



Redeemer Life Group Manual/Field Guide

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Our Mission

Welcome! We are excited to have you as a Life Group leader at Redeemer Church.

The mission statement of Redeemer Church is to "glorify God through the fulfillment of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20)." Our obedience to this mission is the foundation of every Redeemer ministry. Making disciples is the aim of our Worship services, Children's Ministry, Student Ministry, Adult Ministries, Biblical Soul Care Ministry, and Missions and Outreach ministries. Our chief aim is to make authentic disciples of Christ.

Other than our Sunday morning services, Life Groups are our primary method of accomplishing this mighty task of making disciples. *By Jesus, every Christian is expected* to make disciples, but not everyone has the necessary skills to lead a Life Group. Since you are reading this, you have been approved by the elders as someone we see as called by God to carry this excellent weight of responsibility together with the other Life Group leaders, elders, and pastoral staff.

It is God's will that we give all our effort to see others conformed into the image of Christ through our teaching, our example of life, our loving shepherding, and our faith-filled prayers for others. Give your life to this, and it will be a life well-lived.

We believe wholeheartedly in the priesthood of all the saints (Exodus 19; 1 Peter 2:5-9). And every believer has been given the ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5). The job of both elders and pastors at Redeemer Church is to equip the saints to do the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4); this includes Life Group leading.

To what end, you may ask? Great question! Colossians 1:28-29 says, "Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me." Like Paul we labor to present everyone mature in Christ. Memorize these verses, for they are our foundational verses.

Our Vision

We want to see every missional partner and attendee of Redeemer Church being discipled in a Life Group.

Structure

In the Great Commission (GC), Jesus commands His disciples to make disciples, but He doesn't tell them exactly how to go about it. We are told to go, baptize, and teach followers to observe all that he has commanded. Wisely, Jesus does not give us a step-by-step process to accomplish these goals. In their different contexts, Jesus knew that each church would need to develop its own path of discipleship. Discipleship can seem vague without clear steps that need to be taken. We have created a Path of Discipleship for Redeemer which defines discipleship and presents clear goals at each growth stage.

Furthermore, in the Great Commission, Jesus commanded all His followers to make disciples, but He did not give a step-by-step process that explains how to fulfill this command. Therefore, we believe the Lord expects each church to create a Path of Discipleship for their people. Each "Path" must be built upon the explicit and implicit commands and patterns in the Bible. Otherwise, the phrase "making a disciple" can undoubtedly become a hollow phrase nobody knows how to define.

Having a Path of Discipleship does not negate the necessity of the work of the Spirit of God. We are humbled to know that we are called to scatter and water the seed, but God gives the growth (1 Corinthians 3:6-8).

Study our Path of Discipleship deeply. Please do not see this as a cold, distant document but a highly relevant one that influences *all* of our steps to fulfill our mission statement. You will use the Path of Discipleship weekly and discuss it often with your group.

Overview

Life Groups are designed to be intimate settings in which people know and are known. Therefore, each group meets in the homes of someone within the group. **Groups should not exceed 14 members.** They also meet weekly. One week each month should include either a mission project or a relational building night. Life Groups begin in September and end in May. The summers are opportunities to rest and recover from serving but also affords chances to intentionally build community informally, i.e., park play dates, camping together, cook-outs, bonfires, etc. Regular meetings are typically two hours long. The discussion portion of the night could be based upon a sermon, a particular book of the Bible, or a pre-approved book from the Life Group website that discusses a specific topic in the Bible. Groups do not stay together indefinitely and are expected to multiply (details below).

Typical LG schedule:

6:30 - 7:00pm:	Relationship-building time
7:00 - 7:45pm:	Bible/book study
7:45 - 8:30pm:	Accountability and Prayer

**Being disciplined with time is one of the most challenging aspects of LG leading. It is easy to mismanage this seemingly easy schedule. Each element of the LG meeting is vitally important. Some meetings might have more extended fellowship, Bible study, accountability, or prayer, but you must be disciplined to be well balanced. We all default to what comes most naturally to us, but you must not fall into a routine that ignores one or more aspects of the schedule.

Team-Based Approach

We also have designed once-a-month meetings for training and to cultivate community among the leaders. Life Group leaders are required to attend these meetings. We aim never to waste your time at these meetings but seek to further equip you for the work.

Strategy

The strategy of our Life Groups follows the example that Jesus left the church in the Scriptures:

1. Jesus had a group of twelve. He had a ministry to all twelve of the men in His group. He cared for each of them deeply, even the one who would ultimately betray Him. We want to keep the size of our group to twelve, no more than fourteen. If groups grow more massive than this, it becomes impossible to care deeply enough for each group member.
2. Jesus had an inner circle of three. Out of the twelve, He brought three of them into closer fellowship. We see this consistently throughout the gospels. Therefore, we must do the same. We cannot pour out our lives effectively to many, but we can to a smaller number, and we must. But the goal is for everyone in the group to be in an inner circle.
3. Jesus sent them out two by two (Luke 10:1-2). Do you see the pattern? Jesus has laid it out for us. Discipling a Life Group by yourself is not sustainable. You cannot disciple more people than Jesus did at one time. Again, Jesus had a group of twelve and then an inner circle of three. If there are two co-leaders in each group and the group is split in half, everyone in the group will be in someone's inner circle. Divide the group right away with their knowledge. A

secretive plan is a bad plan. The more the people in your group know about the program, the better. People should know their leaders. Being cared for personally is vital to the spiritual health of every Christian. Personal discipleship from a mentor is what changed my life radically, and I bet many of you have the same story. If everyone is in an inner circle, we need to have two leaders or leadership couples per group and keep the numbers between 10-14.

4. Jesus spent three years doing life with and ministry with the disciples. After that, Jesus left His work in their hands. Those eleven men (minus Judas, eventually replaced by Matthias) were to "walk as Jesus walked (1 John 2:6)." Life group is the name, not because they are for life, but to speak to the quality. Remember, everyone in our groups should aim to make disciples, not just be discipled forever. There is no ultimate faithfulness in a Christian's life if we don't attempt to help others grow in their faith. We also believe that groups can stagnate if they are together for more than three years.

What better model for discipleship than Jesus Christ Himself? We want to be like Jesus, even in the way He approached making disciples.

Our role is to help the people in our groups take "one step" of spiritual growth annually. Of course, we want every Christian to take more than one step of growth in their spiritual lives, but we are formally asking them to take one step. The average person becomes overwhelmed quickly at the thought of becoming like Jesus. Therefore, we want to encourage them to take it to step by step. Encouragement is vital to the spiritual growth of believers.

The Path of Discipleship as a Life Group Model

Sunday mornings are *primary* for discipleship in the life of a church. Life Groups (or personalized discipleship) are secondary. But Life Groups can't be like a second Sunday service. They are the place for personalized discipleship. Sunday mornings exist for the church as a whole. Life Groups are intentionally designed for the individual growth of believers. Spiritual growth steps can't be ambiguous. Therefore, we need to know different growth stages to evaluate where we are and where to go next. Consequently, we have developed The Path of Discipleship. A detailed explanation of the Path of Discipleship is provided for you in the following pages.

