

Life Group Lesson Plans on Ephesians

#Basic

Spiritual Identity

Chapters 1-2

Goal of this Lesson: This week will be an introductory week for the people in your group. You'll all be getting to know each other, and as you learn about the identity of everyone there, you'll talk about our spiritual identity.

Introduction: Welcome everyone, hang out, and chat (it's not unusual for the first small group to start a few minutes late so that new students have a chance to get there.) Share a little about what your specific group has planned for the year and the consistent things they can expect every time they share this hour with you.

Have some ice-breakers planned.

Discussion: How would you define yourself?

Major? Year? Gender? Ethnicity? Etc.?

What happens when that's gone, plans change, or things don't work out?

Lesson: God has something to say about our identity.

Read Ephesians 2:4-9, 19

Go through each idea of these verses in explanation and discussion. You can ask their opinions on these ideas. You can teach through all of them and discuss them after. However you present these ideas, convey the importance of relationship and that Christians have an unshakeable identity in God.

- God has a "great love" for us.
- A relationship with God brings us from death to life, not just bad to good.
- It is God's grace that brings us into relationship with Him, not our own works.
- **Our identity, through this, is found as being members of God's family.**

Discuss how having the **solid foundation** of an identity in God can change how we view life and react to it when things are good or difficult.

Closing/Response:

Summarize the main idea of this lesson. You may want to send them home with a Bible verse.

You could give them time to journal about the topic. You might challenge them to read through Ephesians 1 and 2 with these ideas in mind. Maybe you ask them to read Ephesians 3-5 in

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preparation for next week. Consider how they will respond to this lesson and remember it throughout the week.

Pray!

Encourage them to come back next week. This is a good time to make plans to meet with them one-on-one this week!

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Life Change
Ephesians 3-5

Goal of this Lesson: The people in your group have been with Chi Alpha for nearly three weeks now, and they may be just learning what it means to have a real relationship with Christ. They may have known God their whole life, and they are continuing to grow deeper in their faith. Either way, we need to know that God loves us exactly where we are, but He loves us too much to leave us that way.

Introduction: Welcome everyone. Start on time to show that you are true to your word and will respect their time. For new people, go over a little about what your specific group has planned for the year and the consistent things they can expect every time they share this hour with you. Review last week and go over the response from last week if it required participation throughout the week.

Remind them of the discussion from last week about the impact that having a solid identity in God has on our perspective on life. Ask: How does that new identity change the way we live?

- This new identity can change everything!

Go over Paul's conversion (Acts 7:58-8:3, 9:1-31).

Paul is the author of Ephesians, let's see what he says about how and why a life changes.

- Explain that Paul was able to change so drastically because He knew God's love and was empowered through the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 3:14-19).

The Holy Spirit strengthens us. It is the love of God that drives us.

Possible Discussion Questions: What does God's love mean to you? How does the love of a good Father encourage us? How do kids react to a good Father? How do we react to the rules of a parent/organization/teacher that we don't love?

Knowing Paul's past, why do you think he emphasized God's love so much?

- We can see that Paul had a real heart change because it showed in his actions. *Our actions cannot save us, and they cannot make God love us more.* When we love God more, our actions will change.

"Sanctification" is a term that means "to make holy, set apart as sacred, or free from sin." It refers to the Holy Spirit's work in us after salvation. At the moment of salvation, God declares that we have Jesus' righteousness. After that and until we meet Him in Heaven, He works in us to change us from imperfection to perfection. Sanctification is both an instantaneous and a continuous work because we are perfected at salvation and we work toward perfection for the rest of our Christian life.

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God doesn't give us rules to control us. *He wants our life to change because He loves us and knows what's best for us* (Ephesians 4:17-24).

Possible Discussion Questions: What do you think it means to act like a Christian? Why don't all Christians act the same? Why do some Christians struggle with things that others don't? If everything should be driven by love, why do we have rules at all? Why is it so frustrating when people don't walk the talk?

How should we react when people don't walk the talk?

Why can we not have heart change without life change?

Closing/Response:

Summarize the main idea of this lesson. For some potential key verses to add focus, see the ones referenced in the lesson or look to Ephesians 5:1.

Consider how the people in your group need to interact with this information and give them a way to do that—do they need to remember something specific? Do they need challenged to apply it in a specific way? You might want to use some of the responses suggested for last week.

Pray!

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Spiritual Warfare

Goal of this Lesson: There is life after salvation. God is continually working in us during our Christian walk, and Satan is continually working against us during our Christian walk. We need to know how to fight against the enemy.

Introduction: Welcome everyone. Review last week and go over the response from last week if it required participation throughout the week. Introduce the topic for this week and explain what they can expect in this lesson.

*Be prepared to be vulnerable in discussion this week. This sort of topic can lead to talks on many dark times from peoples' pasts, but others are rarely more vulnerable than the leaders, so open up! Remember that God is always and already victorious.

Discuss what people know about strategies of war, soldiers' involvement now and how it might differ from Roman times. Would you want to be a soldier?

- We are soldiers in battle.

Do you believe in a spiritual realm?

Satan is consistently referred to as our enemy.

(2 Corinthians 10:3-5, 1 Peter 5:8-9)

We already have victory in the war (John 19:30, 1 John 5:4).

- We don't fight against tangible things/situations (Ephesians 6:12).

Discuss the things that put stress/pressure on us?

Possible Discussion Questions: What do we feel like we fight against? What are the things we recognize in our daily battles? What is the root of those issues?

(i.e. We recognize struggles with sexual impurity; the root might be loneliness or insecurities.

We recognize trouble in classwork; the root might be laziness, lack of focus, or misunderstanding our calling. We recognize insecurities; the root might be a lack of trust in God.)

- Read Ephesians 6:10-18 to identify how we can fight our real enemy.

Go through each piece of armor to identify the trait that resembles that piece and why it is placed in that specific area (i.e. Belt of Truth: A belt ties up loose ends in a warrior's clothing, and truth ties up loose ends in our life.)

Reference Dr. Constable's commentary here for an explanation of each piece of armor:

<http://planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/ephesians.pdf>

We can stand firm! We "put on" this armor and receive strength by aligning our hearts and our lives with God in prayer (v. 10).

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Possible Discussion Questions: How do we fight in daily life? How can truth tie up loose ends in our life? How does righteousness guard our heart? How would our everyday life change if we put on armor every morning? Is fighting easy? How do we train for battle? Do soldiers ever go to battle alone?

Closing/Response: Summarize the basics of Christianity, spiritual identity, life change, and spiritual warfare. God is working in our lives. He always has been. He wants the best for us, and although that might not always be easy for us or even what we think is best, He knows better. He is a good Father.

Consider how they are going to remember this lesson throughout the week and this unit from here on out. What specific points should you emphasize? What will you give them to remember? What activity will help them work through the ideas? How will you challenge them to grow?

Pray!