

Small Group Leader's Guide

Tips for Success

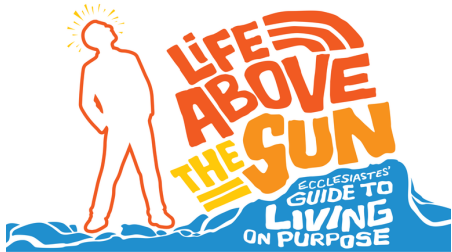


John Maxwell likes to say “everything rises and falls on leadership.” The success of your small group depends entirely upon the effectiveness of the leaders! You might be thinking, *“Wow! That’s a lot of pressure!”*

Nope! Here’s what we actually mean: **Let God be the leader of your group.** Ask for **His Spirit** to do the work of opening hearts and minds to do what He wants to do in and through every person in your group.

- Open your group with an ice-breaker to get people talking. Here’s a few ideas:
 - Highs and lows: tell about high points and low points of your week.
 - Tell about a significant person/relationship/relative in your life and why.
 - Two Truths and a Lie Game: tell people 2 things that are true about you and 1 lie. See if the group can guess which one is the lie.
 - What was a defining moment in your life?
 - Tell us about a great conversation you had recently.
- Take a few minutes every week and let each person share a bit of their conversion story. 3-5 minutes is often a good plan per person. Let each group member know ahead of time that you’d like them to share. Schedule who will share in advance.
- Leaders should share first. This will model for the group what you are looking for. It's a great way to get to know each other and begin to open up and share this part of your life.
- During ministry time (men with men, women with women), share what’s really on your heart. Share deeply. Don’t be afraid to get real. Allow yourself to be vulnerable. This opens the door for others to feel that they are in a safe environment. The level of depth that you reach as a leader will model how deep everyone else in your group follows suit.

You've got this, leaders! Because Jesus has YOU!



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Week 1: Wrong Side of the Sun

Read: Ecclesiastes 1

Big idea:

- Finding our meaning in this world is a meaningless pursuit.

Main points:

- Finding our meaning in this world is a meaningless pursuit (v. 1-3)
- This life offers nothing new. (v4-11)
- Making it to the top moves you no closer to a life of meaning. (v12-18)

Jesus in Ecclesiastes 1: Life is not “under the sun,” when our lives are lived “under the Son.”
(Colossians 1:10-23)

Personal questions:

- How do you express frustration or despair?
- What is the general tone/theme of this chapter?
- What seems to be the source of the author’s frustration?
- What does it mean that there is nothing new under the sun? (v9)

Discussion question:

- What are some ways you see people looking for meaning in their lives? Solomon speaks about the meaningless of man’s life and work. Do you find the true at all? If so, in what situations?
- Discuss as a group what a lasting legacy looks like. How does someone go about leaving a lasting legacy?
- Read Ecclesiastes 1:8-11 What do you want to be remembered for?
- How could someone in a position like Solomon’s (wealth, power, fame, personal encounters with God) come to feel this way about me?
- How does Jesus rescue us from the futility described in Ecclesiastes?
- Think about the different aspects of your life (daily routine, work, relationships). How do they have meaning and purpose in light of Jesus’ sacrifice?

Spiritual exercise:

- Ask God to reveal to us how he is at work in the world and in our lives.
- Write down every way you see this purpose in your daily life this week, and share them with the group next week.

Ministry time: (Men with men, women with women)

- What do you want to be remembered for? What changes or steps need to be taken to bring that desire about? (1-2 key things)
- Pray for each person after they answer the question.



Leader's Tip

- PRAY for God’s Spirit to lead your group and pray over each group member before you meet.
- Get an ice-breaker ready and set a timer!