

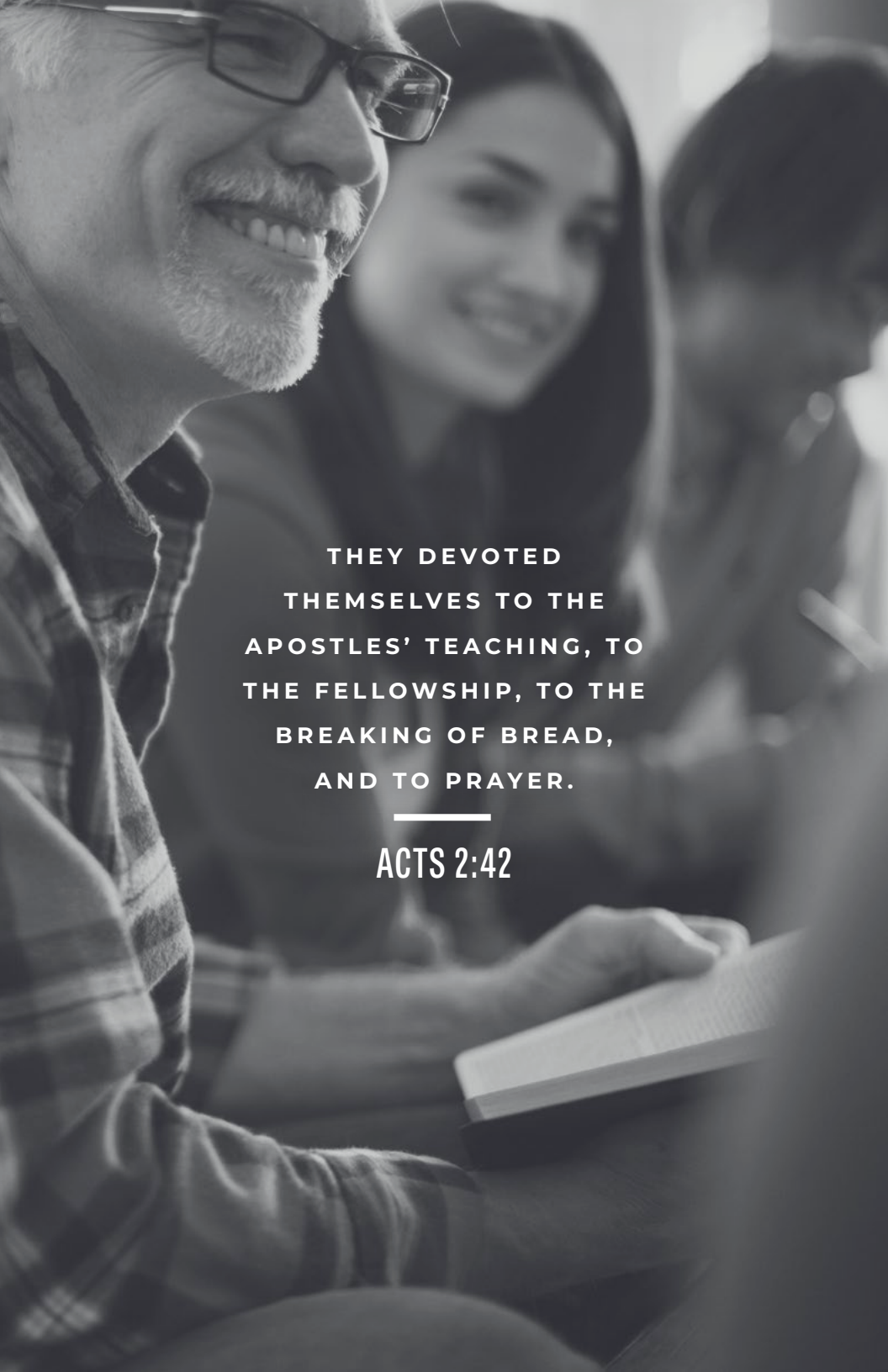
LIFE GROUP 30 DAY STARTUP

4 DISCUSSION GUIDES
TO HELP YOU LAUNCH A
LIFE-CHANGING GROUP



LEADER GUIDE





THEY DEVOTED
THEMSELVES TO THE
APOSTLES' TEACHING, TO
THE FELLOWSHIP, TO THE
BREAKING OF BREAD,
AND TO PRAYER.