THE PATH OF DISCIPLESHIP

1

CONVERT TO CHRIST

Assurance of Salvation

- Baptism

2

COMMUNE WITH GOD

Spiritual Disciplines

- Understand & Love Biblical Truth
- Depend & Delight in God through Prayer
- Kill Your Sin (Romans 8:13)

3

COMMIT TO REDEEMER

Commitment Track

- Connect with a Pastor
- Consider Redeemer Class – pt. 1 & 2
- Commit to Redeemer

4

SHARE YOUR FAITH

Reach the Lost

- Neighbors
- Employment
- Local Outreach & Global Missions

5

REPRODUCE DISCIPLES

Multiply People on Mission

- In Your Family
- In Your Church
- In Your Circle of Influence

Year One

Convert to Christ

At Redeemer Church, we do not assume salvation (Matthew 7:21). A person cannot spiritually grow without being born again (John 3; 1 Corinthians 2:14; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Hebrews 11:6). Moreover, many church-going people will stand before Jesus at Judgment Day, believing undoubtedly that they are saved but realize that they are hopelessly mistaken. We care about the present and eternal state of our people's souls. (See Initial Meeting, page 18).

Commune with God

The height of human flourishing is walking with God in a close relationship. Knowing Christ surpasses any pleasure life offers (Philippians 3:8; Psalm 63:3). Convinced of this, we want people to experience the delight found in the Word of God (Psalm 119; Psalm 1:2; Jeremiah 15:16) and all the spiritual disciplines (1 Timothy 4:6-7). Also, in this stage of spiritual growth, we teach the 'Killing Sin Process' (See Appendix A). A disciple of Jesus must actively pursue obedience to Christ's commands (John 14:15), the benefit of all the spiritual disciplines, and putting to death the deeds of the body by the power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:13).

Year Two

Commit to Redeemer

The need to become a healthy Missional Partner (MP) is of primary concern in this step. Committing to Redeemer includes how each MP serves the body of Christ using their spiritual gift or gifts (1 Corinthians 12-13). It is God's will for every Christian to join a local church body (Hebrews 10:25. 13:17). If God has called a person to stay at our church, we want to see them commit wholeheartedly to the body of Christ. After all, what does the most important command in the Bible say? Matthew 22:36-40 teaches us to love God and people above all things, in that particular order. Loving God and neighbor summarizes the entirety of the Bible, the will of God!

Year Three

Share Your Faith

The Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) demands that we share the gospel. Jesus expects that following Him would include, in large part, sharing His message, for that is what He desired to do during His ministry (Luke 4:43). Sharing the gospel is a beautiful thing in God's sight to do for the world (Romans 10:15). Evangelism is also necessary to experience all of God's blessings in store for His children (Philemon 6). We will learn to reach our lost neighbors and co-workers and engage in local outreach and reach the world with Redeemer's global missions' partners.

Reproduce Disciplers

2 Timothy 2:1-2 says, "You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also." For the faith to carry on and flourish, we must pass it on to others, who will, in turn, pass it to others. This, of course, starts in the home. Jesus entrusted twelve men with His gospel, promised them His very presence, and sent them into all the world to proclaim the gospel message. It is now your turn. Below are the areas of applied focus in making disciples:

1. In Your Family - If you have children, you must realize that you are the primary disciplers of your children. When married, having a healthy marriage is essential for usefulness in kingdom work. Therefore, working on healthy, Christ-centered marriages will be included in this final year as well. The healthier your marriage, the more God can use you in the lives of others.
2. In Your Church - This entire manual discusses this point. We are commanded to obey the "One Anothers" of Scripture (See Appendix B).
3. In Your Circle of Influence - At work, in your friend groups, in your social settings, make Christ known.
4. In the World - As followers of Christ, we must be about the work of the Great Commission. We all must play a part in the global evangelization and discipleship of all nations.

In summary, everything in the Christian life can be placed somewhere on the Path of Discipleship.

Meeting Rotation:

Groups meet from September through May of each year. Every week of those 9 months together is vitally important. Therefore, each week needs strategic attention. Below is a breakdown of how to game-plan. You are encouraged to break from the typical meeting pattern during the summer months. It is wise to continue building your relationship with others during the summer, but it is entirely up to you how you do that.

1. Altogether for fellowship and Bible study, then separate by gender for accountability
2. Separate for Bible study and accountability
3. Repeat week 1
4. Relationship Building week/or mission week ***See note below***
 - a. Repeat week two if a five-week month

OR

1. Week one, only men meet
2. Week two, only women meet
3. Week three, all together for fellowship and Bible study, then separate by gender for accountability

4. Relationship Building week/or mission week
 - a. Repeat week two if a five-week month

These are just options to consider. Groups can remain together for fellowship and Bible study while separating for accountability weekly except for the relationship-building/mission week of the month.

A note about Life Group missions

At Redeemer, our Life Groups are missional! The groups themselves need to think about how they can serve the mission Jesus left us to do. We see that mission on two fronts; to serve others in the church body and to be evangelistic to our neighbors and community.

Practical Steps of the Path of Discipleship

Life Groups are about personal discipleship. Individual care is required. Below is our strategy to help someone take one step of spiritual growth at a time through the Path of Discipleship. So, not only will the group go through the steps together, the leaders will individually shepherd their 'inner circle' through the process at a personal level.

The Process

1. Determine their level of spiritual growth.
2. Determine their next crucial step of growth.
3. Formulate a training objective relating to the step.
4. Develop an evaluation that will let you know when that objective has been reached.

1. Determine Their Level of Spiritual Growth

- Explain the Path of Discipleship to them as a group & individually
- Understand that it is difficult to see yourself correctly. Some are too humble, and some think too highly of themselves. Patience is necessary for this process. Time is on your side.
- Have them choose where they are to start. Once identified, see it as an invitation to help them grow.
- Clarity is key!
- Cast the vision of taking 'ONE STEP' this year. Assure them that you will help them take that 'one step' (Shhhh, we secretly hope they take many). But one step of spiritual growth is no small thing accomplished by the grace of God!

2. Determine Their Next Crucial Step of Growth

- Choose the next step on the Path of Discipleship.

- Unless "something is on fire." If their life is on fire in an area, please do not ignore that to move them along in the process. For example, if your person says they need to grow in sharing their faith, but their marriage is barely hanging on, they need to focus on their marriage before evangelism. Again, the hope would be that they work on both, but their marriage is the priority.
- Most people will say they need help in the Commune with God section.
 - Remember that everything from the Christian life flows out of communion, our union with God through Christ.
- You try and decide if they are correct in their assessment of themselves. Make corrections if needed.

3. Formulate a Training Objective Relating to the Step

I will give you "SOME" recommendations, but there is freedom for you to tailor this to your specific disciplee. I approach each person with a 'customized' plan.

Convert to Christ: *We do not assume salvation.*

- Share testimonies.
- If they are wrestling with their salvation:
 - Take them out for coffee.
 - Go through one of the resources pre-approved from the website with them.
 - Pray for them and continually be there for them through this struggle. Many people go through significant periods of doubt and God tells us to be merciful to them (Jude 1:22).
- Pay attention to your people, remembering Jesus' words in Matthew 7:21-23.
- Have they been baptized?

