GROW DAILY

Life Group Leaders Guide

Directions

This packet contains the background information, series information, and weekly curriculum you will need to lead a life group during our *Grow Daily* series. Everything on this page is to help you stay connected to the series as a whole. Behind this page is the individual curriculum to help you point people to Jesus. The *Purpose* and *Move* sections of the curriculum are for the leader to read or paraphrase to the group. The *Notes and Commentary* section is for the leader to get background information and go deeper into the passages before leading the life group. The curriculum was designed with your freedom in mind. Read through the curriculum and decide what will work best for your group. SOAP the passages with the group, use only certain questions, write your own questions, or use the curriculum verbatim. As the leader, you know what will point your people to Jesus.

Series Overview

The New Year is a great time to start new habits that lead to a healthier life. For most people, these changes during the New Year fall in the health or financial realm but what would it look like to spend the beginning of 2018 focusing on our relationship with God? That is what we want for our people of The Point...to spend the beginning of 2018 focusing on one of our values, Grow Daily. This series, titled *Grow Daily,* will zoom in on 3 daily practices that will help people become more like Jesus. This series was designed to go hand-in-hand with a churchwide SOAP schedule and Core Group launch so that people will not just hear about these practices on Sunday or talk about them at Life Group, but instead, begin applying them to their daily life.

Life Group Overview

During the *Grow Daily* series our life group curriculum will cover the same topic that was covered from stage but using a different passage or set of passages. Each curriculum will begin with an unpacking of the previous Sunday’s service to help the leader open up the topic for the study and also see how people responded to the Sunday teaching. To coincide with our SOAPing schedule, we decided to use a passage from Psalms for each of the life group studies.

 *Grow Daily* Series Schedule

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| **Week** | **Sermon Date** | **Topic of sermon** | **Topic of life group** |
| Week 1 | 1/7 | Grow Daily - Scripture | Psalm 119:9-24 & 97-105 |
| Week 2 | 1/14 | Grow Daily - Confession | Psalm 51 |
| Week 3 | 1/21 | Grow Daily - BLESS Prayer | Psalm 67 |

The Point Church Life Group Curriculum
***Grow Daily* - Week 2 - Psalm 51**

Purpose of Study

In this study we are going to continue looking into habits of the Christian that will allow them to grow in their relationship with God. Last week we looked at reading scripture, this week we will look into confession. Confession can be a scary and seemingly painful experience but, in many ways, it is a catalyst to conquering sins and growing as a Christian. The hope is that all people at The Point will uncover the necessity and power of confession, and apply it to their daily lives.

Flow of Study

**Optional Icebreaker:** Can you remember a time when you were little and you had to confess to something you had done? How did that make you feel (before and after confession)?

**Move #1:** Since the sermon series and life groups are covering the same topics, it might be a good idea (both for content and time) to begin the discussion with some unpacking questions from this Sunday’s sermon.

1. Did anything stand out to you from the message this weekend?
2. When you think of confession what comes to mind?
3. We studied the following Proverbs 28:13 (pasted below) as our main passage. What stands out to you from this proverb? Naturally, concealing our sin seems like the way to safety and prosperity but this proverb says the opposite. Have you ever experienced that?

Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy.

**Move #2:** In this study we are going to read through psalm 51. Before you and your group begin going through the psalm it might be smart to either read or summarize the background information below. This background will provide a helpful setting and context for your group members.

**Background on Psalm 51:** In 2 Samuel 11 we see King David sin in a way that forever changes his life and the lives of others. David sleeps with a married woman that is not his wife and tries to cover it up by having her husband killed in battle. When the husband is dead, David takes the woman as his own wife and together they bear a child. The story ends in such a way that the reader assumes that David has been able to get away with his sinful decisions, however, all that changes in the next chapter. In 2 Samuel 12 a prophet (Nathan) comes to see David. Nathan has been made aware (by the Lord) of David’s actions and he comes to David to call him out and ask him to confess and repent of the sin he has done. David does so, although there are still some pretty painful consequences that occur due to his sin. The psalm we will read in this study is a peek into the journals of David. This psalm is most likely a prayer that he wrote in response to this whole situation. The psalm takes a very natural flow from confession (v. 1-6), to cleansing (v. 7-12), and ends with devotion (v. 13-17). We will use this structure to break up the psalm tonight but please note that we will be leaving off the last two verses of the psalm. Commentators believe that the last two verses were added by the exiles to connect the psalm to their situation. So, in order to stay consistent with the story of David and save some time, we will not be spending time on them. Now that we all know the backstory, hopefully this psalm will come alive and reveal to us the need and power of true confession.

**Read Psalm 51:1-6 (NIV)**

1 Have mercy on me, O God,

 according to your unfailing love;

according to your great compassion

 blot out my transgressions.

2 Wash away all my iniquity

 and cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I know my transgressions,

 and my sin is always before me.

4 Against you, you only, have I sinned

 and done what is evil in your sight;

so you are right in your verdict

 and justified when you judge.

5 Surely I was sinful at birth,

 sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

6 Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb;

 you taught me wisdom in that secret place.

