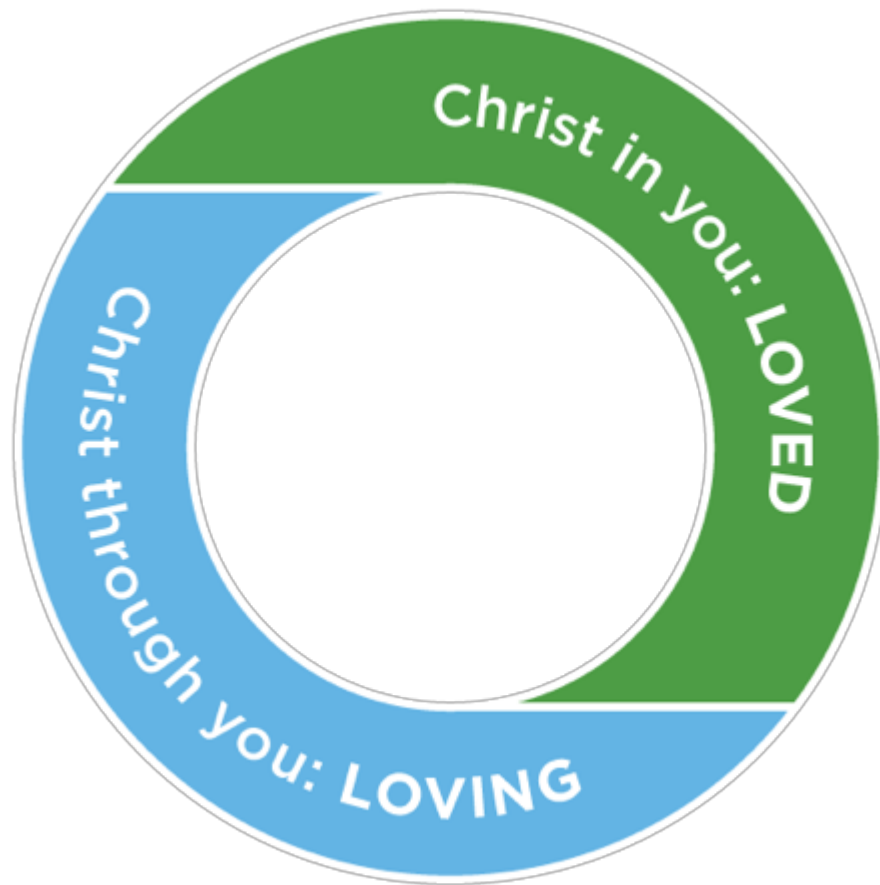


1st Quarter



1st QUARTER

experience Life

6 meetings; *"GroupStart: Home Version"* (Launching your group; see Appendix A)

Service & Missions

1 meeting; Review missionaries and prayer

Community & Evangelism

1 meeting; *"Party with Families"*

Total of 8 meetings

experience Life

All of Bent Tree's LifeGroups should begin with this 6-consecutive week overview and activities relating to growing disciples of Jesus (See page 8). These lessons are designed to help grow a new group into relationships with one another. You will "experience Life" together through **being LOVED** in Christ and by **LOVING others** through Christ. Details for each week's lesson are found in Appendix A, page 35, titled "*GroupStart: Home Version.*"

Service & Missions

In this meeting, your group will get introduced to many of the missionaries that Bent Tree currently supports. You can find this list in Appendix B, page 59, titled "**Bent Tree Missionaries**". If you start your meetings with a meal, this could be a good time to discuss what the group would like to do for "**Community & Evangelism,**" titled "Party with Families" (see below). But to help pick a missionary during this meeting, form 4-5 small sub-teams in your group and give each team an equal number of missionaries. Give the teams a few minutes to look over their part of the missionary list and ask them to be prepared to give the rest of the group a summary about these missionaries and where they serve. As each sub-team shares their presentation, ask them to pick the one missionary and country they felt they would like to support most. This will cull the larger list down to the top 4-5 missionaries. As a group try to narrow this list down further to the top 1-2 choices for your group to adopt. Explain what adopting a missionary might mean for your group.

1. Your group might commit to praying for this missionary(s) on a regular basis.
2. When this missionary is in town, the group might invite them to come and share an update with the group.
3. The group or members from the group might want to do a mission trip with this missionary in the area where they serve sometime in the next couple of years.
4. Members of the group might send cards, emails, and/or care packages periodically to these missionaries.