Commune with God: *Spiritual disciplines, obedience to God's commands, killing sin and studying theology.*

- Help them pick a Bible plan (a manageable one).
- Walk them through how to have a quiet time.
- Teach them to pray (pray with them, come to our 1st Wednesday prayer nights)
- Teach them the Killing Sin process (See Appendix A).
- Read "What Jesus Demands from the World" by Piper with them.
- Study theology together.

Commit to Redeemer: *Marriage, parenting, using your spiritual gifts to serve our church.*

- Ask if they are Missional Partners at Redeemer. If they are, ask where they are serving and what their spiritual gifts are. If they are not MPs, ask them why. Encourage them to go to a Consider Redeemer class.
 - This may seem like a small step, but it is not. Jesus gave His life for his bride, the church, and he expects his followers to do the same.

- Help them find the right place of service for their giftedness from the Holy Spirit.

Share Your Faith: *Evangelism*

Think of the first person that comes to your mind when answering this question, "Who do you want to deeply know Christ?" Then, write their name down and set a date goal for them to share their faith.

- Have them start praying for that person.
- Have them begin pursuing that person.
- Have them invite them to church, write a letter, invite them over, do something intentional with them that they both enjoy, etc.
- Have them share the gospel with that person.

Reproduce Disciples: *Jesus expects EVERY believer to attempt to make disciples.*

- Have them consider co-leading the group with the vision of leading a group someday.
- Give them someone in the group to disciple.
- Marriage: Encourage the Biblical Soul Care ministry for struggling marriages.
- Parenting: Have them read Family Worship and look at our website for resources to Read, Pray and Sing together. Start using the New City Catechism at home.
- Serving: Encourage them to find a place to serve at church.

****If they love to read, encourage them to look at the pre-approved curriculum page and start going after it!**

4. Develop an Evaluation That Will Let You Know When That Objective Has Been Reached

- This is simply accountability for the training objective.
- Once there has been sufficient growth, move to the next one. But, once growth has occurred, ongoing accountability in that area will still be necessary or that growth will atrophy.
- We believe in progressive sanctification at Redeemer, meaning that once a person has been saved by God's grace, we are put on a life-long process of becoming more like Jesus Christ until we meet the Lord face-to-face. Therefore, growth will be imperfect but God-glorifying. What a beautiful thing in God's sight when we help each other become more like Jesus!

Accountability Topics & Questions

Life Group leaders can easily maintain continuity in their group by covering the following six accountability areas. These six topics are taken directly from the Path of Discipleship. It would help if you stayed well balanced on how often you ask your group about these categories. Here are the six areas of accountability:

1. Sin
2. Communing with God (Bible reading and praying)
3. Marriage/Parenting (if applicable)
4. Serving the Church
5. Evangelism
6. Reproduce Disciple Makers

Below are *possible* questions for you to ask in each category. You are certainly not confined to only asking these questions. Let them at least serve as a guide into what we are after from each category of accountability. Even if your group loves and needs one area over and above others, stay disciplined to ask about the other categories as well, because all of these things are important to our Christian lives, not just the one that is most natural or relevant.

Do not try and ask each question under each category in a given meeting. These questions are in abundance so that there are always new questions to ask about each type of accountability.

Sin

- Do you know what sin is? Do you easily and quickly recognize when you sin, or do you believe you are blind to a lot of your sin?
- Do you know sin hurts your relationship with God? In what ways is this true?
- How have you sinned against God this week?
- Do you have patterns of sin? What are some of your triggers? What have you/are you doing to address this pattern?
- Do you have any life-dominating sins right now?
- Do you know the killing sin process?
- Have you repented of your sins this week? If so, how often? How long from the time of the sin committed do you repent? If you haven't repented, why not? (See step one of the Killing Sin process).

Communing with God

- Is your love for Jesus growing?
- What are you learning about God as you learn about him and walk with him?
- Are you reading your Bible regularly?
 - Do you understand it when you read it? If not, what confuses you?
- What is God teaching you right now from your time in the word?
- Are you praying regularly?

- If so, daily? How can you increase your time in prayer?
 - If not, how come? What stops you?
 - Do you know how to pray? Would you like me to teach you?
- Are you actively seeking to obey God's commands?
- Are you actively seeking to kill your sin?

Serving the Church

- Are you a member of the church?
 - If so, for how long?
 - If not, why not? What is stopping you?
- Are you serving the church?
 - If so, in what area?
 - If not, why not? What is stopping you?
 - How is it going?
- Do you feel like you are using your spiritual gifts?
 - Do you know your spiritual gift? (There is a spiritual inventory test on our website. It's not the end all be all, but it is a start.)
 - Look up the spiritual gift passages of the Bible and try and identify your own and each other's; discuss this openly in the group. (1 Corinthians 12; Romans 12; Ephesians 4; 1 Peter 4).
- How can you get better at your area of service?
 - Can you do more?
 - Are you doing too much?
 - Are you doing it for the Lord?
 - Are you intentionally doing it for the Lord during the actual serving?
 - How is your attitude while you are serving?
- Who can you ask to serve with you?

Marriage & Parenting (Only if applicable)

- How is healthy is your marriage? Are you all in a healthy place right now? What makes you think so? Would your spouse agree?
- For men only- Are you leading your wife spiritually?
 - If so, what are you doing?
 - If not, what is stopping you?
- Are you having times of family worship (time of reading the Bible, praying, and singing together)?
 - If so, what do you do?
 - If not, what is stopping you?
- Are you discipling your kids?
 - Do you have a plan to teach them the faith?
 - If so, what are you doing?
 - If not, why not?
- In what ways are you struggling as a husband/father or wife/mother right now?
- What have you intentionally done lately to serve your spouse/children selflessly?

Evangelism

- Are you sharing your faith with anyone right now?
 - If so, how is it going?
 - If not, what is stopping you?
- Do you feel like you are living intentionally as a Christian missionary in everyday life?
 - If so, how?
 - If not, why not? What is stopping you?
- Can you think of one to three people that you know who don't know the Lord to pray for tonight? Write them down and pray for them together as a group. And encourage them to "go after them" with the gospel. Set a "date goal" for when they should share the gospel with them. Hold them accountable to that date (in love, of course).
- Are you stuck in sharing the gospel with someone because they have questions you can't answer?
 - If so, what are they? (Please seek to find the answers together.)

Reproduce Disciple-Makers

- Are you discipling someone else?
 - If so, who? How's it going? What are you doing to disciple them? Are you following the Redeemer process? (Please train them in our Path of Discipleship & and Process of Growth.)
 - If not, why not? What is stopping you?
- How can you grow as a disciple-maker?
- Did you know that Jesus expects this of every Christian? Not just pastors and Life group leaders. Jesus sees you as a potential disciple-maker. With that knowledge, what is standing in the way of you becoming a disciple-maker?
 - How do you remove that obstacle?

Biblical Soul Care and Counseling Center

You will, however, encounter some issues that are beyond your training and skill level. But don't worry! You have built-in support. We have a thriving Soul Care Ministry for our church's Missional Partners and regular attenders. And we are developing a counseling center for members of our beloved Rockford area communities.

