

Life Group Study Guide

The mission and vision of Jesus and His church can be summed up in the following verses:

(Luke 19:10) "for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

(Matthew 9:35) "Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness."

(Matthew 28:19-20) "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in^[a] the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

We as the church should be doing Jesus Vision and His Mission. There is not another vision or mission for our lives or his church!

Vision Statement

"To whole-heartedly participate in God's mission to redeem people and restore His world through Jesus Christ."

This is the vision statement of our church. We exist as Family Church to help, through the power of the Holy Spirit, redeem people and restore them to Jesus.

Question: Are you fulfilling this vision for your life?
Are you helping to fulfill this vision for Family Church?

Mission Statement

*"To **CONNECT** people to Jesus Christ and to one another – to **GROW** in the Christian virtues of Faith, Hope and Love – to **SERVE** others in Christ-like humility."*

- **We are on mission to connect, grow and serve.**

We connect in two ways: to God (worship/prayer) and to each other (fellowship)

Question: Are you connecting to God?
Are you connecting to his church? (Life Groups, relationships)

- **We are on mission as a church to grow in Christ.**

Question: Are you growing in God?
How? What are you doing to see this happen?
How have you grown in the past 6 months?
Compare where you were to where you are now.

- **We are on mission as a church to serve others.**

Question: How are you serving others? What specifically are you doing?
How are you serving to build His local church – Family Church?
How are you serving to build this Life Group?

3 Primary Words

1. Connect

Philippians 3:7-11

⁷But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. ¹⁰I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.

How do you connect with God? Here are some tips:

Experiencing God's Presence

- a) Go to a quiet place & still your thoughts & emotions (Be still & know that I am God Psa. 46:10)
- b) Meditate on a verse of scripture, saying it softly over & over to yourself until you can say it (or a portion of it) with your eyes closed. As you repeat the scripture allow yourself to see it with the eyes of your heart.
 - What is the picture you see in your mind's eye as you repeat the scripture?
 - What does the scripture reveal about the heart of God?
 - What is the Lord speaking to you personally as you see the truth of this scripture? (Put yourself in the picture of this scripture in your mind.)
- c) Take time to pray, saying to God what you have seen and heard from Him today.

Question: What are some good ways you've found to connect with God?
Any good techniques?
Best times?

2. Grow

2 Peter 1:3-8, ³*His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.* ⁴*Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.* ⁵*For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge;* ⁶*and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness;* ⁷*and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.* ⁸*For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

How do you grow in God? Here are some tips:

Prayerful Reading of the Scriptures

You have to spend time in a systematic, consistent study of His word and in prayer! There is no other way!!!

How to spend time in His word and pray:

- Silence – You have to get the noise out! Turn off the TV and radio. Get in a room by yourself and block off time and distractions. Take several deep breaths and allow the silence to **quiet your inside clutter**
- Read the Word - Read a brief portion of Scripture, listening for a **key phrase or word**
- Meditate - **Reflect** on what you've read. (*Allow the Word to sink in from your head to your heart*)
- Contemplate - In silence **listen** (*instead of talking to God or thinking your thoughts*) and allow God to speak to you. (*God is constantly speaking but we seldom hear Him [1 Kings 19:11-12]*)
- Action - **How is God speaking** to you through this scripture? (*pray this back to Him, committing yourself to applying it*)

To help you focus in prayer time:

- Start by simply shut your eyes and enjoy the presence of the Lord. Reflect on a scripture or character of God. You may start focusing by putting on a worship song, then lead right into prayer.
- In your mind look at him (focus on him) as he gazes back at you with his full loving attention and asks you to sit with him for awhile.
- Gently return your attention to him by saying his name whenever you find your mind drifting to other things.

Question: What are some good ways you've found to grow in God?
 Any good techniques? Best times?
 What devotionals are good? Books?

3. Serve

Mark 10:45: "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Out of time spent with God (reading His word, praying, hearing from him), you should be compelled to show others His love and serve. You serve inside the local church but most service should be done OUTSIDE the local church. Just look around and open up your heart. See others as Jesus sees them – with agape love. You'll find tons to do to serve people.

To serve God is to serve others and is the greatest form of charity: the pure love of Christ. Jesus Christ said, "**A new commandment I give unto you, That you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.**" (John 13:34).

Here are some ways to serve God by serving others. Think about these categories and come up with a specific way you can serve others.

1. Serve God With Your Family – Don't make excuses because you have kids, take them with you.
2. Give Tithes and Offerings – Give to the church the tithe, listen to see if God is asking you to give to others
3. Volunteer in Your Community – find a way to show Christ in the community
4. Home Visits - go to the home of someone you are reaching out to and ask what you can do to help them in a practical way
5. Donate Clothing and Other Goods – find people to bless with things you have outgrown (especially your children's clothes)
6. Be a Friend – take someone to lunch
7. Serve God by Serving Children – baby sit someone's kids while they go out to eat. Serve in the preschool
8. Mourn with Those that Mourn – who do you know that is still hurting from a loss or tragedy? How can you serve them?
9. Follow Inspiration – Listen to God to lead you. Look around for serving right where you are at.
10. Share Your Talents – what has God gifted you with to use for Him?
11. Simple Acts of Service – This doesn't cost any money. What little thing can you do?
12. Use Your Creativity
13. Serve God by Humbling Yourself – what have you noticed that needed done around the church or someone's house that you just thought someone else would get around to doing? Do that!

Question: What are some good ways you've found to serve others?
 What areas in our church need servants right now? What are you going to do about it?