Once the group has selected a missionary to adopt, have the members remain in the small sub-teams formed earlier and ask them to share prayer requests with each other. Ask them to pray about these prayer requests and to include a prayer for the newly adopted missionary. Please let your community pastor know who your group adopted!

Community & Evangelism

“Party with families” gathering. The idea here is to, at the very least, offer a time for your group members to enjoy doing something fun together. But there is another aspect to this event that is equally important and that is the idea of your group doing something fun together along with friends of some of your members who may not yet know Jesus Christ in a life transforming way. In other words, the next meeting is for Christ followers and those who are not Christ followers. See “**Groups Sharing Life in Christ: The 3-D’s**” in Appendix C, page 75. Take a poster or marker board and set it up in front of the group. Ask members to name people they know who live nearby whom they think are not Christ followers (You can also refer to “**Your Neighbors**” in Appendix C, page 76). Write their names on the board. As a group, decide what all of you would like to do that evening that would be fun and if you would like to invite any or all of these friends listed on the board to join you. It might be an event that takes place on a day other than when your group usually meets. It could be set for a Saturday afternoon, for example, at a park for the kids even though your group usually meets on Thursday night. As you plan the event together, ask how many of your members intend to invite someone(s) from the list on the board to join with them. The goal here is to enable non-Christians to be in a setting with Christ followers and have a good time together! This is not an evangelistic crusade. It’s just a time to begin breaking down some walls and excuses that some may have for not following Jesus. The measure of success for this evening will be whether everyone seemed to have a good time and whether any friends or neighbors of your group members attended.

GroupStart: Home Version Overview

Introduction: Most of us would agree that first impressions are very important when it comes to meeting people but it's also true in forming small groups. The overall experience that someone walks away with after visiting a small group for the first time can either fill them with excitement and enthusiasm to come back for the next meeting, or it can be a turn off that either leads them to look elsewhere or not at all for another group. The next six small group lessons are designed to help your group get launched well from the very start. They are designed to help build community with one another while also experiencing a balanced taste of what we, at Bent Tree, believe represents the six activities of the early church (**growth, worship, service, missions, community, and evangelism**). We also highly recommend that you ask your group members to meet for six consecutive weeks at the beginning to help build a greater sense of community and to strengthen relationships at a more accelerated pace. For some groups this may seem impossible to schedule due to peoples' busy activities but if you can meet as a group for six straight weeks in a row it will help your group get started well.

Group Start...At a Glance:

Six (6) Weeks Summary					
WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	WEEK 5	WEEK 6
Community	Growth	Service	Service Project	Mission	Worship
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refreshments • Ice Breakers /Soularium Cards • Discuss Group Expectations • Preview Next Week • Prayer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ice Breaker • Discuss Spiritual Growth • LifeMaps • Prayer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ice Breaker • LifeMaps • Service w/in the Group • Prayer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ice Breaker • LifeMaps • Plan Service Project • Prayer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do Service Project • Prayer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ice Breaker • What's Next for Group • Outward expression of Christ is Worship • Next leg if continuing • Prayer

Gather items that will be needed each week: *Each week may have additional needs that will be noted within that week's outline:*

- Refreshments - Food or desserts, drinks (chilled waters or not chilled) for Social Time
- Souliarium Cards or Conversation Cards for icebreakers
- Name tags
- Pens/markers
- Discussion questions for the video

Let's get started...

Week 1 – Your Group’s First Meeting

It’s a “Social” - Take the time to get to know the people that make up your new group. Plan a dinner or dessert (can be potluck) which will include time for you to get to know one another in an informal setting.

Additional Actions/Items needed:

- Que up “*experience Life - Session 3: Life with Others*” at [rightnowmedia.org](https://www.rightnowmedia.org) on a TV or computer. Click the Bent Tree library and search for the Small Group Training section to access the experience Life series: <https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Training/Post/View/256899>
- Copies of “Group Agreement: Nine Characteristics of Biblical Fellowship” (pg. 79).
- Leaders, email your group the list of “Local Mission Opportunities” (see Appendix B, page 55), so your group has time to look over serving opportunities to discuss in week 4 (and if needed, to make an appointment) to serve during week 5.
- Soularium Cards.

Meetings Focus: Groups begin doing community together.

