



## Life Transformation Groups Becoming Internally Strong and Externally Focused

Before we get into what a Life Transformation Group is and what happens in one, we need to understand two things.

**1st** - Our vision and mission as a church is to become Internally Strong and be Externally Focused.

To become **Internally Strong** we need to know Jesus and His Word, become like Him in character and help others do the same. This way of living means we need to breathe. We need to inhale truth and exhale sin. When we inhale God's words by reading, studying, meditating, and memorizing it, we will be challenged on the inside (Heb 4:12-13; 2 Tim 3:16-17; Ps 19:7-14; Ps 119:11). When we exhale or confess our sins, we expose them and their destructive power. We get rid of them and are cleaned on the inside (1 Jn 1:9; Ps 51:1-13).

To be **Externally Focused** we need to see ourselves as missionaries because God has told us to "go and make disciples of all nations." (Matthew 28:19-20) This way of living means we need to engage with others around us, those who are not yet followers of Jesus. The simplest way to begin with an external focus is to see and consistently pray for others.

**2nd** - Since we see ourselves as missionaries who go into and serve our communities, we need to allow God to speak into our lives first. Our external focus is only effective when we are internally strong. Before we spend time together in our Life Transformation Group we must personally dig into God's word, confess areas where we need growth, and pray for opportunities to be externally focused with others.

## LIFE TRANSFORMATION GROUP

What is a Life Transformation Group?

A LTG is a group of 3-5 people (men with men, women with women) who meet to help each other become internally strong and be externally focused.

What happens in a Life Transformation Group?

The group decides when they will meet, where they will meet, and how often they meet. Often the LTG will meet the same day or night the Missional Community group meets. After a time of gathering with the larger Missional Community group where conversation centers around topics like the Sunday sermon and prayer for group members, we break into smaller groups of 3-5. We call these groups Life Transformation Groups where we grow in Christlikeness by inhaling truth, exhaling sin, and praying for others.

How does a Life Transformation Group work?

**Step 1** - Begin by asking: Did you do the reading? Why or why not? These questions are asked with no judgment but rather to encourage us to read God's word.

**Step 2** - How did God encourage, correct, or convict you through the reading of His Word? (2 Timothy 3:16)

**Step 3** - Review the accountability questions. Pick 1 or 2 that you need to discuss with the group. Be honest, be daring, be willing to be vulnerable. Confession is good for all of us. (James 5:16)

**Step 4** - Share who you are praying for and any opportunities you've had to demonstrate the gospel in words or actions.

Life Transformation Groups help us grow in Christlikeness together. But often we don't make or take the time to grow in our love and knowledge of God. Neil Cole in his book Cultivating a Life for God says, "When I get busy, I tend to forget the most important reason why I'm here, my prime directive - to make more and better disciples (Matthew 28:18-20)!" This is why we want everyone committing and connecting with a Missional Community where we intentionally gather because spiritual growth doesn't just happen, we need a plan and we need one another.

Below are some ideas about how to engage with God personally and in community. Use these instructions when you meet with God privately and when you meet with Him in your Life Transformation Group.

### **Internally Strong**

1. Start with a short prayer to God.
  - Confess any sin. Purify **your heart** (I John 1:9)
  - Ask God to enlighten "the eyes of **your heart**" (Eph 1:18) so that you might understand His word.
2. Every day read some or all of the Biblical text your group has agreed to read. Stop and meditate on specific passages or read through the entire passage. The point is to read the same text as those in your group so God is working His word into you and then when you get together you can ask questions like these:
  - a. What is God saying in this passage, chapter, or book? What is the main thought?
  - b. What are the verbs? What do they mean? (Circle them in your Bible)
  - c. What words, thoughts, ideas are repeated? (underline them and draw lines)
  - d. What don't I understand? (Check out a commentary at [blueletterbible.org](http://blueletterbible.org) or [biblegateway.com](http://biblegateway.com).)
  - e. What specifically is God saying **to me** from this reading? What should I do?
  - f. What do I need to meditate on and then memorize?
3. Next spend time confessing your sins and pray for each other (James 5:16) using questions like the ones below. We do this because God encourages us to encourage one another "so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness" (Hebrews 3:12). "If someone is caught in sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently." (Galatians 6:1).

### **Accountability Questions**... (select some questions that could be helpful as you talk with one another)

1. Have I experienced the love of God this past week or am I embittered toward Him?
2. To whom and how did I represent Jesus to someone in the world this past week?
3. How have I handled my God given resources this past week? (money /time)
4. Have I inappropriately used my tongue this past week? (gossip, lying, hurtful, crude/coarse language)
5. Have I been honoring and understanding in my most important relationships?
6. Have I been sexually impure this past week?
7. Did I allow myself to get in a compromising situation?
8. Have I given in to an addictive behavior?
9. Have I continued to be angry, holding a grudge and becoming embittered toward someone?
10. One area of character I need to develop is?

### **Externally Focused**

1. List the names of 2 or 3 neighbors, co-workers, family members, or acquaintances that you will pray for.
2. Ask God to: draw to Himself (John 6:44), convict \_\_\_\_\_ of his/her sin and need for Christ (Jn 16:7-14), give me an opportunity and the boldness to speak the truth to \_\_\_\_\_ (Col 4:3-6)
3. Is there anyone I should invite to an event of this group or to an event or worship service of Hope Community Church? How can I hang out with this person this week? Pray about the ways we can go on mission together this month as a Missional Community.