ACTS 2:42

HOW TO USE THIS LAUNCH SERIES

It's finally here! You have set a meeting time, you have called your friends, and you are ready to start your Life Group. We want to give you a game plan for the first 30 days that will help you create a thriving group where people can experience life change.

This booklet will help you facilitate the first four weeks of your Life Group. The discussions that you have with your group in the first month will cast your Life Group vision as it introduces the elements from the Life Group Starter Guide.

For the next four weeks, you will use this booklet as a Leader Guide for your discussions. Your members can download the Participant Guide for each of these conversations at

longhollow.com/groupresources.

Below is an overview of the four discussions. Before each discussion guide, there is a Leader Preparation section that will give you a short checklist of things to focus on and a podcast episode to listen to that provides tips. In each week's discussion guide, there are additional Leader Notes in italics to help you best facilitate the discussion with your group. These notes will not be included in the Participant Guides.

WEEK 1: Strong Beginnings

WEEK 2: The Impact Our Life Group Will Have On Us

WEEK 3: The Impact Our Life Group Will Have On Others

WEEK 4: Planning Your Hangout Night

WEEK 1: STRONG BEGINNINGS

LEADER PREPARATION

BEFORE GROUP:

- **Invite Your Friends:** Reach out to some of your friends and ask them to help you start your Life Group. Having a core group of people (4-10 people) is a crucial part of starting strong.
- **Register Your Life Group:** Let us know the details about your group so we can support you as you lead and let others know about your group. Go to longhollow.com/register.
- **Listen to Group Leader Podcast:** In Season 5, Episode 6, we give you tips on how to have an awesome first week with your Life Group!

DURING GROUP:

- **Share Participant Guide Link:** After getting to know one another, send the Participant Guide link to those in your group.
- **Facilitate Group Discussion:** The two things you want to accomplish this week are helping people get to know one another and to set expectations for the group.
- **Start A Group Chat:** Create a plan for how you will communicate with everybody on an ongoing basis. This may be GroupMe, text messaging, Facebook, or some other platform. Just make sure people will use it and you can add new people as your group grows.



RECOMMENDED LISTENING

S05:E06

WEEK 1 OF YOUR LIFE GROUP

GET TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER (40 MINUTES)

Spend the first 40 minutes together hanging out. Once you gather everybody together, quickly share the plan for the night. Then, spend time having people share their answers to the questions below. This time should be fun and lighthearted.

- What's your name?
- What do you do for a living?
- Where are you from originally?
- Ask questions from the Life Group Icebreaker Deck

WHAT IS A LIFE GROUP? (15 MINUTES)

Once you have finished the first section of the night, share about your excitement for the weeks ahead. Also, use the text below (also found in their participant guide) and ask people in the group to read each section.



Life Groups are life-changing communities where you can belong, believe, and become.

- 1. Life-Changing Community:** Life Group is more than a Bible Study; it is a community. We believe that life change happens best in circles, not rows. It's in relationships that we experience the love of Christ as we live the "one anothers" of the faith. For this reason, any time we gather, we will spend time laughing and getting to know one another.
- 2. Belong: Provide a place where you can meet Jesus in a group where you are welcomed and accepted.** Our Life Group is a place where people can come just as they are and meet Jesus just as He is. Regardless of where you are in life or your relationship with Jesus, our Life Group is a safe and transparent place where you will experience the love of Christ. It's a place where you can be real with God and real with others.

- 3. Believe: Provide a place where you can know Jesus through His Word and His people.** With Acts 2 as our example, we commit to reading and

“AS GOD’S WORD BEGINS TO WORK IN OUR LIVES, WE WILL SEE PEOPLE MEET JESUS AND KNOW HIM IN A DEEP AND MORE PERSONAL WAY.”

discussing the Word of God and enjoying fellowship with one another. Our discussions will focus on how God’s Word applies to our lives today because the measure of maturity is not information, but obedience. Each week, we will look at the passage from that

week’s sermon. As God’s Word begins to work in our lives, we will see people meet Jesus and know Him in a deep and more personal way.