Suggested Time Frame:

Social Time: Dinner or refreshments – 30 mins

Move into another room and **open with prayer** – 10 mins

Ice Breaker: Soularium Cards: – 10 – 20 mins

- Question #1- Pick a card that best pictures what was your biggest **reluctance** about joining a group like this.
- Question #2- Pick another card that best pictures what you want to **experience** in a group like this.

Give your new members a few minutes to pick out their cards and formulate their answers to the above question(s). Go around and have the group answer question #1 first. Then go around again to answer question #2.

Discuss Group Expectations – 20 mins

Hand out the “Group Agreement: Nine Characteristics of Biblical Fellowship” page and discuss Four Tips for Building a Healthy Group (listed below):

1. **Commitment-** Please be committed to the group for the duration of our 1st 6 week cycle and at the end you will have the opportunity to discuss the future of your group.
2. **Confidentiality-** Prayer requests and concerns should stay within the group.
3. **Shared Responsibility-** A healthy group experience is a shared responsibility by the members of the entire group. (Care, Growth, and Outreach).
4. **No One is Singled Out-** Commitment to allow group members to share as they feel led. Questions are directed towards the group, not an individual.

Share that for the next 6 Weeks we are going to get to know each other better as we begin to introduce each of the **6 purposes of Bent Tree** (growth, worship, service, missions, community, and evangelism).

Show “experience Life - Session 3: Life with Others” then discuss the following: - 21 mins

Discussion Questions:

Ask someone to read **Philippians 2:1-4** for the group:

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion,² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves,⁴ not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

- In this series Pete mentioned the idea of surrendering our lives over to God. What does surrender look like in the area of community based on the verses we just heard?

Ask someone to read **Acts 2:42-47** for the group:

⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

- What stands out to you in this picture of how the early church functioned?
- What about these verses do you want to experience today?
- How much time were these early disciples willing to put into experiencing community with one another?

Ask someone to read 1 Peter 3:15 for the group:

¹⁵ But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,

- Another part of “Life with Others” that Pete spoke about had to do with doing life with those who don’t claim to know Christ. What does “surrender” in the area of evangelism look like for believers?
- How can you show gentleness and respect to someone who doesn’t yet know Jesus? What will that mean for you?

Discuss: They will be planning a service project to do in the next few weeks and to look for an email that will include a list of local service opportunities. Please look over the list and note any areas of interest so our group can narrow it down and schedule a time to serve the community.

Prayer: – 15 mins

Let’s close the first night in prayer! Depending on the size and make-up of your group, ask the women to meet in one room and the men to meet in another room (5-6 in each group max). Ask them to each share one thing no matter how small an issue it might be that they would like the group to pray for them. After each person shares what they would like prayer for, ask each person to pray out loud in their groups for the person on their right only. If they are uncomfortable praying out loud when their turn comes up, simply tap on the shoulder of the person on their right and they will pick up the prayer time. Another approach would be to simply ask for one volunteer from each group to lift up the prayer requests shared at the meeting.

Week 2

Additional Actions/Items needed:

- Que up “experience Life -Session 2: Life in Christ” at rightnowmedia.org: <https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Training/Post/View/256890>
- Copies (one for each member) of LifeMap (2 Peaks/2 Valleys) illustration in Appendix C, page 83.
- Leader, you will need the instructions of LifeMaps to explain to the group.

Meetings Focus: experiencing Life in Christ through spiritual growth.

Social Time

Ice Breaker: Ask each person to introduce themselves and then answer the question, “If your house was on fire, what three items (not people) would you try to save and why?”

Open with Prayer

Show “Experience Life - Session 2: Life in Christ”

Discussion Questions:

Read to group the following three paragraphs:

“Imagine the first time you meet a new friend and you want to get to know them better. How does your relationship grow? You spend time together, communicating, and learning what the other person likes and dislikes. Now, think of how you get to know God better; isn’t it the same?”

“For the Christian, isn’t that what spiritual growth really is—getting to know Jesus better, communicating with him, learning what he likes and doesn’t like, and adapting our lives to his?”

“When we put Christ first, we commit ourselves to spending time with Christ, becoming more and more of the person he wants us to be. But how does this happen? Is spiritual growth a matter of following some step-by-step program? Or is it more dynamic, opening our hearts and souls to the desires of Christ?”