If you have someone in need of Soul Care in your group, please go to our website, and on the Biblical Soul Care page, there is a request form that he or she can fill out. Someone will reach out to them shortly after.

Facilitating Discussions

Leading discussions based upon the Bible, Sunday's sermons, or an extra-biblical book is one of the most challenging aspects of Life Group leading. Even seasoned veterans need to seek to grow in this area constantly. Here are a few steps to take to prepare for this aspect of leading groups discussions. But first, this needs to be framed correctly. You are not leading a Bible study; you are facilitating a discussion. Leading a Bible study would include you doing most of the talking, but that is not the job. Instead, you facilitate a group discussion while having specific priorities that you want to highlight and apply from the particular study in question. With that said, here are seven tips for leading effective and dynamic group discussions:

1. Come prepared. There is no substitute for hard work and dedication to preparing for each meeting. Study the material. Give yourself time to think through each discussion. Think through what you want to say, what questions need to be asked, and the potential questions or concerns.
2. Be confident. That is, be assured that God will help you. God has called you to this ministry, and He is with you. Don't be afraid of saying, "I don't know." Often, a question will be asked, and you won't know the answer, and that's okay! Seek an answer for the next week, ask a pastor or elder for help, but don't be afraid of not knowing.
3. Embrace the awkward. Learn the saying, "Awkward is awesome." What do I mean? Specifically, be willing to ask a question and sit through silence. Resist the urge to fill the silence with your words. Many times, people are thinking about your question and need some time to think. But if your group knows you will fill the silence, they will let you. If you embrace the silence and re-ask the question, someone will eventually answer.
4. Have private meetings and ask for help or challenge people to speak. If you have a group that will not talk, even after long pauses of silence, pull specific people or couples aside and ask them for more participation. Life Groups need to be high challenge, high commitment environments. Sometimes people need an extra nudge to get in the game.
5. Ask good questions. Asking good questions is more than half the battle! If your question is easy to answer, it kills the atmosphere of the group discussion. Asking thought-provoking, open-ended questions inspires excellent participation and discussion. Sometimes the book doesn't ask good questions. Truly. You can't always go by the questions given to you in specific resources. And some of the books on the pre-approved curriculum page do not have pre-written questions, requiring you to write your own. (If you do this for one of our resources, please send those to Mattj@redeemerrockford.church so that they can be made available for others to glean from.)
 - I. As a general rule of ministry, use open questions. Closed questions can be answered with a Yes or No. They require little information disclosure from the person, and they start with Is, Are, Did, Do, or Will? Open questions cannot be answered with a Yes or No, they require the person to select and self-

disclose information, and they begin with Who? What? Where? When? Why? & How?

- II. Here are some examples of good open-ended questions. These will be more useful in talking someone through life situations as they come to you for advice. But you can glean from the style and apply it appropriately to Bible, sermon-based, or book discussions:
 - a) Where do you see God in this situation? What is God up to?
 - b) How do you think God looks at you?
 - c) What do you think God thinks about what you are doing?
 - d) What impact did your action have on your wife (or husband or child)?
 - e) What were you hoping to accomplish by that?
 - f) What was going on in your mind?
 - g) What keeps you from serving your spouse with that same energy?
 - h) If you could change your situation (or the other person) somehow, how would you?
 - i) What are some of the biggest concerns you have in this situation?
 - j) How would you like people to pray for you right now?
- III. Timeless questions in any discussion.
 - a) What stuck out to you the most in the Bible study (sermon or book) this week? Why was it meaningful to you?
 - b) What does this teach us about God?
 - c) What should change in your life based upon that truth?

Call upon specific people to answer questions. Tell the group beforehand you will do this, so they are not taken off guard. Please know who the ones are that really won't appreciate that. Give them time to get comfortable, but gently challenge them to grow in time.

Prayer - Ask God to allow fruitful discussion to happen. We have not because we ask not. Ask God every week to help your group have productive, mutually edifying discussions. And trust that He hears you and will work for good in your group.

Missional Aspect

Ephesians 2:10 and Titus 2:14 teach us that Jesus died to purify a people for himself that are zealous to do the good works that have been planned for us beforehand that we should walk in them. Therefore, we desire to give Jesus the rewards of His sufferings in our personal and corporate lives. Our faith is to be lived in the public sphere, doing good works so that others can see the reality of God and give Him glory (Matthew 5:15-16).

Every group is expected within the first year to identify a missional project that they work on together throughout the year. These opportunities can be categorized into one of two categories: 1) For believers in our church family, or 2) for evangelism in our community. These projects aren't meant to be short-lived (not that you can't see a short-term need and meet it, we want you to serve in those ways as well as God shows you need), but long-term. So, if you choose someone(s) in the church to help, do so all year long (i.e., a lonely elderly person(s) that you provide meals and or services for and spend time with throughout the year). Or, if you choose a community evangelism project, we also want it throughout the year (i.e., choose a fire station or a particular school faculty and seek to bless them year-round with food, treats, cards of encouragement, and practical help). Whenever you drop off a package for your missional project, include invite cards to upcoming events and/or information about our church.

Our groups would be incomplete without a missional focus because Christ sought to serve the church and the lost.

Initial Meeting(s)

Are you wondering what you do during your first meeting together? Don't worry! Follow these steps to start your new group powerfully and effectively, establishing expectations and ground rules for fruitful years of ministry to and for one another. Do not follow the typical LG meeting schedule for the first meeting. Instead, please follow the instructions below. ****Following these steps might take one to three meetings.****

As your new group gathers for the first time, please let the natural meet and greet go on naturally as long as it is not uncomfortable. If your group doesn't know each other at all, do not give much space and time for unstructured time talking initially, but do leave 20-25 minutes in the end.

As you have sat everyone down, please introduce yourself and welcome everyone to the group. And then share your testimony with the group, take your time, and don't skip important details about your story; think 5-7 minutes. Then, after all the leaders have finished sharing, please ask the people in the group to share their stories. Do not passively listen to these stories! Remember the first step in our Path of Discipleship, Convert to Christ. We do not assume salvation at Redeemer Church! You are listening to hear any concerning statements as they share their story, i.e., "I was baptized when I was 10 years old" without any mention of Jesus, or "I have always believed in Jesus." There are countless examples of these concerning statements. Now, if testimonies take the entire two hours, GOOD! That means genuine fellowship has begun to be established. You can learn so much about the people you are shepherding by listening to their stories, don't skip this step.

DO NOT confront these concerning statements in public. But if you are left wondering about anyone's salvation, please schedule a time for lunch or coffee with that person directly following the initial meeting and dig into their stories. This establishes the intentional and personal nature of Life Groups. Getting comfortable with uncomfortable conversations is vital for a Life Group leader. To truly disciple is to confront concerning beliefs and/or behavior lovingly.

Then, establish from the beginning the goal of multiplication in three years. Why do this, you ask? Explain to them the mission and vision of our Life Group ministry, so they understand their command to make disciples, not just be discipled forever. Then, explain to them the multiplication strategy, which is easy if you have a co-leader(s). If you have a co-leader or co-leading couple, you explain that you are one group, but within your one group, there is a division. Finally, tell the new members who their prominent leader is, and explain that our goal is for everyone to be in an 'inner circle' (described above). Take your time explaining this to your group so they understand the purposes of this strategy.