- 4. Become : Provide a place where you can follow Jesus as you become who God designed you to be.** Following Jesus looks different for each person because it involves using the unique gift set (skills, passions, personality) that God has given each person. One of the strategic ways that our groups do this is by offering opportunities for people to use their gifts. Within any group, there are many different ways you can help: facilitating, hosting, coordinating, planning hangouts, and more. The second way that group members can become who God designed them to be is by joining D-Groups where they can meet regularly in a gender-specific group of 3-5 people for a season of accelerated spiritual transformation.

From these four explanations, which most excites you about how God will use this group in your life?

WHEN WILL WE MEET? (5 MINUTES)

Our group will not follow a schedule, but a rhythm . The Life Group's rhythm looks like this:

- **Meet Weekly:** We will gather weekly on the same day and time. Normally we will go through the passage from Sunday's sermon. For the first few weeks, we will go through specific passages that best describe how God will work through this Life Group to bring about change in both your life and in the lives of those who aren't here yet. Below is a recommended meeting flow:
 - **Hangout Time (20-30 minutes):** We will spend time laughing and welcoming new people. We may include snacks and/or a meal for this time.
 - **Group Discussion (45-60 minutes):** We will discuss the weekly passage and how we can apply it to our lives.
 - **Prayer (10-20 minutes):** We will finish by praying for one another.
- **Party Monthly:** Once a month, we will set aside one of our weekly meetings for a Hangout Night. These are nights where we have fun together and invite new people to join our group. We'll talk more about Hangout Nights on Week 4.
- **Serve Quarterly:** Four times a year, we'll serve the community as a group.

Finish the night with a prayer for God to bless the group so that it may greatly

WEEK 2: THE IMPACT LIFE GROUP WILL HAVE ON US

LEADER PREPARATION

BEFORE GROUP:

- **Listen to Group Leader Podcast:** In Season 5, Episode 7, we prepare you to discuss Acts 2 and help your Life Group members commit to actively participating in your group.
- **Register Your Life Group:** If you haven't already, let us know the details about your group so we can support you as you lead and let others know about your group. Go to longhollow.com/register.
- **Remind People About Group:** Make sure to remind people about the group by sending a quick message in the group. Consider asking someone to bring a snack for everybody.

DURING GROUP:

- **Share Participant Guide Link:** After your icebreaker, send the Participant Guide link to those in your group.
- **Facilitate Group Discussion:** In this discussion, the group will discuss Acts 2 and how it gives us the model for our Life Group. For the application, your group will focus on how God will impact their life through the group as they commit to being involved.



RECOMMENDED LISTENING

S05:E07

WEEK 2: THE IMPACT LIFE GROUP HAS ON US

ICEBREAKER

Ask a question from your Life Group Icebreaker Deck. Don't ask everybody to answer, but have a few share. After about ten minutes, transition into the CONTEXT section.



CONTEXT

Today, we will be reading through a passage in Acts 2. Jesus has just died, risen, and spent forty days with His disciples preparing them to continue his ministry in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. After the Holy Spirit descends down onto the disciples, the author Luke gives a summary of how the Early Church functioned. The principles from this passage give us a model for how our community can experience life change through Jesus Christ.

PASSAGE - ACTS 2:42-47

⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and signs were being performed through the apostles. ⁴⁴ Now all the believers were together and held all things in common. ⁴⁵ They sold their possessions and property and distributed the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple, and broke bread from house to house. They ate their food with joyful and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. Every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

