

## LIFE: IT'S A RELATIONAL THING

**Welcome to LIFE! This is first week of our 'Introduction to LIFE' series, which is about helping your group get started using the LIFE resource. This week, we'll be looking at the most important ingredient of any Christian community: Love.**

This week you'll need:

- A sheet of paper and a pen for every group member
- Scissors and sticky tape (optional)

### CONNECT

Go around the circle and give everyone a chance to answer your choice of the following questions.

*Note: If people don't already know each other, start off by getting people to introduce themselves by sharing their name, age, and school/workplace, and something interesting about themselves.*

- How has your week been? Give it a rating out of 1-10 and share why.
- What's one thing coming up in the future that you're really excited about?
- What are you looking forward to most about life group?

### DISCUSS

Have members of your group read out loud the following Scriptures.

John 13:34-35 - *"So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for each other will prove to the world that you are my disciples."*

John 15:12-13 - *"This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you. There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends."*

### QUESTIONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

- When was the time you felt most loved? What was special about it?
- What do you think love is?
- If you got to hang out with Jesus face-to-face today, what kind of things do you think he'd do to show love to people?
- Jesus talks about the greatest love being 'to lay down your life for your friends'. Do you think it's possible to love someone and still get your own way all the time? On the other hand, can you love someone and ever get your own way?
- Do you express love the same way as your friends who don't believe in Jesus? Should the way you express love be the same or different?



### INTRODUCTION TO LIFE

#### WEEK 1

# life.

## LIFE: IT'S A RELATIONAL THING

### QUESTIONS FOR ESTABLISHED CHRISTIANS

- What stands out to you most in the passages we've just read?
- Do you think you're good at showing love to other people or is it an area you need to work on? Think about the relationships you have at school, work, church, and in your family. How could you show greater love in each area?
- Jesus says twice: "Love each other in the same way I have loved you".
  - \* Do you think it's actually possible for us to love the same way Jesus does?
  - \* Why do you think Jesus makes such a point of using himself as an example of how to love people? Isn't that a bit self-centred?
  - \* Imagine you actually got to live with Jesus for a couple of years and spent time with him every day. What do you think the 'every day' love of Jesus would have looked like?
- Jesus talks about a Christian's love being a witness or 'proof' of their faith. Do you think outsiders would get a good picture of Jesus through the way people in your church treat each other? What's something you can do to help grow the culture of love in your church?

### INVOLVE

You'll need pens and a sheet of paper for everyone in your group. Pairs of scissors and some sticky tape will be helpful too!

Have everyone divide their paper into 16 even sections (folding it in half four times is the easiest way). Unfold the paper again and have everyone write their name in the top left section.

Now, working together as a group, come up with 15 ideas (one for each remaining section) for how your group can show love to one another. Make sure you have ideas for how to show love outside of the regular group meeting time as well as within the meeting time. Everyone should write down every answer so that everyone's lists are exactly the same.

Once your lists are finished, have everyone cut or tear their sheet of paper into the 16 pieces. Get everyone to arrange their 15 ideas in order of how they would most like to be loved. Have them put the piece with their name at the top of the list, and if you've got sticky tape then tape all the pieces back together in their new order. (Note: the rearranging is a *personal* activity, not a *group* activity!)

Take some time for everyone to have a look at everyone else's list. Ask whether other people's lists were expected, or were there surprises?

## LIFE: IT'S A RELATIONAL THING

As a leader, take note of and draw attention to the different ways people like to be shown love (through words, actions, gifts, time together). Knowing how your group members receive love will be invaluable to your leadership and for your group as a whole.

### APPLY

Ask your group to share one thing that they are going to do this week based on what they've learned or been challenged about.

AND/OR

Have everyone select one thing from the list that they're going to do to show love to their fellow group members during the week. Ask everyone to share their decision with the group.