Teach through the Path of Discipleship as seen above. Also, before you go to your first accountability time together, which is always gender-segregated, explain the expectation for humility and genuineness in true confessions of sin, albeit once relationships and trust have been established. Finally, go over the Killing Sin process with them to understand what they will be directed to once they confess sin. **Groups will typically only confess sins if their leaders go first and demonstrate the level of confession and trust that you desire from the whole group. Your group will follow your lead.** Once you have explained all of this, please review the accountability categories and tie the thread back to the Path of Discipleship.

Please walk through the Life Group Covenant (see Appendix D). Life Group members do not need to sign this document, but explaining what creates the best environment for a Life Group is helpful. Please do not set a legalistic tone for the group, but one of love, grace and growth.

If you follow these steps, your group will be well established and ready to follow the traditional schedule afterward.

Selecting a Co-Leader and Apprentice (Scalability)

Why do you need a co-leader, you may ask? First, Life Group leading is hard, and it is easy to burn out. So, having another person or couple to carry the load builds sustainability over the long haul, and we desire you to carry out the Great Commission in the LG ministry at Redeemer for many years to come. Second, having two leaders or

leadership couples makes having everyone in an inner circle possible. Jesus had twelve disciples, but he spent more time with Peter, James, and John. This allows us to follow the Lord's example and, again, have everyone in our LGs be in an inner circle. Third, when the three years are over, you have a natural way to multiply. Multiplying a group is difficult if the group gets close with one another. And we want this to happen! But, deciding how to multiply at the end of the three years is a bad idea. There is more potential for hurt feelings and misunderstandings in the end. Therefore, establishing who goes with whom at the initial meeting gives a natural multiplication point. Ideally, each co-leader has disciplined the people in their group and wants to stay with their leader. Finally, you are doing ministry with a friend. Having a co-leader(s) makes the work more enjoyable. Ideally, this leader or leadership couple are your close friends. Of course, you will pour into one another, but it is nice to have someone you are not officially discipling and is more of a peer. Building this into your group is healthy and necessary to last over the long haul leading a group. And the healthier you are, the more you can pour out for Jesus and His Kingdom.

Once the group multiplies, each new group will need a new co-leader or co-leading couple. New co-leaders need to be established and trained for this model to be scalable and reproducible. Therefore, in the initial three-year group, you are looking at your inner circle to see who has the most potential to be a co-leader. At some point in the first three years, you need to ask them if they are interested so they are ready when the group officially multiplies. If they agree, then they become your apprentice or Life Group leader in training.

FAQ - Is having a co-leader required to start a group? Answer - No. I do not require it, but it is preferred. If you don't launch with a co-leader, finding one must be your top priority once the group has begun.

Curriculum

The primary curriculum of Life Groups is the Bible. This means that there are pre-selected studies on the books of the Bible that you will find on the LG curriculum page to aid you along the way. A LG may study only the Bible for the entire three years they have together before multiplying if they choose. But if a group does a pre-approved topical study, they must follow that with a study of a book of the Bible. So you can study two book of the Bible in a row, but you must study a book of the Bible in between two topical studies.

There is selective freedom in choosing the right study for your group. That means that we have made it easier for you by having our pre-approved books on our website on our Life Group Ministry tab. The curriculum is broken down by year and stages of the Path

of Discipleship. We have given choices for each year, providing you with selective freedom to choose within those boundaries. However, if there is a study that you would like to cover that is not on the pre-approved list that accompanies the learning objective for the year your group is in, you are welcomed to email Matt Joiner (mattj@redeemerrockford.church) and ask him for approval. But the final say over what is taught in LGs lies with the pastoral team and the elders. All curriculum must adhere to our Doctrinal Statement.

Appendix A

Killing Sin Process

We want you to be prepared for the moment that someone confesses sin during accountability. Traditionally, when sin is confessed in a small group setting, the person is thanked for opening up about their sin, they are prayed for and held accountable at future Life Group meetings. We must do better. When someone confesses sin, they invite you into a sensitive area of their life that needs sanctification. Moments like these are God-given, and we must steward them faithfully. Below is a five-step process to helping someone kill sin in their lives. Please learn this process so you are ready for the moment this happens in your group.

The Killing Sin Process is based upon Romans 8:13.

Romans 8:13 "13For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live."

Based upon the context, it is clear that Paul is talking to Christians. But that is confusing because according to the original language, it is clear that you will eternally perish if you live according to your sinful nature. How could Paul say that to Christians? He can say that because there is a certainty in the connection to those who have no condemnation (Romans 8:1) and those who kill their sin (Romans 8:13). Killing sin is a part of everyday Christian life.

Some other observations about this verse are 1). it is conditional. If you live for sin, you will perish. If you kill your sin, you will live. 2). Notice who is responsible for obedience to the action; "If you," every individual Christian is in view here. 3). Perish/Live are the sufferings and the rewards at stake. Eternal death and life are in view, but also our earthly life as well. The more sin we live for, the more we die (in our souls) while living, as the opposite is true for those who kill their sin, meaning the more they obey this verse, the more comfort, strength, and joy they will experience in life as well as entering eternal life. 4). Notice who has the power to kill sin. It's not the person commanded to kill their sin! It is by the Holy Spirit's power. The reason for this document is to explain, in part, what does it mean to kill your sin by the power of the Holy Spirit. We believe every Christian ought to know how to obey & live this text.

John Owen famously said, "Be killing sin, or sin will be killing you." He wrote a dense but excellent book entitled "The Mortification of Sin." It is an 83-page book that is a commentary on Romans 8:13. It is worth the time and effort to dig into works like that. Because what is below is certainly not all there is to say on killing sin, but it is a great start. Make killing sin a daily, life-long, Holy Spirit-empowered goal and work in your life. And once you learn this, teach it to others as the Lord allows you to disciple other believers.

We know that the Lord wants us to make war on our sin because he taught us to do whatever it takes to cut sin out of our lives. In Matthew 5:27-30, he teaches, "27 'You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' 28But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. 30And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell." Jesus uses hyperbolic language here to command us to go to the extreme to kill the sin in our hearts. Why? Because the goal of the Christian life is to be like Jesus (Romans 8:28-30). The main thing keeping you from that is your sin.

****A note on what is meant by "killing."** Once something has been killed, it can and will no longer move or stir in our world. And we know that our remaining sin will not be forever removed until we meet Jesus. Therefore, I want to be clear on what is being aimed at in this process. John Owen speaks to this in his book, "The Mortification of Sin," "To mortify a sin is not utterly to kill, root it out, and destroy it, that it should have no more hold at all nor residence in our hearts. It is true this is that which is aimed at; but this is not in this life to be accomplished." He goes on to say that "Its not being is what is being aimed at." We should so walk through the process below that active sin should no longer stir or awaken as it does now. We will not be sinless as Christians in this world, but the longer we walk by the Spirit of God, we ought to sin less.

May the Lord use this to glorify Himself, transform you more into the image of Jesus, and help you be an instrument in His hands to help others be transformed more into Christlikeness.