DISCUSSION

- 1. This passage highlights the three commitments that the church makes. What are they?** *The Early Church committed to engaging in the Word, Fellowship, and Prayer.*
- 2. Practically, what do you think it looks like for us to devote ourselves to these three things within our group?** *We will engage in the Word by regularly discussing a Bible passage that we went through that Sunday. We will regularly fellowship with one another by having scheduled time to hang out every week and hosting designated Hangout Nights once a month. We will commit to sharing prayer requests and praying for one another.*
- 3. In verses 43-47, Luke describes the church's impact in two ways: inward and outward. In what ways do you see how the church's commitment to these three devotions strengthened its members and the community within? There was unity, mutual care, and generosity (vv.44-45) How can you see it doing the same for us? When we gather around the Bible and share not just what God says, but how it applies to our life, it will lead to us growing in our relationship with God and loving one another.**
- 4. Luke describes the impact the church had on its community as people were added daily. In what ways do you see how our group could have the same type of impact? The Christian community is one of the greatest apologetics. When we invite new people to our group to experience that community, it will point them to Jesus and provide us with opportunities to share the Gospel.**

In the final 15 minutes, have people in the group read the next page and discuss the final question.

NEXT STEP:

As we commit to the Word, fellowship, and prayer, God will do something in and through our group. Here are two simple NEXT STEPS you can take to be a part of this life-changing experience.

Contribute To The Group.

We want every person to engage in our Life Group so that you can BECOME who God designed you to be. A Life Group is not a place to simply observe, but to participate. Our group will be better when you share your perspective in the conversation, encourage and serve someone, and use your talents, skills, and personality to help make this a group that people love!

How can you contribute to this group to both serve one another and serve those who will join us in the future?

Plan To Join or Start a D-Group.

Jesus' final command to His disciples was that they go and make disciples of all nations. Our Life Groups actually provide us an easy way to do exactly that. As you grow in your relationship with God and your relationships strengthen with one another, you will long for "something more." Discipleship Groups (D-Groups) are gender-specific groups of 3-5 that meet together for a season of accelerated spiritual transformation. These groups meet weekly for 12-18 months for accountability, and to read, journal and memorize scripture. These groups eventually launch into new groups that help new believers experience the same dynamic environment. For more information, see the D-Group Overview in the Participant Guide.

As we continue meeting together, consider asking some others in the group to join you in a D-Group. Long Hollow provides excellent resources to help take the pressure off of leading and equip you to have a thriving group that encourages and challenges you in your spiritual journey.

WEEK 3: THE IMPACT LIFE GROUP WILL HAVE ON OTHERS

LEADER PREPARATION

BEFORE GROUP:

- **Listen to Group Leader Podcast:** In Season 5, Episode 8, we share how you can get your group not just thinking about themselves, but the people that they can invite into your group.
- **Register Your Life Group:** If you haven't already, let us know the details about your group so we can support you as you lead and let others know about your group. Go to longhollow.com/register.

DURING GROUP:

- **Share Participant Guide Link:** After your icebreaker, send the Participant Guide link to those in your group.
- **Facilitate Group Discussion:** In this discussion, the group will discuss Matthew 9 and how Jesus spent time with people who weren't believers and the world looked down on.
- **Hand out Who's Your One Cards:** As an application to the discussion, have each person take a card and bring it back the next week with someone in their life who they will pray for, invest in, and invite to the group.



RECOMMENDED LISTENING

S05:E08

WEEK 3: THE IMPACT LIFE GROUP HAS ON OTHERS

ICEBREAKER

Ask a question from your Life Group Icebreaker Deck. Don't ask everybody to answer, but have a few share. After about ten minutes, transition into the CONTEXT section.



CONTEXT

This story with Jesus falls between several miracle accounts as He is in the middle of His earthly ministry. In this passage, we will see Jesus take a detour from those miracles and spend time in a tax collector's office where a different type of miracle takes place: life change.

PASSAGE - MATTHEW 9:9-13

⁹ As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office, and he said to him, "Follow me," and he got up and followed him.

¹⁰ While he was reclining at the table in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came to eat with Jesus and his disciples. ¹¹ When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" ¹² Now when he heard this, he said, "It is not those who are well who need a doctor, but those who are sick. ¹³ Go and learn what this means: I desire mercy and not sacrifice. For I didn't come to call the righteous, but sinners."