### LEADER'S NOTES

- Create a helpful atmosphere before people arrive – put some music on, have a few snacks available, have something for people to do when they arrive.
- Theological note:
  - \* Is it possible for us to love people the same way that Jesus does? Well if he commands it, we should believe he enables it. The humanity of Jesus means that are able to become just like him - we just need to work on surrendering completely to the Holy Spirit.
- Don't forget to set aside some time to ENJOY – have supper, play a game, or just chill!
- Include prayer as a part of your night. Maybe ask someone to open and someone else to close in prayer?
- Are there any other young people in your church who you'd like to see join the group? Ask some group members to invite them during the week.
- Before the session, it'd be a great idea to get familiar with our LIFE Leader's Handbook. It'll give you a whole pile of practical advice on how to be a great life group leader. If you don't have a Leader's Handbook, head to [salvos.org.au/more](http://salvos.org.au/more) and download a free copy!

## LIFE: PROMISE KEEPERS

**Honesty flows out of trust. If your group is going to be honest about where they're at or how they are going, then a culture of trust needs to be created. This week we're going to work on creating a covenant agreement to help your group get a grasp of what trust looks like for your context.**

This week you'll need:

- Paper and pens for everyone
- An extra sheet of paper for your covenant

### CONNECT

1. Have each person in the group (including the leader) come up with two things that are true and one thing that is untrue about themselves. Each person should write these down on a piece of paper so they don't forget.

Have each person take a turn sharing their two truths and a lie to the group, after which the group tries to guess which one is the lie by asking questions. You want to try and trick the group if possible so don't pick things that are obvious. Some examples might be:

- I am secretly afraid of...
- I have never ever...
- My true hair colour is...
- My favourite theme park ride is...

2. Ask your group to tell us about a time they broke a promise. You might want to prompt this or follow this by: Why did you make the promise in the first place? How did it feel to break it? Did anyone get hurt?

Alternatively, you might want to ask them to share about a time that someone broke a promise that was made to them. (No need to share names though!)

### DISCUSS

Have members of your group read out loud the following Scripture.

*Ephesians 4:2-3 - "Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace."*

### QUESTIONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

- What is unity? How do we make sure we've got it?
- What are some things that would stop unity?
- Why is it hard to be honest sometimes? What causes us to want to lie, mislead people or deflect questions?



## INTRODUCTION TO LIFE

### WEEK 2

# Life.

## LIFE: PROMISE KEEPERS

### QUESTIONS FOR ESTABLISHED CHRISTIANS

- What stands out to you most from the passage we've just read?
- What do you think 'unity of the Spirit' means?
- How can we create 'bonds of peace' within our group?
- Why is it hard to be honest sometimes? What causes us to want to lie, mislead people or deflect questions?

### INVOLVE

Every life group is different, totally unique in its values and expectations, so each group's covenant will be different. Here are some important things to think about as you create your covenant...

- A covenant is ultimately a set of promises that your group makes to each other about group values, habits and culture.
- We enter into covenant relationships based on mutual acceptance. A covenant is only valid if everybody chooses to agree to it.
- A covenant is a foundation for accountability. If you are not prepared to be confronted on the point then don't include it.
- Some basic principles of respect should just be 'a given'.
- Your covenant should reflect a "unity of the Spirit". Eph 4:3

Your covenant will be built by asking a bunch of questions of each other as a group (have someone take some notes).

### COMMIT

- Why is it important to attend life group regularly?
- What can we do to show our group that our life group is a priority?

### TRUST

- How can we encourage people to be honest within life group?
- Why is confidentiality in the group a big deal?
- Do you have any other group situation where you know you can share anything from your life and it will never be gossiped about or shared?
- What will be done if someone breaks the trust of the group?

### PARTICIPATE

- What do you think should be a minimum standard of participation in this life group?
- Is it important that everyone contributes their thoughts and opinions?
- What would make it difficult to share openly in this group?

