

## Life Group Topic #19

### **Part I: The Love Abbotsford Challenge**

### **Part II: Simplified Missional Living**

Prelude: This week's LG Topic will have a completely different format! It is designed as preparation for our Love Abbotsford Challenge on June 13-20! Feel free to hand out this outline to all your Life Group members!

#### **Welcome Ice-Breaker** (15 minutes)

When you interact with people outside of the faith community, which of these worldviews do you see the most?

DEISM—God is around but not active

HUMANISM---Man can do anything on his own, without God

SECULARISM---God is irrelevant to individuals and society

RELIGIOUS PLURALISM---Everyone's belief system is equally acceptable

UNIVERSALISM---All people will somehow be saved

#### **Topic for Discussion: Simplified Missional Living (60 minutes)**

**Read: Matthew 6:14-16...**especially note the conclusion: *let your light shine before men so that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.*

Last week I was challenged with a statement that Alan Hirsch made in a forum held in Surrey: The Hellenistic Western church tends to follow the principle of "Thinking our way into a new way of acting," whereas the Hebraic model was much more that of "Acting our way into a new way of thinking." We could debate which statement best mirrors the Christian life. The fact remains however, that our understanding of Christian truth too often never gets translated into concrete action. This week's topic will be all about preparing the Life Group for ACTION in the month of June!

#### **1. The Love Abbotsford Challenge:**

- Love Abbotsford began as a one day blitz to show random acts of kindness in our city to demonstrate the love of Jesus.
- Last year we decided to help people with whom we already had established relationship. We ended up with about 10 projects and over 80 volunteers.
- This year we want to expand on this momentum by mobilizing our Life Groups to reaching our city. This increases our potential to 40 projects.
- **The Challenge:** Does your Life Group know someone outside of the faith community with a tangible need that your group could meet? (Keep in mind that these needs may be practical, physical, emotional or social)

- **Target period for Action:** Anytime between **Sat. June 13 to Sat June 20<sup>th</sup>**
- Seed money of **\$100.00** for each Life Group (May 31 deadline for request). Your project may cost more- in which you will need to pitch in as a group to meet the needs.

**Two guidelines** on whom to choose:

- Someone outside of the faith community
  - Someone with whom you could ideally continue to foster loving friendships and integrate into your Life Group.
- **IDEAS:**
    - Be creative in matching the skills/passions/resources of your Life Group with the needs of your contacts!
    - Outdoor yard work, minor renovations, painting or cleaning.
    - BBQ: target one neighbourhood or friends from work or school
    - Outing to a park/lake with people who don't normally get the chance.
    - Rent a moss thatcher, airater, lawnmowers, trailer for hauling away junk, etc and canvas one of your neighbourhoods to offer free help on a given day when your LG will return to serve them for free
    - Host a day/evening of conversational English practice with some people of ethnic origins who would be thrilled to spend a day with native English speakers. Play games and have fun together!
    - Go visiting people who are lonely and rarely receive guests. (The Menno Home where David Dick is Chaplain is just one great place to visit, or sing and share).
    - Bake pies, brownies or ethnic specialty foods together, and choose a neighbourhood, or list of friends to go distribute the goodies.
    - Have a movie night with lots of junk food and invite your friends.
    - Plan an afternoon of bocce ball, croquet, soccer or baseball and invite your friends.
  - **Action Points:**
    - Anyone at South Abbotsford is encouraged to share **project** ideas for Life Groups to send a description of the project and your contact information to Sylvia Pauls at the church office. These will be emailed to all Life Groups for any group who needs a project.
    - If your **Life Group is committed to participating**, let Sylvia Pauls know by May 31<sup>st</sup> in order to receive \$100 seed money.
    - We are already planning a worship service in fall for LGs to tell some of the stories of what happened in the June Outreach.

## **2. Group Discussion: Simplified Missional Living**

**The Obstacle:** There are several clear obstacles for many of us when we think of this Love Abbotsford Challenge. One of them is simply this: **Most of us do not have meaningful relationships with unbelievers!** Even if we have connection with people

outside of faith in our places of work, school or extended families, we have not cultivated relationships with them to the level where we know their needs or feel comfortable inviting them into our lives.

For this reason, we are at a loss as to where to begin with this June Outreach. We have not done the groundwork necessary to make this event a success. For that reason, I'd encourage Life Groups to take the remainder of your time to consider the following ideas on basic missional living by Jonathan Dodson. The best approach may just be to distribute copies of the ideas to your Life Group and read and discuss them together.



## **Eat with Non-Christians**

We all eat three meals a day. Why not make a habit of sharing one of those meals with a non-Christian or with a family of non-Christians? Go to lunch with a co-worker, not by yourself. Invite the neighbors over for family dinner. If it's too much work to cook a big dinner, just order pizza and put the focus on conversation. When you go out for a meal, invite a non-Christian friend. Or take your family to family-style restaurants where you can sit at the table with strangers and strike up conversations. Have cookouts and invite Christians and non-Christians. *Flee the Christian subculture.*

## **Walk, Don't Drive**

If you live in a walkable area, make a practice of getting out and walking around your neighborhood, apartment complex, or campus. Instead of driving to the mailbox or convenience store, walk to get mail or groceries. Be deliberate in your walk. Say hello to people you don't know. Strike up conversations. Attract attention by walking the dog, carrying along a 6-pack to share, bringing the kids. Make friends. Get out of your house! Last night I spent an hour outside gardening with my family. We had good conversations

with about four of our neighbors. Take interest in your neighbors. Ask questions. Engage. Pray as you go. *Save some gas, the planet, and some people.*

## **Be a Regular**

Instead of hopping all over the city for gas, groceries, haircuts, eating out, and coffee, go to the same places at the same times. Get to know the staff. Smile. Ask questions. Be a regular. I have friends at coffee shops all over the city. My friends at Starbucks donate a ton of leftover pastries to our church 2-3 times a week. We use them for church gatherings and occasionally give them to the homeless. Build relationships. *Be a regular.*

## **Hobby with Non-Christians**

Pick a hobby that you can share. Get out and do something you enjoy with others. Try city league sports or local rowing and cycling teams. Share your hobby by teaching lessons, such as sewing, piano, knitting, or tennis lessons. Be prayerful. Be intentional. Be winsome. Have fun. *Be yourself.*

## **Talk to Your Co-workers.**

How hard is that? Take your breaks with intentionality. Go out with your team or task force after work. Show interest in your co-workers. Pick four and pray for them. Form moms' groups in your neighborhood and don't make them exclusively non-Christian. Schedule play dates with the neighbors' kids. *Work on mission.*

## **Volunteer with Non-Profits.**

Find a non-profit in your part of the city and take a Saturday a month to serve your city. Bring your neighbors, your friends, or your small group. Spend time with your church serving your city. Once a month. *You can do it!*

## **Participate in City Events**

Instead of playing Xbox, watching TV, or surfing the net, participate in city events. Go to fundraisers, festivals, cleanups, summer shows, and concerts. Participate missionally. Strike up conversation. Study the culture. Reflect on what you see and hear. Pray for the city. Love the city. *Participate with the city.*