

**Welcome to Worship with us!** Please take a moment to fill out the **Communication Card** inside this guide and place it in the offering box. We're so glad you've decided to worship with us this this morning!

**Game Night During Life Group This Week** Both Life Groups will host game nights during regularly scheduled times. If you've never participated in a Life Group this a great opportunity to check out a group.

**Safe on the Square** will be Oct. 31<sup>st</sup> from 2:30-5:00pm on the Greenway at the Park. We need a few people who are willing to give out candy and invite cards to families! Also, please bring a bag or 2 of candy with you when you come to worship the next couple of weeks, so we have some to give out!

**Toys needed for Nursery Area!** The nursery area is being changed to accommodate more children. To do this, more toys are needed. Please see the list at the Welcome Center or Stephanie Stotts for more information about how you can help.

**Nicaragua Mission Trip March 8-17, 2014.** The next Mission Trip to Nicaragua has been scheduled. At this point, the plan is to take a medical team and children's ministry team. If you're interested in going, see Billy. The cost of the trip is \$1500 and the first deposit of \$500 is due Dec. 8<sup>th</sup>.

**Giving** can be done in the box in the back of the room or online at [www.encounterlifechurch.org/give](http://www.encounterlifechurch.org/give). Thanks for faithfully giving and supporting the work God is doing through ELC!

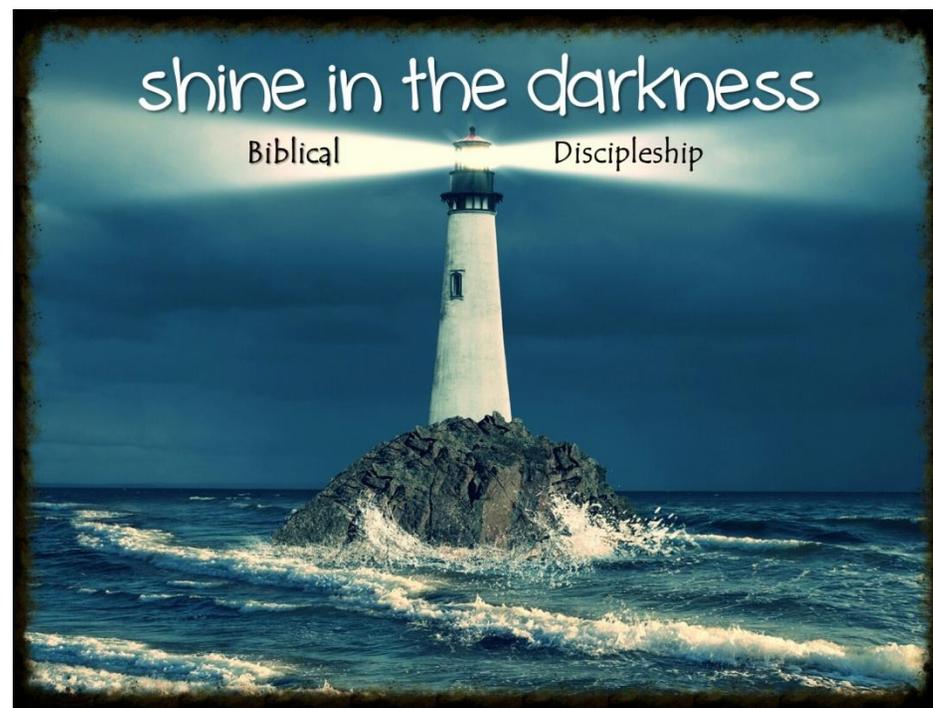
**Life Group Times and Locations:**

1. **Sunday Nights @ 5:00:** Meets at the Lemmons' (1203 Hillcrest Drive) and is led by Joel Littlefield.
2. **Thursday Nights @ 5:30:** Meets at the Cunningham's (324 Brook Hollow Circle) and is led by Billy Levensgood.

**Need Something this week?** Please call the Leadership Team:

Jim Lemmons	273-2532	Billy Levensgood	224-8502
Joel Littlefield	273-9574	Justin Stotts	409-7013
James West	235-5432		

# Encounter Life Church



## Family Worship Guide

**October 27, 2013**

Family Worship Night  
Week of October 27, 2013

### LEARN, RELATE, COMMUNICATE

A disciple of Jesus is someone who learns the gospel, relates in the gospel, and communicates the gospel. This definition of disciple shows us that the gospel both makes and matures disciples. We see this in Jesus's ministry. Jesus proclaimed the same gospel to the crowds that he taught to the disciples. He did not have the twelve on a special, gospel-plus track to study advanced subject matter. The gospel is for undergraduates and graduates because nobody ever graduates from the gospel.

