

## Next Level

### Message Series (Oct 11 – Nov 21)

## Facilitator Notes

The group facilitator notes are tailored to the specific week. Some notes might include info on a group activity, while others might point out a great way to keep a discussion going.

### 1. Helpful Faith (Week 1)

If your group is new, don't forget to spend some time introducing everyone. The "Share Your Story" section today can be augmented by asking everyone to share their name, how long they've been connected to Journey, and what any previous small group experience has meant to them. This kind of "identity" exercise will be a great way to hear how people describe themselves. Hearing from everyone will help you start learning more about where each group member is coming from and how you can pray for them and support them.

### 2. Meaningful Success (Week 2)

Though many people are excited to meet new people and build new friendships in your group, you may still be noticing this week that others are hesitant or reluctant. The reasons for this are many: Some have been hurt in the past. Others are wired to be more introverted, and even coming to your group has been a major social step. But no matter where they're coming from, everyone can benefit from a safe place to open up and explore new connections. Pray before your group meets for God to help you navigate the relational challenges of helping to bring a diverse group of people into closer relationship with him and one another. Then, be gracious and encouraging to those who are more hesitant during this week's session.

### 3. Life-Giving Wellness (Week 3)

This session delves into topics that may be burdened by traditional or cultural assumptions that usually aren't very well fleshed out – the afterlife, the relationship between our physical and spiritual lives, Jesus' supernatural ability to heal. While we purposely want to promote good discussion in our groups, we are not trying to create heated debate around these topics. So, as you lead your group this week, work hard to keep directing people to the scripture passages, what we do know for certain about how Jesus lived and healed, and the hope of full restoration in Heaven someday for those that follow him.

### 4. Transforming Regret (Week 4)

While your group may be growing more connected and more willing to share openly, there is a chance that today's topic of regret could cause a few people to bottle back up – not many of us are used to bring out our hidden guilt in front of others. This is an opportunity for those in your

group who do feel comfortable sharing to prove to everyone that your group is a safe place, founded on grace for one another. Prep your own heart through prayer to lead with compassion and love for your group members even before you get to your meeting!

### **5. Empowering Influence (Week 5)**

Work diligently during this week's session to help center people around the topic of truth and honesty in their own lives – while avoiding amplifying any complaints people may have about our political leaders. With Election Night just a few short days prior to this session, we can model grace as we keep the discussion away from anger or slander. Knowing that tensions and emotions can run high, know that's ok, as the facilitator of the group, to pause and lay these values out explicitly. Feel free to share this kind of sentiment with your group, either at the beginning or if you feel tensions rising: "I know we all may still have high emotions about the election, but I'm going to ask that we focus tonight on what God wants to do with this group. He wants to bind us together as we focus on him. So, let's work together to show extra grace and extra understanding for each other, but let's also work together to stay on topic. We can do it!"

### **6. True Belonging (Week 6)**

While we're still going to use this final session primarily for a group discussion, similar to the discussions from previous weeks, this session is also intended to serve as a wrap up, and there are special group housekeeping and follow-up questions at the end. Don't forget to process those together before you're done!

#### **\* Week 6 Group Questions:**

- Who is available to continue meeting as a Life Group?
- If not all of our group members are able to continue, should we join another group or add other group members to our gathering?
- Most Life Groups typically meet weekly or every other week. What day/time would work best for everyone going forward?
- Would any of you like to start facilitating a new Life Group, either instead of or in addition to participating in this group?
- How can we support each other going forward, even if we aren't all able to continue in this group?