“A LIFE GROUP IS A
PLACE WHERE PEOPLE
CAN COME JUST AS THEY
ARE AND MEET JESUS
JUST AS HE IS.”

DISCUSSION

1. **As a tax collector, how was Matthew seen by society?** *A tax collector was considered scum in society. They worked for the Roman Empire and they always kept part of the taxes for themselves. They were seen as traitors and thieves. How should Jesus' invitation to a tax collector impact the relationships in our life?* *Jesus' relationship with the outcast (tax collectors, prostitutes, Gentiles, etc.) shows us that Christ's love extends to all people. This should move us to always invite people regardless of their situation.*
2. **What does the full room of tax collectors say about Jesus' impact on Matthew?** *He has experienced life change. 1) Matthew stopped everything and followed Jesus. 2) He hosted a banquet for Jesus and 3) He invited his friends to meet Jesus. When Christ impacts our life, it leads us to share the good news with others. Can you share how Jesus has impacted your life in a similar way?*
3. **In verse 11, what does the Pharisees' question show us about their heart?** *The Pharisees' self-righteousness blinded them 1) to the mercy that Christ was extending to the tax collectors and 2) their own sickness.*
4. **In verse 12, Jesus says He came for the sick, not the healthy. What do you think He meant by these two descriptions?** *We know that none of us are healthy (Romans 3:23) and that all of us are sick. Jesus' statement was ironic, because he told it to the Pharisees' who considered themselves healthy. Christ's statement shows that he came to save the lost, but it required people to receive him with humility, not self-righteousness.*

Finish the night with reading through the next page with your group. You will discuss the final question and pass out the ONE cards provided with the Launch Kit. You will close the night with prayer and a reminder to bring the card back.

NEXT STEP:

Jesus' interaction with Matthew is one of many where He spent time with people regardless of how society saw them. He never required people to get their lives together before He loved them. Jesus created a place in His life where all people could be accepted and experience the love of God. Likewise, we must create a place where people feel welcomed and accepted. Todd Engstrom has a great quote about the power of creating a place to belong before belief is required:

"The most persuasive argument for the Christian faith is the Christian community. The majority of conversions throughout church history have come not through argumentation, but through belonging to a meaningful community before belief is ever required."

As a Life Group, we will intentionally create an environment where people can come JUST AS THEY ARE and meet Jesus JUST AS HE IS. Regularly, we will bring a friend with us to Life Group. What are some practical ways that we can make sure that person feels welcomed by our group?

WHO'S YOUR ONE?

As a Life Group, we want every member to identify one person in their life who would benefit from a group like this. Someone who doesn't know Jesus, isn't involved in church, and lives near you.

As a group we will encourage each other to pray daily for that person, invest weekly in that person, and invite them to our group's monthly Hangout Night.

This week, write down the name of that person on your card and bring it to Life Group next week. We will pray over those names and plan our monthly Hangout Night with that person in mind.



(FIRST NAME ONLY)

PRAY DAILY
INVEST WEEKLY
INVITE TO THE NEXT RIGHT THING

WEEK 4: PLANNING YOUR HANGOUT NIGHT

LEADER PREPARATION

BEFORE GROUP: _____

- **Listen to Group Leader Podcast:** In Season 5, Episode 9, we share how you can not just prepare an awesome Hangout Night, but how to help your people invite their ONE to the Hangout Night.
- **Remind People To Bring Their ONE cards:** You will discuss these more in your group this week.

DURING GROUP: _____

- **Share Participant Guide Link:** After your icebreaker, send the Participant Guide link to those in your group.
- **Facilitate Group Discussion:** This week's discussion will be different than the previous weeks. We will continue last week's discussion by discussing their ONE cards and how we can intentionally create an INVITE opportunity for their people.
- **Plan Your Hangout Night:** The group will plan next week's Hangout Night and pray over the names they plan to invite.

AFTER GROUP: _____

- **Remind People To Invite Their ONE to the Hangout Night.**
- **Remind People the following week to invite their ONE to next week's gathering.**



RECOMMENDED LISTENING

S05:E09

WEEK 4: PLANNING AN
AWESOME HANGOUT NIGHT

ICEBREAKER

Ask a question from your Life Group Icebreaker Deck. Don't ask everybody to answer, but have a few share. After about ten minutes, transition into the CONTEXT section.