Ask someone to read **Ephesians 3:14-21** (NASB) out loud to the group:

¹⁴For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,¹⁵from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name,¹⁶that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man,¹⁷so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love,¹⁸may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,¹⁹and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.²⁰Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,²¹to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

- **Verse 16** refers to strength we receive in our “inner being.” What kind of strength is that? How does inner strength differ from outer strength? What does it look like in our daily lives?
- Paul wants the Ephesians—and us—to be strong! Paul writes that we are to be “rooted” in God’s love. How can we do that?

Read to group: “We can know God’s love by experiencing it, but it will always be beyond our complete understanding. This is the nature of spiritual growth that Pete was talking about. We are always drinking from a never-ending supply. We never “graduate” from this school; there is always more to learn. In genuine spiritual growth, there is no place for pride over being higher on the “ladder” than someone else. Together we are trying to grasp more and more of the amazing love of God, to know this love even though it supposes knowledge, and to be filled with God’s fullness.”

- According to verses 20-21, who is doing the work of spiritual growth?
- Growth happens. Jungles are full of wildlife that just grow without any tending. Even we don’t try to grow. A child who is three feet tall might want to grow to be six feet tall, but trying won’t make it happen. However, there are things we can do to allow growth to happen — eating right, exercising, sleeping, etc. When it comes to spiritual growth, it’s clear that God is working in us to make it happen. It’s his power.
- What are some things we can do to help that process? What can we do to open ourselves to the growth God wants to give us?

- Pete talked about a "60 day challenge" involving Bible reading and journaling. Consider trying this for just 6 days.

Set aside some time each day this week to read one chapter of Scripture. (Consider reading through the book of Ephesians since it has only six chapters.) Then create some sort of journal and each day, describe whatever you can remember that took place in your life. This is a spiritual journal, so let Jesus sit with you as you jot down your reflections. Let your writing turn into a conversation with him. This is where spiritual growth begins.

Are you ready to go for 6 days?

LifeMapping:

Explain the LifeMapping exercise:

Two Peaks and Two Valleys - Think of the 2 peaks and 2 valleys in this illustration as two important life changing events that have occurred in their lives and two difficult experiences or even learning experiences they have gone through. Have them write these on the peaks and valleys and be prepared to share some of yours with the group.

Give them time to prepare their story and allow some time to share a few LifeMaps during this meeting if possible.

Instructions for Next Week:

Work on LifeMaps and bring back next week.

Prayer:

1. Divide the men from women.
2. Ask these smaller groups to pray for the person on their right after everyone has a chance to share their prayer requests.

Week 3

Additional Actions/Items needed:

- Que up “experience Life - Session 4: Life Expressed”, (only the 1st 11 minutes) at [rightnowmedia.org](https://www.rightnowmedia.org):
<https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Training/Post/View/256906>
- Additional Copies of “LifeMap” illustration (if needed).
- Copies of “Areas of Service within the small group” (one for each member, page 84).
- “Refreshment and Host Home” sign-up sheet. Page 87.

Meetings Focus: Involving each member in servicing the Body of Christ and building community with one another.

Social Time

Open with Prayer

Show only the first 11 minutes of the “experience Life - Session 4: Life Expressed”

Ice Breaker: Describe for us an experience you had where you felt incredibly served by someone else, an organization, a church...etc.

Discussion Questions:

Read to group: “Jesus is a servant. When He lives His life through us, we will find ourselves serving. Pete talked about how we are to invest time and resources in others.”

1. Where do you invest your time and resources that gives you the most joy?
2. Where have you been asked to serve?
3. Are there any other areas where you would like to serve?

Pass out the “Areas of Service within the Small Group”.

1. Explain the “Areas of Service” page.
2. Ask each person to fill this out and collect them.
3. Ask “How did the “6 day challenge” go for you last week?” (Pete had suggested a 60 day challenge in the Life in Christ video).

Group leader share their LifeMap as kind of a model for the group to follow.

1. Allow time for Q & A.
2. Ask someone(s) to pray for the leader after they share.
3. Then ask someone else to share their **LifeMap** (2 Peaks & 2 Valley's) and repeat 1 & 2 with each person who presents. Do not feel pressure to complete all **LifeMaps** in one meeting!

Continue **LifeMaps** next week if necessary.

Instructions for Next Week:

Pass the “Refreshment and Host Home” sheet around and explain

Prayer:

1. Break into groups of 3-4 men & 3-4 women each.
2. Share a praise or prayer need.
3. Pray for the person on your right.

