



BREAKOUT : Creekside's LifeGroup Study Session 1 – The Reality Choice

Welcome to Creekside's LifeGroup study, BREAKOUT! Over these next eight weeks, your LifeGroup will explore how to begin to break free from life's hurts, hang-ups and habits. Together, you'll read through the beatitudes, the sermon that Jesus taught in Matthew 5. These teachings from Jesus are a powerful guide for us to experience God's blessing in our lives, particularly as we look to Him for freedom. May God bless you and your group on this journey!

GROUP GUIDELINES: BREAKOUT has the potential to have a life-changing impact on each group member and your group as a whole. The Group Guidelines are a great guide to help you maximize what God will do in your life. Before you begin your study together, read through the Group Guidelines at the end of this handout and talk about them as a group.

CONVERSATION STARTER: If you could participate in a reality TV show, which would you choose? Why?

MEMORY VERSE: On Sunday, October 14th, we handed out a bookmark with the beatitudes, the teachings of Jesus from Matthew 5:3-10. Our hope is that your LifeGroup would memorize one beatitude each week that you're together. Bring your bookmark to group, read the beatitude out loud together, then put your bookmarks away and quote the beatitude from memory. Here's our first one.

"God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs." Matthew 5:3

VIDEO: Watch session 1 together (www.breakoutseries.ca)

STUDY:

Today's study is called "The Reality Choice". The goal of our time together is to explore teachings from the Bible about this choice and to take steps to make this choice personally.

- If you could summarize the theme of the video in one sentence, what would you say?
- How has watching the video helped you understand our theme of BREAKOUT?

Read the following quote from Rick Warren.

"Maybe you're thinking this study is only for people with serious addictions, for people whose lives seem out of control. Well, I believe the Bible teaches that all of us have some form of addiction. Sin is addicting and "all have sinned." This means we've all created ungodly and unhealthy methods for handling life. Not one of us is untainted, and because of sin, we've all hurt ourselves, we've all hurt other people, and others have hurt us."

Life's Healing Choices Introduction

- What do you think about the idea that all of us have hurts, hang-ups and habits we need to address in our lives? Do you agree? Why or why not?
- Has there been a time in your life when you've thought your sin isn't a big deal? What changed your mind?
- What might you say to a follower of Jesus who says, "I don't think I have any significant hurts, habits or hang-ups"?

READ Isaiah 57:18-19

"I have seen what they do, but I will heal them anyway! I will lead them, I will comfort those who mourn, bringing words of praise to their lips. May they have abundant peace, both near and far," says the LORD who heals them.

These verses are God's words to Israel but they apply to us today. God knows we have sinned, but He has decided to heal us (forgive us) anyway.

- What are the promises that God gives us in these verses? See how many you can write down as a group.
- How do these promises tie into the hurts, hang-ups and habits we deal with?
- "I will heal them anyway!" Salvation is all about God's grace. It's about His decision to intervene on our behalf. What might "healing" look like for you in the coming weeks?

READ Romans 7:18-25, 8:1

- Paul uses the Greek word *sarx* (human nature or flesh) to refer to the proneness to sin that we all struggle with. The analogy he uses for this struggle is slavery. We are slaves to sin. (vs. 25) What does Paul say in this passage about the experience of battling sin? See if your group can come up with 4 or 5 statements about what this battle is like.
- How do these verses in Romans 7 help us make the Reality Choice?
- Why is Romans 8:1 so crucial to understand in the context of our battle with sin?

PRAYER

This past Sunday we handed out an inventory at Creekside that lists areas you might identify as a hurt, hang-up or habit in your life. For the BREAKOUT LifeGroup series, we encourage you to identify 1 area that you would like to see God help you begin to break free from in the next 8 weeks. As a group, you are encouraged to share that area with one another and then pray for one another for freedom. If you would like a copy of the inventory we used on Sunday, you can find it at this link (www.breakoutseries.ca)

TIPS for sharing and prayer.

- If you are a mixed group of men and women, you can subgroup into women only and men only for this time.
- If you are a larger group, you can subgroup into same gender smaller groups or pairs.
- Confidentiality is key. What is shared in group should stay in group.

- What hurt, hang-up or habit would you like to see God begin to set you free from over the next eight weeks? Make a commitment as a group to pray for this one area for the next eight weeks.

GROUP GUIDELINES

In your first group meeting, whether you are a new group or reconvening, it is important to agree on guidelines. These guidelines will help you lay the foundation for a healthy group experience. Feel free to add or modify these guidelines to what will best suit your group experience.

We agree to the following values:

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| Clear Purpose: | To FOLLOW JESUS, LOVE GOD and LOVE PEOPLE. |
| Group Attendance: | To prioritize the group meeting and let the group know if I'm going to be late or absent. |
| Safe Environment: | To create a safe place where people can be heard and feel loved (no quick answers, snap judgments or simple fixes). |
| Confidentiality: | To keep anything that is shared strictly confidential and within the group. |
| Conflict Resolution: | To avoid gossip and immediately resolve any concerns by following the principles of Matthew 18:15-17. |
| Spiritual Health: | To give group members permission to speak into my life and help me live a healthy, balanced spiritual life that is pleasing to God. |
| Welcome Newcomers: | To invite friends who might benefit from this and warmly welcome newcomers. |
| Building Relationships: | To get to know other members of the group and pray for them regularly. |
| Sharing Roles: | That each group member would be open to having a role in the group that is a ministry to the other group members. |