1. Pray – For Repentance & Help

Keep in mind throughout this entire process; we are seeking to answer the question: How do we kill our sin by the power of the Holy Spirit.

There is no killing any unconfessed, unrepented of sin. Killing sin must always begin with repentance of sin. Without initial faith in Jesus and repentance of sin, there is no salvation. Therefore, any effort to kill sin a different way is an affront and offensive to God. Jesus is God's solution to our sin problem. Anything else would be for self-justification or out of self-righteousness, which does not satisfy God's righteous standard; it actually excites his wrath.

Therefore, we must understand repentance. "Repentance is changing one's mind and life. It involves an acknowledgment that one's thoughts, words, and actions are sinful and thus grievous to God; a sorrow for one's sin; and a decision to break with sin. Though a fully human response, repentance is not merely human because it is prompted by grace." That grace is the work of the Spirit because He is the one who convicts people of sin (John 16:8-9).

Our verse for repentance is 1 John 1:8-9 "8 If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. "9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

What a promise! What a gift to hold this verse out to the people you are discipling! Practically, when someone confesses a sin in your group, you, as the leader first, thank them for being willing to share that with the group. Then ask, "Have you repented of that sin?" Eventually, you want others to ask that question as well. Now, from there, the conversation can go in a couple of different ways. 1). "Yes, I have," they say. "Great!" you say. "How long from the time of the sin until the act of repentance?" You are not rubbing salt in an open wound, you are ministering to a soul, and this question will reveal a lot about the condition of their soul. We want to encourage them to repent quickly and not beat themselves up or run from God before they turn and ask God for forgiveness. If it took them a bit of time before they repented, ask them why? You are trying to find out why they didn't turn to God first and what consequences that had in their life. Again, to encourage them to go quickly to God in repentance the next time.

You need to be prepared for statements like this one: "I have been like this my entire life. I have been praying for God to help me with this my entire life; and he has not answered. What do I do?" This happens a lot. God has not failed to forgive or answer them, and the problem is never with God. Psalm 66:18 has the answer. "If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened." Let David, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, teach us here. If someone is stuck in sin, they most likely are in love with their sin. Now, you might get pushback from them on this point. "I don't love pornography. I hate it!" When you hear that be able to filter it correctly. They hate the shame that comes afterward or that they have become slaves to their lust, but they love their sin; otherwise, they wouldn't turn back to it. "Like a dog returns to its vomit is a fool who repeats its folly (Proverbs 26:11)." We are all guilty of asking God to forgive us of sin, but we fully expect to do it again because of the love in our hearts for that sin. God doesn't want the outward religious form of repentance; He wants our hearts. Therefore, after discussing this with the group, you encourage them to confess to God their love for that sin and tell them to ask God to change their heart. God will not ignore that prayer. Again, encourage them to make their first prayer to Jesus to deliver you from the love of their sin.

Once sin has been confessed and repented of, the next step in killing sin by the power of the Spirit is praying for help amid temptation. Once God has cleansed the heart of all our unrighteousness, the art of defeating temptation is now in view. We want them to learn to honor and prefer Christ above sin. That happens in the heat of temptation. Our verse for fighting temptation is 1 Corinthians 10:13 "13 No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it."

Notice several things in this verse. 1). We are not alone in our temptations. Sometimes, we think we are the only ones going through something, but whatever it is, it is not unique to us. The circumstances will be, but not the temptation itself. 2). Our hope is in the fact that God is faithful, not us. So, in moments of temptation, we can trust God to help us because we know that He is committed to us in the New Covenant. 3). Temptations may feel uncontrollable, but no sin will ever swallow us whole, leaving us no way out. 4). God promises that He is with us during times of temptation, and He is at work providing pathways out of it. 4). God provides the grace and strength we need to endure moments of temptation. Many times the way of escape is going through them to the end.

Look at Luke 22:31-34; 46. Jesus prayed for Peter's faith to not fail. We trust in Jesus during times of temptation, not ourselves. We live by His power, not our own. We must not view ourselves as above temptation. Notice Peter was thinking himself above temptation. "Pride comes before the fall (Proverbs 16:18)." Our faith must be in Jesus' preserving power of our faith, not in ourselves, even when we feel strong.

Look at Luke 4:1-14, but focus on 12-14. Then, overlooking Jesus' use of the Bible for now(because that is step two of the Killing Sin process), notice what is said about Jesus when we returned, "And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit." How are we supposed to kill our sin, according to Romans 8:13? In the power of the Spirit. Here Jesus shows us that defeating temptations in the power of the Spirit enflames the activity of the Spirit in your life. Defeating temptation increases the work of the Spirit in the life of a believer. But giving into sin grieves the Spirit and quenches His work (Ephesians 4:29).

We have to learn how to fight temptation. But, above all else, we must trust God and call out to Him for help in our time of need. John Bunyan said, "You can do more than pray, after you have prayed, but you cannot do more than pray until you have prayed." These two aspects of prayer, repentance, and help, are where killing sin must begin.

The rest of this document explains how to prepare to fight our flesh's temptations and do so in the power of the Holy Spirit of God, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity.

2. The Word of God

You can not separate the Spirit of God from the Word of God. So how do we kill sin by the power of the Spirit? The Bible must be central in our fight, as we have seen true of Jesus in his wilderness temptations. Yet again, we must follow our Lord's example in defeating sin's temptations.

Our instruction for this can be found in the immediate context of Romans 8:5, where it says, "5For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit." The 'things of the Spirit is the Word of God. Have we or our disciple truly set our minds on God's Word? Psalm 1:2 teaches us that "[Blessed is the man whose] delights

in the law of the Lord and meditates on it day and night." Psalm 119:11 teaches us that we hide God's Word in our hearts so that we might not sin against Him. But, how so?

We must put this all together now. First, we must ask several questions from and about the Bible.

Question One: What is the Word of God?

Answer: The sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17). Question: What are we trying to accomplish? Answer: We are trying to learn how to kill our sin by the power of the Spirit. Well, the Spirit is telling us in His word that He has a killing agent, a sword. Therefore, we must learn to plunge His sword into our sinful temptations.

Question Two: How does the Bible describe believers?

Answer One: We are God's children (Romans 8:14). Notice the placement of this verse, one after our primary text. We fight sin as God's children!

Answer Two: We are dead to sin (Romans 6:11). Re-read that statement and verse. Pause. Let it soak in. We are to consider ourselves dead to sin. Jesus saves us from the penalty of sin, the power of sin, and one day the presence of sin. We were once slaves to sin, but the prison door cell has been flung open. We are free! When someone in your group is stuck in sin and feels defeated, you must remind them of this truth! They are not a prisoner, Jesus tells us his power is greater than sin. Read Romans 8:1-2.

Answer Three: We are alive to God (Romans 6:11). We are not only dead to sin; we are now alive to God. Before salvation, this is the opposite. We are 'alive' to sin, which makes us dead to God. We were once unable in our sin to obey God, we had no power to do so, but now, in the Spirit, we are made alive and able to follow Christ! There is so much hope in knowing we fight sin as God's children, dead to sin, and alive to God through Christ.