1. Does anything stand out to you from those verses?
2. Look at verses 1-2. David is praying for forgiveness AND for God to cleanse him from his sin. When you think of confession do you think of both of those aspects (forgiveness and cleansing)? What do you think cleansing of sin looks like?
	1. **Possible answer:** Cleansing is a step farther from forgiveness, it is the removal of shame.
3. In verse 3 David is most likely remembering his conversation with Nathan. God has always known about David’s sin (we see that in verse 5), however, David was blind to it until Nathan pointed it out. David finally understood how far he had fallen. Have you ever experienced a moment like this?
	1. **Note to the leader:** It is common for people to confess small “mess ups” or “struggles” without actually realizing just how far they have fallen. David seems to finally understand how far he had fallen here.
4. David mentions being sinful from birth. In other words, we are all sinful in nature from the beginning. Do you think he is using this as an excuse?
	1. **Note to the leader:** The following verse (v. 6) answers this question.
5. In what ways does our “sinful at birth” nature magnify who Jesus was?
	1. **Note to the leader:** Jesus was the only person to ever be perfect from birth. He also willingly died for people who never lived a sinless second of life.

**Read Psalm 51:7-12 (NIV)**

7 Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean;

 wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

8 Let me hear joy and gladness;

 let the bones you have crushed rejoice.

9 Hide your face from my sins

 and blot out all my iniquity.

10 Create in me a pure heart, O God,

 and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

11 Do not cast me from your presence

 or take your Holy Spirit from me.

12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation

 and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

1. Does anything stand out to you from those verses?
2. Hyssop was a plant that was used in to treat the “unclean” of this time period (ex: lepers, anyone who had broken one of the laws). Also, the washing of the clothes and body was a part of the cleansing ceremony. David isn’t looking to God to make him physically clean as much as he is wanting God to cleanse his spirit and his heart. How is our confession similar to this?
3. In verse 8 David mentions that the displeasure of the Lord has “crushed his bones.” Have you experienced this kind of crushing in your own spiritual life?
4. Reread verse 10. David is not asking for life to be restored as it was before he sinned. He is asking for a radical change of heart and spirit. Do you think this is a mark of the confession of most Christians?
5. Reread verse 11. As Christians, we have been promised that, no matter what, we will never be cast from God’s presence (i.e. Matthew 28:20, Romans 8:31-39). David was given this same sort of assurance but notice how David's sin robs him of this assurance and causes him to doubt God's promise. Do you think this same kind of robbing occurs in the lives of Christians today? Is this a consequence of sin that you have experienced and/or think of?
6. This section of scripture is all about cleansing. Do you find it interesting that David doesn’t necessarily ask God to cleanse him and restore him, instead he commands it throughout this chunk of scripture? In what ways can we apply that to our confessions?

**Read Psalm 51:13-17 (NIV)**

13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways,

 so that sinners will turn back to you.

14 Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God,

 you who are God my Savior,

 and my tongue will sing of your righteousness.

15 Open my lips, Lord,

 and my mouth will declare your praise.

16 You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it;

 you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.

17 My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit;

 a broken and contrite heart

 you, God, will not despise.

1. Does anything stand out to you from those verses?
2. In verse 13 David is acknowledging that he will use his sin to teach others. Being open about current sin that we haven’t allowed God to deal with is not common. However, many people find it possible to teach from their past mistakes after they have allowed God to deal with them. Has there been an area of your life that you are able to teach from in the same regard? What happened to get you there? Do you think it is possible for a person to be completely healed of their sin and not willing to use it to teach others?
3. In verse 13 we see a fruit of confession and repentance. A person who has confessed and repented of sin will naturally work so that others do not fall in the same trap. Have you experienced that sort of transformation? Is there an area in your past that caused you difficulty that now you are incredibly sensitive to in the lives of others?
4. Reread verses 16-17. What do you think David means by these verses? Can we control whether we have a “broken spirit and contrite heart?”

**Move #3:** To close out our study, let’s make the idea of confession a little more personal.

1. This theme of confession is not only seen in David’s life. In James, the author gives a very clear description of how a church is supposed to deal with sin (see verse below). Why do you think confessing your sin to like minded brothers and sisters (as well as God) is so important? In what ways will it help a person “grow daily?”

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. (James 5:16 [NIV])

1. The idea of confessing your sins to another person is a very scary thought for every Christian. What are some reasons why Christians view that as a dangerous or scary practice?
2. What is the danger of keeping sins hidden? Is keeping sins hidden more dangerous for us than the perceived dangers of confessing them to another?
	1. **Note to the leader:** A lack of confession will stunt someone from experiencing what David references in verses 10 and 12. Also, imagine what would be different in David’s life if he would have confessed his adultery from the beginning instead of hiding it.
3. Have you ever had a routine of confessing sin in your life (not only to God but also to others)? What did that look like? Did that benefit you?

**Next Steps:** The following is something you could challenge your members to do in order to take what you studied in this curriculum farther.

1. Begin the practice of regular confession with God knowing that He is a forgiving and loving father.
2. Begin the practice of regular confession with a trusted friend of the same gender and/or with your spouse. One of the best places to grow in this practice is a Core Group. Consider joining one THIS WEEK. We have found that Core Groups form best from a Life Group. Is there someone in this Life Group you think you would mesh well within a Core Group? Ask them!

**Prayer:** End your study with a time of prayer where people can share prayer requests and be prayed for before they leave. If possible, please steer some prayer towards what your group talked about during this study.

Notes and Commentary

The following are pieces of commentary, facts, and links based on the passages of this study in order. Use them to help supplement your group time or for your personal preparation.

* Much of the reasoning and logic behind the questions written in this study was borrowed from the *Old Testament Survey Series: The Wisdom Literature of the Psalms* by James E. Smith. Because many of the insights are written into the questioning we will not repost the material here.