CONTEXT

Today, we won't go through a new passage, but we will continue the conversation we started last week about how we can follow Jesus' example by identifying ONE person in our life that we intentionally want to invest in.

DISCUSSION

If you are comfortable sharing, whose name did you write down and why?

Now that we have all identified one person in our life that would benefit from a group like ours, we want to do three things:

1. **PRAY daily:** We will ask God to make this person aware of Christ's love and their need for Him and to give them the faith to repent and believe.

Without sharing intimate details about your ONE, what are specific prayers you can pray for your ONE?

2. **INVEST weekly:** We will build a relationship with this person so we can share Christ's love with them. As we invest in someone's life, we build trust, which creates more opportunities to share the Gospel.

What are some simple, practical ways that you can invest in your relationship with your ONE? How would that create opportunities to demonstrate and discuss Jesus with them?

3. **INVITE to the next right thing:** We want to invite people into a growing relationship with Jesus. When people aren't there yet, we can invite them to belong in our community before they believe.

NEXT STEP:

As each of us are praying for and investing in our ONE, we want to intentionally create a place where you can invite them to belong in our community. Once a month, our Life Group will host a Hangout Night.

As the name suggests, Hangout Nights are just nights where we hang out with one another. It's a time where we can get to know one another better as well as invite new people to join us. Though we can invite someone new any week, Hangout Nights are intentional nights designed with the new person in mind.

Hangouts can be as simple or involved as you want them to be. You can grill out, go to Top Golf, complete an Escape Room, or host a Trivia Night. It's totally up to your group. Just choose things that allow your group to connect with one another and something your ONE will be interested in joining.

Next week, we will have our first Hangout Night. What should we do? What do we need to coordinate to make this event fun?

Use this time to give people responsibilities (e.g. food list, make reservations, etc.)

During this week, each of us will be inviting our ONE to join us. How can we make sure that they feel welcome and accepted?

Finish the night praying as a group for a fun night together and that each member's ONE joins next week.

WHAT TO DO NEXT?

WITH YOUR GROUP:

- **Have An Awesome Hangout Night:** Have a great time as a group next week and help new people get connected into your group. We recommend you try to have these nights monthly.
- **Keep Meeting Weekly:** As you keep meeting weekly, we will send you the week's group discussion through our Group Leader Email. You can also access it at longhollow.com/groupresources.
- **Encourage People To Participate:** Whether you give Life Group members a role in the group or ask them to join a D-Group, continue to encourage them to grow in their relationship with Jesus by participating in the group.

WITH OUR STAFF:

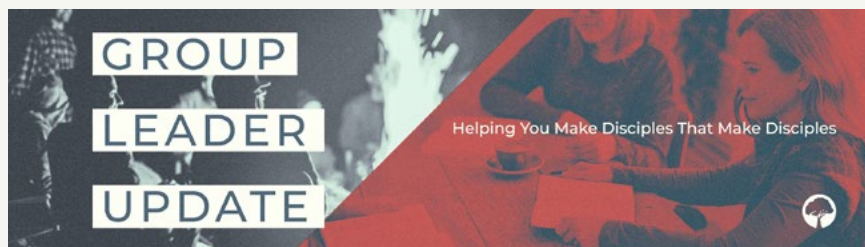
- **Let Us Know How It's Going:** We will be sending you a Group Pulse Check in the weeks ahead. We want to hear how you are doing personally, how your group is going, and how we can help.



Subscribe To The Group Leader Podcast: We will continue to release new episodes to best serve you as a Life Group Leader. Subscribe (if you haven't already) so that you can get weekly group tips.



- **Read The Weekly Group Leader Email:** Each week, we will send you the weekly curriculum, helpful tips, and encouragement.



We are so thankful for you. Our staff is praying for you by name and praying for the people in your group and those who will soon join. If we can help in any way, don't hesitate to reach out at groups@longhollow.com



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