fruit will come.

**WHAT TO LISTEN FOR IN TODAY’S STORY:**

**TELL THE STORY:**

**REBUILD THE STORY THEN READ THE PASSAGE**

**ASK:** Was anything added or left out of the story?

**QUESTIONS:**

Head questions:

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Heart questions:

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Hand questions:

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**GENEROSITY SERIES QUESTIONS:**

- If someone looked at your finances, your calendar, your phone or computer, what would they say are the priorities of your life? Would generosity be among them?
- When you think about your giving to the Lord's work, on a scale of 1-10, how would you define your giving? 1 being "first fruits"; 10 being "leftovers."

**NEXT WEEK'S READING:**

*Joshua 24:11-15*

**CLOSING PRAYER**

NAME	PRAYER REQUEST	CELEBRATE/PRAISE

Generous  
Disciples

**GRATEFUL**

[MAR. 12-13 ]

**DURING THE WEEK:** Make time daily with God to know Him and His heart through time in his Word, prayer and reflection. Read the chapter after the sermon and before LifeGroup.

**GROUP TIME**

- Opening prayer
- Vision cast
- Review group guidelines.

**REVIEW LAST WEEK’S STORY AND OPPORTUNITIES YOU HAD TO SHARE IT:**

**SUMMARIZE THIS WEEK’S CHAPTER:**

- God’s people remember that God did the work of bringing them into the promised land. Their response to his love and mercy is to serve him.

**WHAT TO LISTEN FOR IN TODAY’S STORY:**

**TELL THE STORY:**

**REBUILD THE STORY THEN READ THE PASSAGE**

**ASK:** Was anything added or left out of the story?

**QUESTIONS:**

Head questions:

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Heart questions:

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Hand questions:

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**GENEROSITY SERIES QUESTIONS:**

- Where are you on the generosity ladder? (See page 21) Circle this ring.
- Where would you like to be as a next step on the generosity ladder? Circle this ring.
- What sort of heart change is required for you to move on the generosity ladder?
- What sort of practical steps are required for you to move in this way?

**NEXT WEEK’S READING:**

*Matthew 21*

**CLOSING PRAYER**

NAME	PRAYER REQUEST	CELEBRATE/PRAISE

**DURING THE WEEK:** Make time daily with God to know Him and His heart through time in his Word, prayer and reflection. Read the chapter after the sermon and before LifeGroup.

**GROUP TIME**

- Opening prayer
- Vision cast
- Review group guidelines.

**REVIEW LAST WEEK’S STORY AND OPPORTUNITIES YOU HAD TO SHARE IT:**

**SUMMARIZE THIS WEEK’S CHAPTER:**

- Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem provokes two responses: worship and questioning. Those who worship lay down what they have and praise Jesus as king; those who question ask, “Who is this?”

**WHAT TO LISTEN FOR IN TODAY’S STORY:**

**TELL THE STORY:**

**REBUILD THE STORY THEN READ THE PASSAGE**

**ASK:** Was anything added or left out of the story?

**QUESTIONS:**

Head questions:

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Heart questions:

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Hand questions:

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**CLOSING PRAYER**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>PRAYER REQUEST</b>	<b>CELEBRATE/PRAISE</b>

**8-POINT CULTIVATING  
GENEROSITY LADDER**