### SCRIPTURE

- Refer back to Ephesians 4:2-3. How will we know if our group is united?
- What words would outsiders use to describe us? What do we want our reputation to be?
- Describe our group the way you would want someone to describe it in six months time.

## LIFE: PROMISE KEEPERS

You need to write something down that becomes a firm promise you enter into as a life group. This covenant can be changed or added to later if necessary but only if the whole group agrees.

Spend some time creating a covenant in point form (or simply use or adapt the sample covenant provided). You may wish to wait until next week to bring in a typed version for everyone to sign, or sign it together once made.

Ask someone to pray that God will help you to keep the covenant as a group. Pray for trust, honesty and spiritual growth for your life group.

### APPLY

Ask your group to share one thing that they are going to do this week based on what they've learned or been challenged about.

AND/OR

Challenge your group to pair up and call or SMS each other this week to ask how the other person is going with one aspect of your new covenant.

### LEADER'S NOTES

- Putting together your covenant (which is the Involve section) will probably take the majority of your group time. Be prepared to keep the other sections short to make sure you have enough time.
- The covenant values need to be decided by the group, not imposed by the leader. Get everyone's opinions and then give them the chance to discuss them and think about them before agreeing to them. You can suggest expectations to the group but you can't force them.
- Be sure that expectations are clear, not ambiguous or open to interpretation. A covenant should be in writing. Group covenants should always be in the form of "we" statements.
- Covenants should have a set timeframe. Be prepared to re-evaluate and reaffirm the covenant each year (or every six months) so that members are reminded and/or clarified about group expectations.
- Your covenant should include any mid-week behaviour expected of group members. Do they agree to pray for each other through the week? Or to text each other reminders?
- Once you've finished it, you'll need to provide a copy of the covenant for each member.
- Theological Notes:
  - \* Some other references about Christian fellowship and unity of purpose you could read together: Philippians 2:1-2, Colossians 3:12-17, Acts 2:42-47

## LIFE: PROMISE KEEPERS

### SAMPLE COVENANT

Our group will meet every: week/fortnight/other:

Day:\_\_\_\_\_ Time\_\_\_\_\_ Location\_\_\_\_\_

### We agree to the following actions for our group:

- Making regular attendance a priority (and calling when absent or late).
- Starting and finishing on time.
- Leaving our life group meeting location tidy.
- Valuing each member of the group and their opinions.
- Keeping all things that are shared as strictly confidential (leaders need to explain they have a legal responsibility to tell someone if things like physical or sexual abuse are shared within the group).
- Holding each other accountable for set goals.
- Sharing in the roles and responsibilities of the group (whole group participation).
- Welcoming and encouraging new people.

### Our group exists for the following purposes:

1. Connecting with other Christians, creating an honest and transparent environment so that group members develop relationships where they are loved, known, accepted and challenged. Sharing our lives and faith journeys in community.

*We will pursue connecting in the following ways:*

2. Growing to be like Christ, through group accountability, application of Scriptural truth, discussion of God's word, supporting each other in prayer and worshiping together.

*We will pursue growing in the following ways:*

3. Developing our spiritual gifts, encouraging discovery and application of talents and gifts, pursuing areas of ministry and service that group members are passionate about.

*We will pursue developing in the following ways:*

4. Sharing our life mission. Building a community with a save-grow-serve mindset so that each life group member is an evangelist and minister to their generation.

*We will pursue sharing in the following ways:*

Signed:



## LIFE: THIS IS WHERE I'M AT

**Life groups depend on a culture of openness and honesty - without those two things your relationships will ultimately be shallow and superficial. This week we'll use a Spiritual Health Assessment to help people have an honest discussion about where they're at.**

This week you'll need:

- A pen for every person
- A copy of the attached Spiritual Health Survey for every person

### CONNECT

Go around the circle and give everyone a chance to answer your choice of the following questions.

