



Adult Life Groups & Care Groups

Shively Baptist Church | Louisville, KY



Care Group Leaders Briefing For Sunday April 6th, 2014

Planned Schedule:

- 0900-0910 – Ice Breaker (David Bradford)
- 0910-0915 – Focus –
- 0915-0930 – Teaching – The Vine – Part 2 (John 15:1-17)
- 0930-1015 – Care Group Time (Care Group Leaders)
 - 0930-0950 – Apply the teaching
 - 0950-1005 – Strategic follow-up / Invitation planning
 - 1005-1015 – Prayer time

This week's teaching – The Vine and Branches – Part 2 (John 15:1-17)

“From No Fruit to Some Fruit”

Teaching Objective: This week is a discussion on the possibility of a branch bearing no fruit, and what is the Father's (Gardener's) response to fruitlessness.

Care Group Leader Encouragement: Your objective is to ensure your Care Group members leave recognizing that:

1. **We are all chosen by God to bear fruit.**
2. **God acts when we do not produce fruit. (v2)**
 - a. **“cuts off / takes away” – by removing terminally unfruitful branches**
 - b. **“lifts up” – by placing branches with productive potential in a position of maximum opportunity for fruitfulness**
3. **There is no option to understand terminally unfruitful branches as being disciples**

Points from previous weeks to review:

1. **Jesus mentions four different levels of fruit bearing in this passage.**
 - No fruit
 - Some fruit
 - More fruit
 - Much fruit
2. **Jesus refers to the “Much fruit” level of fruit bearing as “to my Father's glory.” See v8**



3. What is the fruit? Read the following passages:

- **Character** - love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control – see Galatians 5:22-23
- **Conduct** - the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God– Philippians 1:11
- **Conversions** - a harvest among you– Romans 1:13

Questions to Consider: My responses to some of these questions are in *(italics)*.

- 1. Can a person be “in Christ” (truly connected to the vine – “saved”) and not bear fruit?** *(Possibly for a season, but not terminally.)*
 - 2. Have you experienced a time in your life when you were bearing fruit?** (Change of character, conduct and/or conversions)
 - 3. What is the corrective for someone who has never born fruit?** *(Conversion - Fruit is an indication of connection to the vine. Never bearing fruit indicates never being connected to the vine.)*
 - 4. Have you ever experienced a time in your life (after conversion) when you were not bearing fruit?**
 - a. Has that period ended?
 - b. If yes, did you see God working during this period to bring it to an end? Please share.
 - 5. Bearing fruit involves overcoming barriers to fruit bearing. Moving from “No Fruit” to “Some Fruit” involves “getting out of the dirt”. Can you identify “things”, “attitudes” or “practices” that might be barriers to fruitfulness in your life?** *(Here we want to focus on things that are generally considered bad (“dirt”) that we need to be lifted out of. Things could include: lust, greed, hatred, preoccupation with leisure, laziness, etc. Note: This is different than pruning (removing things that are not “technically” sin, but hinder our productivity). We will cover pruning next week.) Write some of your group’s responses here -*
 - 6. Leaving the parable for a moment:**
 - a. Do Christians (personally) have a role of participation with God in “lifting and setting” their fellow Christians? What might that look like?
 - b. Does the Church local (e.g. Shively Baptist) have a role of participation with God in “lifting and setting” those who claim the name of Christ? What might that look like?
 - 7. Ask: “So ... what have we covered today?”** Allow members to reflect back to you their “take aways.”
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Strategic Invitation / Follow-up

Easter Sunday is April 20th this year – just 2 weeks away. Easter and Christmas are two Sundays during the year when people who never attend any other weeks, tend to show up. Let's intentionally use this cultural tendency to invite friends and family to join us.

1. Ask members to think of friends and family they can invite to our Easter service(s).
2. After a few moments – ask them to commit to inviting those who came to mind.
3. Ask if anyone would be willing to share whom they intend to invite. Write these down.
4. Pray together that God would:
 - Be working in lives of our potential guests, even before we ask them.
 - Provide us with opportunities and boldness to invite them.

We are going to provide invitations and envelopes for your group to sign and address. The invites can be from one person or from everyone – you decide. Place your completed invitations in your folder. We will send them out on Monday April 14th with the invites we collect next Sunday April 13th. Ask your members to bring a couple names and addresses next week so we can send their guests invitations.

Pray for one another.

Consider asking members to share requests one at a time, and asking if another member would pray for that request immediately after it is made. This method ensures that priorities of your members are voiced and prayed over. Close in prayer when requests are exhausted or time runs out.

At the end of Groups: Place this guide, your attendance sheet, and completed invitations in your folder, and place on the table at the exit as you depart.

THANK YOU!