Week 4

Additional Actions/Items needed:

- Que up “experience Life - Session 4: Life Expressed”, the 2nd half of the video clip beginning 11 minutes into the video (Mission):
<https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Training/Post/View/256906>
- List of local mission possibilities to serve at in Appendix B, pages 55-58. This was also emailed to your group earlier to help narrow down possibilities and possibly get something scheduled.

Meetings Focus: Plan a local mission project to do together as a group or individually sometime during the next 2 weeks, (if your group has not decided before this week).

Social Time:

Open with Prayer:

Ice Breaker: Describe for us a time when you really went the extra mile in serving someone else or an organization?

Show the “experience Life - Session 4: Life Expressed”, clip on “Mission”

Discussion Questions:

Discuss this quote from the Life Expressed “Mission” video clip (2nd half of video session #4 in the experiencing Life video series), “It is God’s heart and strategic passion that everyone on earth would have the opportunity to hear about Him in a language and culture form that they can understand so they can respond to his life-giving gospel. And He does this through us.”

Ask someone to read **Ephesians 3:2-12 (ESV)** out loud to the group:

² assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace that was given to me for you, ³ how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. ⁴ When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery

of Christ,⁵ which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.⁶ This mystery is^[a] that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

⁷ Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power.⁸ To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,⁹ and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in^[b] God, who created all things,¹⁰ so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.¹¹ This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord,¹² in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.

Discuss this quote from the “Life Expressed” video, “Sometimes we Christians are like the ancient Jews. We enjoy our fellowship. We study our Scriptures. We bask in the relationship we have with God. We strive to keep ourselves separate from the world. But then we catch a glimpse of God’s eternal plan. It was never just about us. He wants to win the whole world—and use us to do it! That might be shocking, or it might be exciting. It might make you nervous. “Who, me?” you might ask.

Ask group members to volunteer looking up and reading each of the following Scriptures:

- a. Matthew 28:19
- b. Mark 16:15-16
- c. 1 Peter 3:15
- d. Romans 10:14
- e. 2 Timothy 4:1-2

- After reading these Scriptures have you ever wanted to be used by God in these kinds of ways? Why or why not?

Discuss what the group would like to do for a local mission project next week!

1. Talk with your group about doing something completely different at their next group meeting. Plan to not actually meet as a group for a discussion time but go instead to a place where the group can serve together. Before this meeting go over the list of local mission opportunities and contact one or two that might be of interest for your

group to serve. You may have to plan to meet as a group on a different day and time than your group ordinarily meets, but do so in lieu of your next meeting. Don't try to do both in one week! There are several options to serve together at Bent Tree. For example: Special Needs, Preschool, or Children's classes on Sunday mornings. We also do worship services for area nursing homes that groups could attend and serve along with others who do this regularly. Contact your community pastor for details on any of these ideas and others.

2. Be sure to arrange a place and time to meet before everyone leaves this meeting.
3. Alternative: Identify a local charity that needs food or clothing and ask each member bring something to the group at the next meeting. This won't be nearly as exciting as actually going out as a group together to serve but it may have to do in some cases.

Prayer:

Break into men's and women's prayer groups depending on the size of your group. After each shares a request, ask members to pray for the person sitting on their right.

Week 5

***If the group does not go out this evening to do their mission experience then this lesson plan can be used instead.

Additional Actions/Items needed:

- Provide “**Refreshment and Host Home**” sign up list (Appendix C, page 87) – Next week’s meeting, plan on celebrating your group’s first 6 weeks together in the form of a party. Let members know in advance, this week, so they can plan to bring snacks and refreshments to share.
- Copies of **LifeMap** illustrations if needed.

Meetings Focus: Mission to those outside of the church and Service to those within the Body of Christ.

Ice Breaker: Pick one of the ice breakers found in Appendix C, page 80.

