

## Weekend message Small group study

- complementing the sermon given at St. Paul on **8/29/15 – 8/30/15.**
- a meeting agenda organized per St. Paul core values
- estimated for a 90-minute meeting



### WEEK THREE STUDY

### STARTING SPIRITUAL CONVERSATIONS

**Equipping** “the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ” –Eph. 4:12

Below is a tool to help delegate the leading/facilitating of meeting components between different small group members.

	Prayer (p.5)	Outreach (p.5)	Word of God (p.2)	Equipping (p. 6)	Worship - Our Redemption Response - (p.2)
Study component leader					

**Prayer leader** – Leads group prayer time

**Outreach leader** – Leads the charge of outreach (serving, inviting, filling the empty chair, etc.)

**Word of God leader** – Leads the Bible study time, encourages application of God’s Word to life

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**Worship (Our Redemption Response) Leader** – Leads worship time during meeting.

**Worship – Our Redemption Response**

**5 minutes**

Stand and Read together Nehemiah 9:5b-7a (NIV):

**All: Stand up and praise the Lord your God who is from everlasting to everlasting. Blessed be your glorious name, and may it be exalted above all blessing and praise.  
You alone are the Lord.  
You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them.  
You give life to everything, and the multitudes of heaven worship you.  
You are the Lord God. Amen!**

**Word of God**

**40 minutes**

1. Take turns reading through the following:

*Today's session will be focusing on how we can build bridges in our conversations with non-believers. In other words, how do we transition every day conversations and turn them into spiritual discussions? How do we bridge from everyday life to eternal issues?*

*"...good witnesses have learned to apply the art of asking good questions. Jim Peterson (in his book, Evangelism as a Lifestyle) says, 'Any subject, if explored far enough, will lead us into a discussion of the good news.' The ability to ask appropriate questions enables any subject to lead to a discussion of the Good News. As a matter of fact, one of the most difficult problems Christian witnesses face is how to get from a discussion of the weather, politics, sports, or current events to a conversation about spiritual matters. The art of asking questions is one of the most effective ways." (from The Art of Sharing Your Faith, Joel D. Heck ed., p.81)*

*Questions have a way of opening up conversations and allowing us to catch glimpses of what our non-believing friends think, feel, and believe. A well-timed, well-worded question is the perfect bridge to going deeper in our conversations.*

2. Look up the following verses as a group. The group is asked to respond to the question: **"What was the impact of each of these questions?"** (Hint: you'll have to consider the context of the verse.)

**VERSE**

**IMPACT**

Genesis 3:9

Acts 8:30

**VERSE**

**IMPACT**

John 21:17

Job 38:1-7

John 5:6

Mark 4:40

Luke 10:26

3. Take turns reading through the **Four Levels of Questions**.

*Joel Heck suggests that there are four levels of bridge building questions we can use in our conversations. Consider each level for a moment...*

**Level 1 General Information Questions.** *This is where we try to solicit basic information about a person's life, background, work, interests, etc.*

*Example: "Tell me about where you grew up."  
"What do you enjoy doing with your free time?"*

**Level 2 Purpose Questions.** *These kinds of questions help you discover the basic reason(s) or purpose for an individual's life.*

*Example: "What made you choose the kind of work you're involved in?"  
"What do you want most out of life for your kids?"  
"What are your thoughts about what's happening in our state, community or nation?"*

**Level 3 Initial Spiritual Questions.** *Transitions to spiritual issues begin here. Often we can use the topic under discussion in Level 2 to springboard to a deeper question.*

*Example: "What do you think God thinks about what's going on in the Middle East, in our nation or community?"*

**Level 4 Deeper Spiritual Questions.** *From Level 3, it is a natural step to move to more personal spiritual questions that help highlight where a person is in their journey with God.*

*Example: "If you were to die tonight and you were standing before God and He asked you this question: 'Why should I let you into Heaven?' what would you say?"*



## Outreach

20 minutes

**Application Activity (15 minutes).** Break up into triads. During this role playing activity, be creative as you use various life situations to start spiritual conversations.

### Role Play Guidelines:

- One person is the non-believing friend
- One person is the Christian trying to bridge into a spiritual conversation
- One person is the observer

The person playing the Christian needs to pick a "life situation" from the Starting Spiritual Conversations worksheet. Their goal is to start a conversation that can lead to a spiritual conversation with the person role playing as a non-believer. Each person should take turns as the Christian, non-believer and the observer. Depending on the time you have available, allow for several rounds of role playing and encourage people to switch their roles. Also, encourage the observer to give feedback on what went well and what could have been improved in the conversation.

### Wrap-Up (5 minutes).

1. Debrief the role playing by asking:

**QUESTION #1:** What went well?

**QUESTION #2:** What was challenging for you?

**QUESTION #3:** What did you learn?

2. Go back into your triads and to share the name of the person or person you would like to bridge a spiritual conversation to this week (or some other specified amount of time). Stay in your triads for the following Prayer time. Be sure to pray for the non-believers mentioned and for the courage to make conversation bridges.

**Adapted from Groups Ablaze/LC-MS Ablaze Living: Starting Spiritual Conversations.**

## Prayer

20 minutes

In your triads, share a prayer request based on what was discussed during this meeting's *Word of God* and/or *Outreach* time. What is that next step in your faith life God is calling you to make? What convicted you from God's Word and/or our discussion of His Word? Please also share a way in which the group may support/encourage you regarding what you've shared. Of course other important matters can be prayed about as well. After all have shared, pray for the person on your left (whether aloud or silently). Pray together in popcorn style (as opposed to going in order around a circle.)

**Equipping** *for coordinating next week's meeting...*

**5 minutes**

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