Why? Because his agenda of grace is the only solution to our common predicament of sin, Christian or non-Christian. Both desperately need the forgiving, reconciling, and restoring power of the gospel to know and enjoy God, not just once but for a lifetime. In light of this understanding of discipleship, I did not become a disciple at 20 when I got kicked out of Bible school and got serious about my faith; I became a disciple upon conversion to Jesus Christ, at age six. My collegiate sins did not betray a failure to become a disciple upon my conversion; they betrayed a failure to grasp the gospel in sanctification. We aren't converted at the outset of the Christian life only to join the gospel-plus track a little later as a disciple.

### GO DEEP

What I was missing was not a new set of relationships to usher me into Christian maturity (with a discipler and an accountability partner) but a deep understanding of the gospel of grace. What I needed was a deeper comprehension of the cross and the resurrection. I needed to know that Jesus's sacrifice is sufficient, not just for pre-Christian failures but for post-Christian, lifelong failures. Jesus died to set me free from judgment by embracing my judgment on the cross. Riddled with guilt and sin, and a dichotomous view of discipleship, I could not grasp freeing forgiveness purchased for me at the cross of Christ. Unaware of my union with Christ, his enduring approval seemed like something I had to regain. I did not grasp the present tense power of a Jesus, "who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification" ([Romans 4:25](#)), which confers forgiveness and acceptance not only in the past but also in the present.

### WE'RE NOT SAVED BY PERFORMANCE

The power of God's reckless love and remarkable grace could not pull me out of sin into repentance because, in some way, I perceived that love and grace as restricted for better men. I felt I had transgressed in my new life in Christ, forever trapped in a struggle to return to the new.

I failed to believe [Romans 6:6-7](#): "We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin." I believed the bonds of sin were stronger than the power of grace.

Naturally, I turned to performance, not grace. At every failure, I concluded that I needed to work harder, get better accountability, and perhaps find a stronger discipler.

What I did not know is that discipleship is not performance-based. What I needed is what all of us need: continual belief in the depth of God's forgiveness and the resilience of his genuine approval in Christ. In brief, what I needed was more Jesus, not more discipline. As Bonhoeffer points out, I needed to give up on myself and give in to Jesus:

When a man really gives up trying to make something out of himself—a saint, or converted sinner, or a churchman, a righteous or unrighteous man . . . when in the fullness of tasks, questions, success or ill-hap, experiences and perplexities, a man throws himself into the arms of God . . . then he wakes with Christ.

The gospel promises us the arms of God's loving embrace every single minute of every single day, provided we give up on ourselves. When we give up on our rebellion and religion, we can give in to God's amazing grace. This surrender is a recentering of faith in Jesus.

Jesus, alone, should take the center place in our lives, not our Bible reading, evangelism, character, or effort to be different or spiritual. No disciple will ever graduate from the school of grace.

Every follower of Jesus needs to know, and be reminded, that the gospel that makes disciples is the very same gospel that matures disciples. We are born in grace and we breathe by grace, all bought by the blood of Jesus.

## THE GOSPEL, OVER AND OVER AGAIN

In summary, this gospel-centered definition of discipleship collapses [the dichotomy between evangelism and discipleship](#) by showing that disciples are made and matured through repentance and faith in the good news. If this news is what makes and matures a disciple, then evangelism and discipleship are both gospel endeavors.

The gospel integrates, not dichotomizes, evangelism and discipleship by announcing a grace that saves and sanctifies disciples! Michael Horton captures this well when he writes: “We have to reevaluate the common assumption today that we move from being evangelized to being disciplined. These terms are interchangeable. Believers need to be immersed in the gospel every week.”

This gospel-centric approach to disciple-making is largely missing from discipleship today, which tends to focus on evangelistic techniques and discipleship methods. Unless these methods are tethered to a robust understanding of the gospel, they will actually sabotage discipleship. What we need is a recentering of Christian discipleship devolving it into forms of spiritual performance.

The Great Commission is not evangelism- or discipleship-centered—it is gospel-centered. It calls us to make disciples by being a people who orbit around Jesus and his blood-bought benefits, not performance and self-made efforts.

Disciples are gospel people who introduce and reintroduce themselves and others to the person and power of Jesus over and over again. A disciple of Jesus never stops learning the gospel, relating in the gospel, and communicating the gospel.<sup>1</sup>

*Prayer Thought: Ask God to grow you as a disciple and help you help others become followers of Jesus.*

For more information on how to have a  
**Family Worship Night** please visit,  
[www.encounterlifechurch.org/fwn/FWNPrepGuide.pdf](http://www.encounterlifechurch.org/fwn/FWNPrepGuide.pdf)

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