- If your life this week was like a car, what kind of car would you be? (e.g. an old bomb because I felt like I was about to break down, a racecar because I felt I was going really fast all week, a tank because this week I felt like I really conquered some tough stuff.)
- What's been the most difficult thing about your week so far?
- What's one thing from your covenant that you've done well with this week? What's one thing you've struggled with?
- What are three words that you'd use to describe God?

### DISCUSS

Have the members of your group read out loud Galatians 5:16-26.

#### QUESTIONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

- Read again the fruit of the Spirit in v22-23. When was a time that you experienced one of those things from someone else? How did it make you feel?
- Which of the fruits do you find easiest and which do you find the hardest to display?
- Have you ever known that something was wrong but then done it anyway? Why do you think you did it? How did you know it was wrong?
- Do you think it's possible to become a better person just by trying really hard? How do you think God would answer that question?
- Paul says that if we're led by the Spirit we won't do the wrong thing. Does that mean that if we ever do the wrong thing we're not led by the Spirit? How do you think we can become led by the Spirit?
- In verses 19 – 21 Paul mentions a whole bunch of things that are 'acts of sinful nature'. Which of these can you identify with, and are there more things that you would add to the list?



### INTRODUCTION TO LIFE

#### WEEK 3

# Life.



## LIFE: THIS IS WHERE I'M AT

### QUESTIONS FOR ESTABLISHED CHRISTIANS

- What stands out to you the most in the passage we've just read?
- What should our response be to sin in our own lives? How do we deal with it? Why should we deal with it?
- Here's a risky question if you're up for it: What's one sin or area in your life that you're struggling with and could do with some help?
- What do you think Paul means when he says 'those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God'? (v21)
- Do you think it's possible to become a better person just by trying really hard? How do you think God would answer that question?
- Paul says that if we're led by the Spirit we won't do the wrong thing. Does that mean that if we ever do the wrong thing we're not led by the Spirit? How do you think we can become led by the Spirit?

### INVOLVE

Life groups depend on people being honest and open with one another about how they're going. Print out a copy of the included Spiritual Health Survey for everyone in your group and get them to fill it out. Once everyone is finished, create space for discussion using the following questions:

- What's one area where you feel really strong at the moment? Why do you think you're strong in that area?
- What's one area where you're not so strong and you'd like to improve?
- If everyone is okay with it, let your group look at other people's responses. Do you think anyone deserved a higher score than they gave themselves? (i.e. Has someone scored themselves really low on patience but you find them to be a patient person?)
- Does anyone have anything else they'd like to share?

### APPLY

Ask your group to share one thing that they are going to do this week based on what they've learned or been challenged about.

AND/OR

Have everyone select one weaker area from their survey and think about what they can do this week to start to grow in that area. Have everyone share with the rest of the group.

Challenge your group members to spend time this week praying for the Holy Spirit to guide them and help them to grow in that specific area.

## LIFE: THIS IS WHERE I'M AT

### LEADER'S NOTES

- Life group should be a place where people can openly share their struggles and even their sins. As your group discusses where they're at, make sure that no-one is made to feel guilty. As a leader, you need to set the culture by being open and honest with your own struggles.
- Remember that as a leader, your role is to bring questions rather than answers to the discussion. Wherever possible, avoid giving a young person advice or an answer to something they've shared, but ask questions to help the group respond to the issue themselves.
- There are a lot of discussion questions provided, but we'd suggest not spending too long on the 'Discuss' section. Make sure you leave yourself plenty of time to complete the survey and then talk about and apply what you've learned.
- Want some tips for discussion times? Check out our LIFE leaders manual at [salvos.org.au/more](http://salvos.org.au/more).
- Don't forget to set aside some time to ENJOY – have supper, play a game, or just chill!
- Theological Notes:
  - \* Fruit of the Spirit is about the Holy Spirit being at work within us. We need to take personal responsibility for our actions and attitudes, but we also need to realise that it's the Holy Spirit that changes our hearts - it's not our personal efforts. Want more fruit of the Spirit in your life? Then work on surrendering more of yourself to the Spirit's leading.

