LIT: The Power of Your Story

Pastor Derek Sanford

December 1, 2019

**Life Group Discussion Questions:**

1. Thinking back on this week’s sermon, was there a particular point or passage that challenged you, confused you, or caught your attention?
2. Read the following scriptures: **1 Peter 2:9, 2 Timothy 1 8-9, Revelation 12:11, Romans 10:14-15.**
3. God has given each of us a story, and our story is meant to bring Him glory. Have you ever shared your faith story with anyone? How did that go?
4. Derek shared some tips for crafting your story: *Keep it simple, keep it current, keep Jesus as the Hero*. Think about as “BC-Cross-AD” (life before Christ, meeting Jesus, what does it mean that Christ lives in you now?)
5. Leader, consider using the following questions for further discussion:

How has knowing Christ transformed your life?

Are you ashamed to share the simple truth of God’s grace as you’ve experienced it?

How is Jesus changing your life right now?

Are you giving Christ the glory for the positive changes in your life?

Are you pointing other’s to Christ, not only by your actions, but by your words as well?

What is the cost of not sharing your story?

**Next Steps:** During group time, give everyone a few minutes to write out some key bullets of their story. Invite a few to share, and allow everyone to offer words of encouragement. Now think, what are the missionary possibilities where God has placed *you*? Who in your life may need to hear your story this week?

**Prayer Thought:** Pray that God will use your story this week. Pray your story will be told not just through your actions, but by verbally sharing it with others.

Follow the **ACTS** Model:

**Adoration:** Praise God for who He is, for how He has blessed your life, and for the opportunity to share your story with others.

**Confession:** Confess any sins of fear and trepidation about sharing your story, knowing a place far more beautiful than we can ever imagine awaits those who are faithful believers.

**Thanksgiving:** Thank our Heavenly Father that the Holy Spirit will provide us with the words that we need to touch the hearts of those with whom we have contact.

**Supplication:** Pray that the Holy Spirit will nurture and guide each one of us to live a life of praise, and service to the Kingdom through the sharing of the “Good News” of Christ.

LIT: Power of An Invitation

Pastor Derek Sanford

December 8, 2019

**Life Group Discussion Questions:**

1. Thinking back on this week’s sermon, was there a particular point or passage that challenged you, confused you, or caught your attention?
2. Read **Luke 14:16-24**. Jesus told this story while He was dining in the home of a leader of the Pharisees. What do you think their reaction was? What is the point of the story and how does it relate to our invitations to others?
3. Pastor Derek encouraged us to get into the habit of inviting people to church. He said there are 3 cues to look for in people who might be open to an invitation: *Not doing well*; *Not ready for a change*; *Not from here*. Share a time when you were in one of these categories and were or could have been changed by an invitation.
4. Read **Isaiah 9:6,7** and **Romans 5:1-4**. What does it mean to you that Jesus is called the Prince of Peace? How valuable is it to have “peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ?” How can you invite others to know that peace?
5. Read **1 Peter 3:9-11** and **Romans 14:17-19**. During this advent season how can you bring peace in your family or in your workplace?
6. Read **John 1**:**40-46** and **John 4:27-30**. In these passages who is doing the inviting? What is the invitation in each case? How does this relate to you as you invite people?

**Next Steps:** 1) Focus your mind on one face in the crowd of your life—someone who needs Jesus.

2) Share with your group so you can pray together for people you will invite.

**Prayer Thought:** Isaiah 9:6 calls Jesus these names: Wonderful Counselor; Mighty God; Everlasting Father; Prince of Peace. Pray through each of these names and praise Jesus for Who He is.

**Suggested Memory Verse:** *Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.* –***Romans 5:1***

LIT: Stay Salty, Stay Lit

Pastor Derek Sanford

December 15, 2019

**Life Group Discussion Questions:**

1. Thinking back on this week’s sermon, was there a particular point or passage that challenged you, confused you, or caught your attention?
2. Read **Matthew 5: 13-16**
3. You ARE the salt of the earth! What does that mean? Why is that important?
   1. Primary uses for salt are as a preservative, as a purifying agent and for adding flavor. How do you think these functions translate into human relationships?
   2. What kinds of things might cause us to lose our ‘saltiness’?
4. You ARE the light of the world! What does *that* mean? Why is *that* important?
   1. Primary functions of light are to reveal and to illuminate. Jesus instructed his people to let their light shine before others… What did that look like in Jesus’ time? Does it look any different now?
   2. Why do people sometimes put their light under a basket? (selfishness, unpreparedness, fear)
5. Read **John 8: 12**
   1. Share some ways that Jesus’ light has brought revelation in your life. Think not only about the types of things that God reveals, but also HOW he goes about it.
   2. How can we reflect the beauty of God’s revelation, light and love in our daily encounters?
6. The Big Idea this week is that ‘You are here for those around you.’ Both salt and light are expressed though our actions, our ‘good deeds,’ and are meant to reveal the glory and love of God. Review the characteristics of love listed in **1 Corinthians 13: 4-7** and discuss how putting each of these in action brings salt and light into the earth. Which ones are most challenging? Why?

**Next Steps:** Brainstorm a list of at least three practical steps or strategies that you can take to stay salty and stay lit. Share your ideas with a fellow believer and choose one to begin to apply this week.

**Prayer Thought:** Ask God to open your eyes to an area of darkness in your life or in the life of someone close to you. Seek His wisdom and courage on how to shine the light of Jesus into that specific place.

**Suggested Memory Verse:** *In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. -* ***John 1: 4-5***

LIT: Flash Light to Flood Light

Pastor Derek Sanford

December 22, 2019

**Life Group Discussion Questions:**

1. Thinking back on this week’s sermon, was there a particular point or passage that challenged you, confused you, or caught your attention?
2. Read **1 Peter 2:9-10**. During the sermon we learned that we shine stronger together. We were told that a city indicates togetherness and community. How are you seeing that to be true in your family, your Life Group and in Grace Church?
3. Read **John 8:12**. What does this passage reveal about how we can have the “light on life” shine brightly in our lives? In what ways have you been following Jesus this year that has brought the “light of life” to you? How have you seen the “light of life” grow in the members of your Life Group?
4. Read **Matthew 5:13-16**. We can strengthen the brightness of our light by praying together, growing together, working together, loving together and giving together. In which of these areas has your group developed in this year? Which of these areas could you grow in this year to make your groups light brighter?
5. Watch & worship together- “Light of the World” by Lauren Daigle. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dCRunZGYBi4>

**Next Steps:** What steps will your group take to follow through with the area of growth identified in question 4?

**Prayer Thought:** Recite Psalm 98 together in the same translation as a prayer of praise. Pause after reciting and allow the group to pray aloud.

**Suggested Memory Verse:** *You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. -* ***Matthew 5:14***