Question Three: How does this practically work?

Answer:

1. Memorize specific verses dealing with a particular sin you are trying to kill by the power of the Spirit.
 2. Come up with these verses together during accountability time.
 3. Try and memorize each other's verses so that we start holding each other accountable with the language of the Bible. i.e., say something like, "Have you been slow to anger this week, Bob?" (See example below). Then, memorize verses based upon God's character, His commands, and wisdom literature.
- Anger Example
 - God's Character - (Psalm 103:8) "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love."
 - Our Command - (James 1:19-20) "Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God."

- Wisdom - (Proverbs 15:1) "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger."

3. Have faith

The Bible must be coupled with faith to kill sin by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is not enough to simply memorize Bible verses and recite them in vulnerable moments of temptation. God and his word must be believed to be effectual unto killing sin. For example, Galatians 3:5 "5 Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith?" The obvious answer that Paul is after is by faith!

John Piper gives a beneficial illustration to help us understand the truth that the Spirit works to kill sin by the Word of God coupled with faith when he talked about a phone charger. When your phone is dead, what do you need to charge it again? Your phone, charger, and an outlet. What happens when you plug your phone into the charger but not the wall? Nothing! But when you connect your phone to the charger and then the charger to the wall, the power to charge your phone is present and real. Think of the Word of God and faith as the plug and outlet that the Spirit of God uses to kill our sin.

Romans 17:17b says, "The righteous shall live by faith."

Therefore, in the group setting, when someone confesses the same sin over and over again, they have memorized the verses, but nothing seems to change; ask, "Do you believe God's Word to be true for you?" You can ask that question in several different ways, but you are trying to communicate care and concern over the health of that person's faith. We all can relate to the man who cries out to Jesus, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!"

What if you don't have faith? Many will feel defeated about the strength, or the lack, of their faith. Where do we turn their attention? Romans gives us a gloriously circular exhortation to the question of, "How do I grow my faith?" Romans 10:17 "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ." When you are shepherding someone who has little to no faith, you direct them to give themselves to the Scriptures (personal study, going to church, Bible studies, etc.) and prayer.

4. Delight in Jesus

The killing sin process would be horrifically incomplete without fixating our attention upon the Person and Work of Jesus the Christ. 2 Corinthians 3:18 "18 And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit."

Everyone in the New Covenant era can behold Jesus, unencumbered, unlike in the Old Testament. And the keyword in this verse is "behold," meaning contemplating or

reflecting. When we focus upon Christ, we are being transformed; notice the passive tense here, into Christlikeness. And who is this from? The Lord who is the Spirit. So, how do we kill sin by the power of the Spirit? Answer: Look to Christ, contemplate his glory, and the Spirit makes us like Him.

The secret to killing sin is to be delighted in Jesus. The goal is to be so filled with Jesus that there will be no room for sin. Let's return to our incompleted "Anger" example. It is incomplete until you think about your particular sins in the light of how Jesus and how He was tempted in every way, yet without sin.

- Christ example: Jesus calmed the raging storm in a word, He can do the same for you. He has the power to calm the storm of anger in your soul. (This is one of the ways you apply step 4: Focus on Jesus and the truth of Him and His Person and power).

Psalm 37:4 "Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart." Delighting in Jesus is the secret to life. Delighting in Jesus is the secret to how you obey the command of Romans 8:13, and yet the Spirit is supplying the power. Delight yourself in the Lord. He is our strength. Notice in Psalm 37:4, when we delight in Him, He changes our desires to match His, and then He will give us our desires. And what are God's desires for His children? That we kill our sin and become more like Jesus.

5. Kill Sin at Redeemer Church

As described so far, the killing sin process can seemingly be accomplished without the church, the body of Christ. But that would not be true! God wants us to walk through steps 1-4 with our brothers and sisters in Christ. The Christian life is not of the Lone Ranger type. We are made to be in deep communion with one another. Simply put, God made sanctification, the process of becoming like Jesus, a community project. To say it another way, we need each other.

Titus 2:11-14 "11For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, 12training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, 13waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works."

Notice that grace is not so much a thing; it's a Person. So how did the grace of God appear? Answer: Jesus Christ put on flesh and dwelt on earth among men (John 1). And did Jesus come empty-handed? No! What did He bring with Him? Answer: Salvation! Then the grace of God trains us, as we see in verse twelve. Training is in the active, present, continuous voice. Meaning, this is ever-present grace that is active now and will always be for those given salvation through Jesus. And what does this grace teach us to do? Answer: It teaches us to say "NO!" to sin and "YES!" to righteousness. In other words, the grace of God teaches us to say no to what God hates and yes to what He loves. Once you see this, go back and look at the word "us." God's grace

teaches "us" to say no to sin and yes to righteousness. Paul could have said, "the grace of God trains 'me,'" but he doesn't; he says "us." Because killing sin is to be done in relationship/communion with other believers.

Therefore, we encourage our groups to make Life Group a priority with their presence and to be genuine, humble, and honest during accountability time. Many struggle with opening up about their sin for various reasons, but we must convince them of their forsaking graces to protect their pride.

****More than killing sin**

Another essential way to fight sin is found in verse 14. "14 [Our Savior Jesus Christ] who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works." Why did Jesus die for us? One reason is found in this verse. He wants people for himself who are zealous for good works. And in Ephesians 2:10, we find out that God had planned things for us to do before we were born! So we need to get busy giving Jesus the rewards of His sufferings. If you walk through steps 1-5 and seek to live out God's will for your life, you are well on your way to killing sin and living a good life before God.

Do not give up fighting against sin and helping others fight their own.

****Please watch the videos explaining this process as you work through this context to aid you in your study.**

Biblical Soul Care & Counseling Center

You will, however, encounter some issues that are beyond your training and skill level. But don't worry! You have built-in support. We have a thriving Soul Care Ministry for the Missional Partners and regular attenders of our church. And we are developing a counseling center for those who are members of our beloved Rockford area communities.

If you have someone in need of Soul Care in your group, please go to our website, and on the Soul Care page, there is a request form that you can fill out, and someone will get back to them shortly after.

Appendix B

One Another Commands in the N.T.

The phrase "one another" is derived from the Greek word *allelon*, which means "one another, each other; mutually, reciprocally." It occurs 100 times in the New Testament. Approximately 59 of those occurrences are specific commands teaching us how (and how not) to relate to one another. Obedience to those commands is imperative. It forms the basis for all authentic Christian communities and directly impacts our witness to the world (John 13:35). In addition to *allelon*, the Bible uses other words and phrases to relate to others. With that in mind, the following list is not exhaustive and primarily focuses on the use of *allelon*.