## LIFE: THIS IS WHERE I'M AT

### SPIRITUAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT

QUESTION	DISAGREE					AGREE				
1. My family and friends would say I'm good at showing my love for them.	1	2	3	4	5					
2. I try really hard to start conversations with new people or visitors at church.	1	2	3	4	5					
3. I find it easy to be nice to people who don't like me or make fun of me.	1	2	3	4	5					
4. I feel I do a good job of showing I love people through my words and actions.	1	2	3	4	5					
5. I find it easy to stay positive even when things are going wrong.	1	2	3	4	5					
6. Nearly every morning, I wake up excited about what the day holds.	1	2	3	4	5					
7. Others would say I help them feel more optimistic.	1	2	3	4	5					
8. I'm normally energised at the thought of going to church or spending time with other believers.	1	2	3	4	5					
9. I'm often a calming influence when things are really hectic for other people.	1	2	3	4	5					
10. I don't participate in gossip.	1	2	3	4	5					
11. I don't make fun of others.	1	2	3	4	5					
12. I find I don't really get anxious about anything.	1	2	3	4	5					
13. My friends and family describe me as patient.	1	2	3	4	5					
14. I find I don't get annoyed with people very often.	1	2	3	4	5					
15. I tend to be tolerant with the faults or failings of others, and I seek to encourage and guide them.	1	2	3	4	5					
16. If I don't get my own way, I find it easy to accept it and move on.	1	2	3	4	5					
17. I enjoy helping others even if I will never receive credit for it.	1	2	3	4	5					
18. I make an effort to give what I can to help those who have little or nothing.	1	2	3	4	5					
19. I find myself drawn to people who are suffering and enjoy helping them.	1	2	3	4	5					
20. People that know me well would say I openly share what I have.	1	2	3	4	5					

## LIFE: THIS IS WHERE I'M AT

QUESTION	DISAGREE					AGREE				
21. I try to stand up for others, even when I know it will probably make me unpopular.	1	2	3	4	5					
22. I go out of my way to encourage other people.	1	2	3	4	5					
23. I try to make sure everyone is included in what's going on - especially those people who are usually ignored by everyone else.	1	2	3	4	5					
24. When I hear about injustice, I feel compelled to do something about it.	1	2	3	4	5					
25. I find it easy to keep promises even if they come at a high cost to me.	1	2	3	4	5					
26. My friends would describe me as a very reliable person.	1	2	3	4	5					
27. People seem to trust me with private or personal information.	1	2	3	4	5					
28. I trust God even when the way seems impossible.	1	2	3	4	5					
29. Other people would say I'm a good listener.	1	2	3	4	5					
30. I always seem to notice if other people are upset or uncomfortable.	1	2	3	4	5					
31. I rarely say things I wish I could take back.	1	2	3	4	5					
32. People consider me to be a polite person.	1	2	3	4	5					
33. When my friends are doing something I know is wrong, I still find it easy to do the right thing.	1	2	3	4	5					
34. I find it easy to stay focused on God despite distractions that are around me.	1	2	3	4	5					
35. I find it easy to control my temper.	1	2	3	4	5					
36. If someone from church saw my life at home or with my other friends, I think they'd be pleased with the choices they see me make.	1	2	3	4	5					

## LIFE: HEALTHY COMMUNITY

**Plenty of relationships we see in the world revolve around manipulation, secrets and power struggles. This week we're going to look at an opposing culture: one of encouragement and accountability.**

This week you'll need:

- Paper and pens for everybody
- A couple of different translations of the Bible, if possible

### CONNECT

Go around the circle and give everyone a chance to answer your choice of the following questions.

- How has your week been? Give it a rating out of 1-10 and share why.
- What was the most unusual thing that happened to you this week? What was something that caught you by surprise?
- Where are you at with God this week? What have you learned through reading the Bible?
- Tell us about one hope you have for your life. What would you like to accomplish? Who would you like to be?

