



Calvary LifeGroup Leader's Guide

Week of 9/12/21

It is great to be back together again! This week, take some time to make sure everyone in your LifeGroup is familiar with each other. Buckle up, because by God's grace you are in for seeing God move in the lives of those in your group and in your own life as well from week to week. The most important agenda as you meet the first week is to reconnect relationally and have each other share their perspective about the LifeGroup (*see step 1 below*).

Let's prayerfully aspire to be the kind of disciple-makers who...

- Are interested in applying Scripture to life, not just conveying information
- Invite conversation and listen well to what others are saying
- Encourage everyone to participate
- Are prepared for difficult conversations and opinions, but know when to limit input for the good of the group
- Are curious, asking both clarifying and open-ended questions

The role of the facilitator the first few weeks back is to communicate the vision, promote sharing, and define group goals.

**The goal of your LifeGroup is to provide EVERYONE
in your group the OPPORTUNITY to GROW SPIRITUALLY
through a Biblical Community on Mission.**

Ok, let's get started...

STEP 1: Starting the Conversation

Warm-Up Discussion Question: What was the highlight of the summer for you?

This first week is a great time to begin or revisit the conversation about what the group will look like. Here are questions to ask and see what your LifeGroup thinks (there are no wrong or right answers).

- What is the purpose of this LifeGroup?
- How can we encourage group attendance?
- How can we maintain a safe environment and confidentiality together?

- How can we resolve conflict within the LifeGroup?
- How can we promote each other's spiritual health?
- How can we inspire listening in the LifeGroup?
- What expectations do you have of the LifeGroup?

STEP 2: Into the Text—Discussion Questions for Hebrews Chapter 2

Read Hebrews chapter 2 as a group before discussing the questions below. We strongly recommend picking only a few rather than trying to answer them all.

1. In verse 1, what is said about what listeners must do? From verses 1-3, what danger could they face if they failed to do so?

This question is intended to make sure we're tracking with how the chapter begins.

*Verse 1 says this about what listeners must do: "Therefore [i.e., based on everything that chapter 1 said about Jesus being greater than the angels] **we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard.**"*

The danger they face is that they could "drift away."

What do you think it means for people to "drift away" from the gospel message?

There's more than one way to answer this, but (sadly) I think we can think of real-life examples where people appeared to have a genuine faith but then drifted from it. They stop going to church. They stop reading their Bible. They don't pray anymore. They may begin pursuing the things everyone else in society pursues.

2. Deuteronomy 33:1-4 suggests that angels revealed God's law to Moses at Mt. Sinai. Since Jesus is even greater than the angels (from chapter 1), what should our response be to an even more complete revelation of God's will?

Jesus is God incarnate (i.e., in the flesh), so we have a greater responsibility when He is the messenger. He is a direct revelation of God because He is God! Moreover, the degree or scope of Jesus' revelation is even greater than what Moses received through the angels.

As an analogy, think of the difference between a CEO giving a direct instruction to an employee along with a thorough explanation of the rationale for the instruction, versus an employee hearing second-hand about an instruction and without much explanation behind it. Who would be held more responsible if that instruction was not followed by the two employees?

What kind of habits or practices can help us avoid neglecting such a great salvation (verse 3)?

There are multiple ways to answer this. Ideas could include being in a LifeGroup(!) where the people around us remind us of the gospel and encourage us to not neglect our faith. Also, we should commit to reading Scripture and praying daily, etc.

3. Psalm 8 is cited in verses 5-8 to describe what Jesus has done. What do you see in the words of this psalm that describes what you know about Jesus' ministry and its impact?

This psalm includes the "humiliation" of humanity—"What is man, that you are mindful of him..." as the psalmist (David) considers how vast the nighttime sky is above him (refer back to the entirety of Psalm 8 to see this). It then shifts to the fact that, in spite of this feeling of "smallness," God has actually made humanity to rule and reign in the Creation—a reality reflected in the opening pages of Genesis. Humanity has a royal purpose and nature.