Positive Commands

Love one another (John 13:34 - This command occurs at least 16 times)
Be devoted to one another (Romans 12:10)
Honor one another above yourselves (Romans 12:10)
Live in harmony with one another (Romans 12:16)
Build up one another (Romans 14:19; 1 Thessalonians 5:11)
Be like-minded towards one another (Romans 15:5)
Accept one another (Romans 15:7)
Admonish one another (Romans 15:14; Colossians 3:16)
Greet one another (Romans 16:16)
Care for one another (1 Corinthians 12:25)
Serve one another (Galatians 5:13)
Bear one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2)
Forgive one another (Ephesians 4:2, 32; Colossians 3:13)
Be patient with one another (Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 3:13)
Speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15, 25)
Be kind and compassionate to one another (Ephesians 4:32)
Speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (Ephesians 5:19)
Submit to one another (Ephesians 5:21, 1 Peter 5:5)
Consider others better than yourselves (Philippians 2:3)
Look to the interests of one another (Philippians 2:4)
Bear with one another (Colossians 3:13)
Teach one another (Colossians 3:16)
Comfort one another (1 Thessalonians 4:18)
Encourage one another (1 Thessalonians 5:11)
Exhort one another (Hebrews 3:13)
Stir up [provoke, stimulate] one another to love, and good works (Hebrews 10:24)
Show hospitality to one another (1 Peter 4:9)
Employ the gifts that God has given us for the benefit of one another (1 Peter 4:10)
Clothe yourselves with humility towards one another (1 Peter 5:5)
Pray for one another (James 5:16)

Confess your faults to one another (James 5:16)

Negative Commands (how not to treat one another)

Do not lie to one another (Colossians 3:9)

Stop passing judgment on one another (Romans 14:13)

If you keep on biting and devouring each other... you'll be destroyed by each other (Galatians 5:15)

Let us not become conceited, provoking, and envying each other (Galatians 5:26)

Do not slander one another (James 4:11)

Don't grumble against each other (James 5:9)

We do all this because we are, in a real sense, "members of one another" (Romans 12:5; Ephesians 4:25).

Appendix C

X-Ray Questions from David Powlison

1. What do you love? Hate?
2. What do you want, desire, crave, lust, and wish for? What desires do you serve and obey?
3. What do you seek, aim for, and pursue? What are your goals and expectations?
4. Where do you bank your hopes?
5. What do you fear? What do you not want? What do you tend to worry about?
6. What do you feel like doing?
7. What do you think you need? What are your "felt needs"?
8. What are your plans, agendas, strategies, and intentions designed to accomplish?
9. What makes you tick? What sun does your planet revolve around? Where do you find your garden of delight? What lights up your world? What fountain of life, hope, and delight do you drink from? What food sustains your life? What really matters to you? What castle do you build in the clouds? What pipe dreams tantalize or terrify you? What do you organize your life around?
10. Where do you find refuge, safety, comfort, escape, pleasure, security?
11. What or whom do you trust?
12. Whose performance matters? On whose shoulders does the well-being of your world rest? Who can make it better, make it work, make it safe, make it successful?
13. Whom must you please? Whose opinion of you counts? From whom do you desire approval and fear rejection? Whose value system do you measure yourself against? In whose eyes are you living? Whose love and approval do you need?
14. Who are your role models? What kind of person do you think you ought to be or want to be?
15. On your deathbed, what would sum up your life as worthwhile? What gives your life meaning?
16. How do you define and weigh success or failure, right or wrong, desirable or undesirable, in any particular situation?
17. What would make you feel rich, secure, prosperous? What must you get to make life sing?
18. What would bring you the greatest pleasure, happiness, and delight? The greatest pain and misery?
19. Whose coming into political power would make everything better?
20. Whose victory or success would make your life happy? How do you define victory and success?
21. What do you see as your rights? What do you feel entitled to?

22. In what situations do you feel pressured or tense? Confident and relaxed? When you are pressured, where do you turn? What do you think about? What are your escapes? What do you escape from?
23. What do you want to get out of life? What payoff do you seek out of the things you do? What do you get out of doing that?
24. What do you pray for?
25. What do you think about most often? What preoccupies or obsesses you? In the morning, to what does your mind drift instinctively? What is your mindset?
26. What do you talk about? What is important to you? What attitudes do you communicate?
27. How do you spend your time? What are your priorities?
28. What are your characteristic fantasies, either pleasurable or fearful? Daydreams? What do your night dreams revolve around?
29. What are the functional beliefs that control how you interpret your life and determine how you act?
30. What are your idols or false gods? In what do you place your trust, or set your hopes? What do you turn to or seek? Where do you take refuge? Who is the savior, judge, controller, provider, protector in your world? Whom do you serve? What "voice" controls you?
31. How do you live for yourself?
32. How do you live as a slave of the devil?
33. How do you implicitly say, "If only..." (to get what you want, avoid what you don't want, keep what you have)?
34. What instinctively seems and feels right to you? What are your opinions, the things you feel are true?
35. Where do you find your identity? How do you define who you are?

Appendix D

Life Group Covenant Form

This contract communicates what every small group member commits to maintaining and defines the guidelines for our community.

- I will make my life group meetings a priority, and if I'm unable to attend or running late, I will call ahead.
- I will come to my life group meeting prepared and ready to participate.
- I will commit to my life group to focus on applying God's Word to my life.
- I will maintain the confidentiality of the personal information that is shared within my life group. I understand my life group leader may communicate appropriate information to leadership as necessary, and I trust his or her discernment.
- I will be accountable to my life group concerning my personal and spiritual goals.
- I will commit to a small group that is open to new members, and, as it grows, we will seek to multiply to further God's work.
- I will encourage other members to cultivate a daily quiet time with God.
- I will pursue opportunities to share what God has done in our lives with those who do not know Jesus Christ.
- I will pray and support the leadership of Redeemer Church to continue to seek God's direction for our Life Group Ministry.

Appendix E

Redeemer Church Visional Roadmap Mission-Vision-Structure-Strategy

Redeemer Church Mission

Glorifying God Through the Fulfillment of The Great Commission.

Redeemer Church Vision

To see every regular attender at Redeemer Church progress through the PATH of DISCIPLESHIP and to reproduce discipplers through church planting endeavors.

Redeemer Discipleship Structure

Path of Discipleship

CONVERT to Christ	Belief in the good news of Jesus
COMMUNE with God	A growing relationship with God
COMMIT to Redeemer	Investing in one another
SHARE your faith	Boldly proclaiming the gospel
REPRODUCE Discipplers	Intentional relationships

We Ask: Have you repented from your sin and placed your faith in Jesus?
We Ask: How are you growing in your relationship with God?
We Ask: How are you investing in others at Redeemer Church?
We Ask: When is the last time you shared your faith?
We Ask: Who are you walking through the Path of Discipleship with?

Strategy For Consistent Messaging

If our mission is glorifying God in the fulfillment of The Great Commission and our vision is aimed at ensuring every regular attender of Redeemer Church is on the Path of Discipleship, then our strategy starts with the integration of the Path of Discipleship throughout every ministry of Redeemer.

Three elements to ensure The Path of Discipleship stays in front of our people:

Verbal – In every message, in every ministry (LG, Men, Women, Kids, Students, 20s, EquipU, leadership pipeline (preaching lab, SLT, Internships, parenting Ministry etc.)

Visual – Website, social media, lobby, auditorium, resources, employee handbook, etc.

Validated (Celebrated) – Culture is created by what we tolerate and what we celebrate. We need to consistently celebrate when people meet milestones. We celebrate new missional partners, baptisms, Life Change, people who serve, people who share their faith, new LG leaders and people who are raising up other disciples, etc.)