### DISCUSS

If possible, have a couple of different translations of the Bible available and have a couple of different young people read the Scripture verse out loud.

Hebrews 10:24-25 - *"And let us consider how to motivate one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another even more as you see the day of the Lord coming nearer."*

### QUESTIONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

- Why do you think Paul is telling the church to meet together? What's so helpful about being in community as opposed to being a Christian on our own?
- What do you think it means to encourage each other? What's the purpose of encouragement?
- What does good encouragement sound like? What doesn't it sound like?
- What do you think the ideal Christian community should look like?
- How could your life group become more like God's ideal for a healthy community?



### INTRODUCTION TO LIFE

#### WEEK 4

# Life.

## LIFE: HEALTHY COMMUNITY

### QUESTIONS FOR ESTABLISHED CHRISTIANS

- What stands out to you most from the passage we read?
- What do you think God's purposes are for the church?
- Consider Hebrews 3:13. In the same letter Paul says we should encourage one another 'so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness'. What sort of encouragement is Paul talking about here? Is there someone in your life at the moment who is giving you this kind of encouragement? Are you providing this kind of encouragement to others?
- How do we 'motivate one another to love and good deeds'?
- Have you ever had someone in your life who challenges you, holds you accountable, speaks positives into your life, spurs you on, sharpens you, etc? Who was it and what impact did it have on your Christian growth?
- What are you currently doing to help others grow and reach their God-given potential?
- What do healthy Christian relationships look like in an ideal world? What should they look like in this life group?

### INVOLVE

We're going to spend some time encouraging one another.

Give everyone a sheet of paper and a pen. Get everyone to write their name at the top of their sheet, then have everyone pass their sheet of paper to the person sitting on their left.

Give your group a few minutes to write an encouragement for the person whose name is at the top of the sheet. Once everyone is done, pass the sheets to the left again and write an encouragement for someone new. Keep going until everyone's sheets have gone right around the circle.

### APPLY

Ask your group to share one thing that they are going to do this week based on what they've learned or been challenged about.

AND/OR

Challenge everyone in your group to write one encouragement note to someone before you next gather for life group. Encourage each young person to prayerfully consider who might need encouragement, and what that person might need to hear.



## LIFE: HEALTHY COMMUNITY

### LEADER'S NOTES

- The verb 'encourage' means 'to put courage in to', 'to inspire with courage, spirit or confidence' or 'to promote, foster or advance'. It's purpose isn't to make us feel warm and fuzzy inside, it's to strengthen us. Synonyms include: embolden, hearten, reassure, urge, support, aid and help.
- You might want to bring along some blank postcards for your young people to write their encouragement notes on. You can get them free from most surf shops.
- If your group is keen, you might want to consider some of these other Scripture verses that speak about accountability, encouragement and the value of being part of a Christian community:
  - \* Hebrews 3:13
  - \* Acts 2:42
  - \* Luke 17:3-4
  - \* James 5:16
  - \* Ecclesiastes 7:5
  - \* Ecclesiastes 4:10-12
  - \* Colossians 3:12-17
- Is anyone missing from your group tonight? Don't forget to ask for volunteers to follow them up!
- Include prayer as a part of your night. Maybe ask someone to open and someone else to close in prayer?
- Theological Notes:
  - \* The reference in v25 to encouraging each other 'even more as the day draws near' is saying that there should be a sense of urgency about this. The fact that there are days of trial coming should cause us to be even more diligent in striving to see one another grow.

# LIFE: SEEKING GOD TOGETHER

**Life groups aren't clubs, self-help groups or therapy sessions - they are expressions of Christian community. As Christians we believe that prayer is central to our faith, not just as a personal discipline but as an essential act of community.**

This week you'll need:

- A bag of M&M's or other coloured lollies.

## CONNECT

Pour your M&M's into a bowl. Have everyone in the group grab as many or as few as they like from the bowl, up to a maximum of 10. Make sure that no one eats their M&M's right away.