Jesus' ministry follows these contours of "humiliation" in the incarnation and then exaltation through resurrection. Our real-world experience of life seems to mock the claim that we are royal, but Jesus is the perfect human who was exalted (refer back to 1:13, for example) and will one day lift us up to rule and reign with Him in the new heavens and earth.

4. Verse 8 declares the complete sovereignty of Jesus over all things but acknowledges that "we do not yet see everything in subjection to him." Think of a few examples (there are many!) of how we do not yet see Jesus' superiority over this world.

Generally speaking: wars, evil, rape, murder, violence, thievery, dishonesty, bribery, hurricanes, earthquakes, etc., etc., etc. You could encourage people to give more specific and personal examples.

5. Several different relationships are depicted between Jesus and his followers in verses 10-18. What relationships do you see in these verses and how are each significant?

In relationship to God, the one "for whom and by whom all things exist," we are "sons" (v. 10), and Jesus is the "founder of our salvation." So, we are sons of God.

We are also referred to as "brothers" of Jesus in verses 11, 12, and 17.

We are called "children" in verses 13-14.

Finally, Jesus is our "merciful and faithful high priest" in verse 17.

In all, these show the remarkable intimacy that we have with and through Jesus, but also depict the "royal" status we have that Psalm 8 describes as it is quoted earlier in the chapter.

6. What role does the fear of death (verse 15) have in people's lives? How is this fear a kind of "slavery," but one from which Jesus sets us free?

There could be a lot of ways to answer the first part of this. People tend to do whatever they can to avoid or distract themselves from death. Some are fanatical about diet and exercise out of a fear of aging. From a different angle, our society tends to devalue the

elderly as though they are less important somehow. (Maybe we don't want to be reminded that all of us will one day be in their place...if we live long enough!)

Jesus has demonstrated power over death (verses 14-15). We don't need to fear death or desperately seek to "live our best life now" (to quote a prosperity gospel phrase) because we know that our best life is the life Jesus is bringing when He returns.

7. In verses 10-18, what does the author of Hebrews emphasize about what Jesus did and what he accomplished?

There's a lot here, but these are key points:

- Jesus founded our salvation, bringing many to glory (verse 10).
- Jesus sanctifies us (verse 11). In other words, He sets us apart from the common, ordinary things of life to make us holy, fit to be in His continual presence.
- Jesus took on flesh and blood as a human and experienced death so that He could defeat death and the devil, freeing us from the fear of death (verses 14-15).
- Jesus is our high priest who made propitiation (i.e., sacrificed Himself to remove the barrier of sin keeping us from God) for us.
- As high priest, Jesus helps us in temptation.

8. As our "merciful and faithful high priest" (verse 17), Jesus knows what it's like to suffer under temptation and to help us in our own temptation. How is this relevant in your life right now?

This could be a sensitive question that not everyone is comfortable answering. So, it could be a good question to go first in answering as you facilitate the conversation. Don't go too deep too quickly. There should be great comfort in knowing that Jesus knows what it's like to face temptation, yet He never succumbed to it. Right now, people in your group might feel tempted to quit, to stop trusting God, or to please people (including themselves) rather than God. Jesus "is able to help [us] who are being tempted"!

STEP 3: Planning A Meal Together

Can we encourage your LifeGroup to share a meal in next few weeks? People feel welcome and appreciated when they eat together.

STEP 4: Wrapping it Up and Closing in Prayer

- Make sure everyone knows where and when you will be meeting next week.
- Discuss when you will have a meal together and the details. Work out who will bring what food to that meal.
- Thank everyone for coming and for being a part of the LifeGroup.

- Pray as the LifeGroup facilitator for a wonderful week as you grow further into a Biblical Community on Mission. More importantly, when you pray in your LifeGroup, you are helping shape the disciple-making lifestyle (Calvary calls these *Shaping Values*).

Ultimately, “we believe that God accomplishes His will through our prayers.” So, pray honestly and filled with hope about what God wants to accomplish in your LifeGroup this fall.