For each M&M someone took, they will have to share something, depending on its colour. You can be creative and choose any questions you think would be fitting for your group. For example, you can designate:

- Red: Highlight from their week
- Green: Challenge/struggle from their week
- Yellow: Thing they're looking forward to
- Orange: Interesting person they spoke to during the week
- Brown: Interesting thing they read/learned during the week
- Blue: Someone they've encouraged during the week

Your group members will need to share one thing per M&M they have - so if they have three red M&Ms then they'll need to share three highlights. Go around the circle and let everyone share one thing at a time. Once they've shared something, they can eat that M&M.

If a person can't think of enough things for a particular colour, allow them to trade someone else for a different coloured M&M.

## DISCUSS

Read out loud James 5:13-18.

### QUESTIONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

- What's one thing from the Bible passage that you find interesting? What stands out to you about it?
- What do you think of when you hear the word prayer?
- Have you ever prayed out loud before? How did you feel?
- What do you think makes a good prayer? Is there a right way to pray? Are some prayers better than others?



## INTRODUCTION TO LIFE

### WEEK 5

# life.

# LIFE: SEEKING GOD TOGETHER

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### QUESTIONS FOR ESTABLISHED CHRISTIANS

- What stands out to you most from the passage we read?
- How is your personal prayer life going? Do you find it hard? What's hard about it?
- Do you think prayer changes God's mind on things?
- Which do you find easier, praying alone or praying with other people? Do you think it's important that we do both? Why?
- How do you feel about praying for people to be healed? Do you think it can work? Why do you think that we don't always see results with the things we pray for?

### INVOLVE

It shouldn't come as any surprise that this week we're going to spend some time praying for one another!

Go around the circle and have everyone share a prayer request. It could be for something difficult they are facing, an upcoming challenge or event, or something they're thankful to God for. If anyone is sick, ask if someone can pray for their illness. You might want to write down something to help you remember everyone's request.

Everyone in the group is going to pray for someone else - it's probably easiest if you have everyone pray for the person on their left.

If you haven't already, find out who in your group is comfortable with praying out loud. If anyone isn't comfortable or doesn't know how, ask the group for ideas on what that person can pray and make sure the unsure person knows what they're going to pray before the prayer time starts.

Finally, make sure your group understands that prayer doesn't need to be drawn-out or long-winded. It's okay just to say one or two sentences to God if that's all you've got to say!

# LIFE: SEEKING GOD TOGETHER

### APPLY

Ask your group to share one thing that they are going to do this week based on what they've learned or been challenged about.

AND/OR

Challenge your group to pray for each other during the week. If prayer is a new thing for your group, challenge them to pray every day for the person they prayed for earlier. If your group is more mature, challenge them to pray for all the group members every day. It might help to provide everyone with a copy of the prayer requests from earlier.

If your group members have mobile phones, get them to set some daily alarms that will prompt them to pray for each other at a convenient time.

### LEADER'S NOTES

- Don't challenge your group to do something you're not prepared to do yourself - if you challenge them to pray everyday, make sure you make your best effort to meet that challenge yourself.
- If you have some group members who are very comfortable praying and others who aren't, encourage the more experienced members to keep their prayers short and to-the-point. We don't want people to feel intimidated or discouraged by the elaborate and articulate prayers of the rest of the group.
- Many life groups have their own traditions on how to keep track of prayer requests and to acknowledge, remember and celebrate answers to prayer. These can be as simple as notebooks right up to elaborate paintings and other artworks. Why not ask your group if they have any ideas?
- Remember, come armed with questions rather than answers. You can guide the discussion with good questions, but avoid just forcing your ideas about prayer onto other people.
- Remember to create a helpful atmosphere before people arrive – put some music on, have a few snacks available, have something for people to do when they arrive.
- Don't forget to set aside some time to ENJOY – have supper, play a game, or just chill!