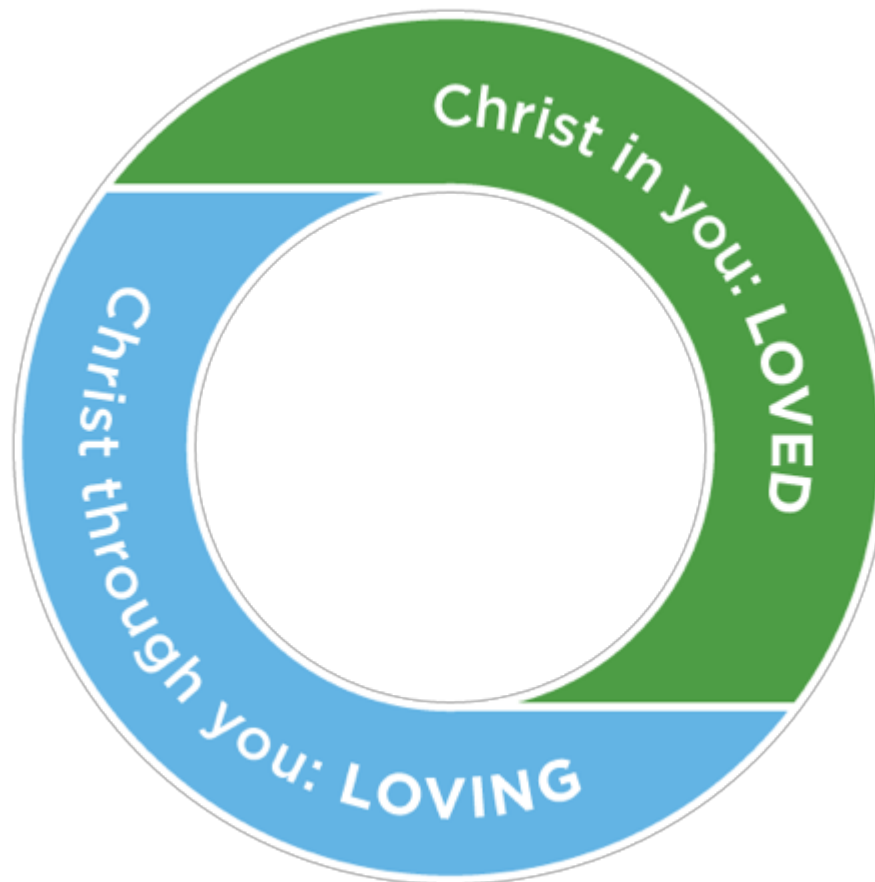
Open with prayer:

Debrief whatever this group did as a local mission exercise this week if applicable.

Discussion Questions:

1. Explain that this is an example of the mission part of the experience-Life wheel (see next page).
2. Review the experience-Life wheel with the group.
3. Ask someone to pray that Jesus would be glorified through whatever the group does in way of missions.
4. If the “*experience Life - Session 4: Life Expressed*”, (service or missions) video clips have not been shown yet, show either or both of them at this meeting, then discuss the questions on the next page.

Experience Life Wheel



What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus?

"My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you." (John 15:12)

Realizing who we are in Christ — that we are constantly in the place and position of being loved fully, without hesitation or reservation — is the starting point for discipleship. It's what Jesus gave to his followers in John 15:9 when he said, *"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love."*

At Bent Tree, we want to see believers living fully out of their relationship with Christ in the reality of the New Covenant. We want believers to realize how loved they are, because that is true of them, and leads them to live the life they were made to live. A life of actively loving — operating, demonstrating, and giving Christ's love to others.

As you rest in the reality that you are fully loved by Christ, the overflow is that you love and are loving toward others. This active choice of the will is sourced in Christ and allows us to look to him as the one who loves perfectly.

We believe that as you grow as a disciple of Jesus, learning about Christ in you and Christ through you, the Holy Spirit will guide you into **growth, worship, service, missions, community, and evangelism**. These are the six purposes the early church engaged in, wherein they expressed the Life of Christ. These purposes serve as our model for ministry and how they are connected to the wheel.

The Six Purposes of the Early Church:

Growth

Learning is essential to your maturing in Christ. As you grow in your understanding of what Christ has done on your behalf, we hope your sense of his love for you will deepen.

Worship

As Christ works in you, convincing you of his love for you, we believe that worship will be a natural outflow.

Service

God is inviting you to experience him through joining a serving opportunity in the church body here at Bent Tree. Prayerfully consider where there is need and what he's placed on your heart, then take a step of faith to serve.

Missions

Christ desires to work through you to reach those who are far from the gospel message. As you depend on Him as your source, you will learn to trust and follow Him to places beyond your immediate comfort zone.

Community

In Christ, our relationships with other believers should be rich and full. In the context of community, we grow in our understanding of Christ working in us, and through us in loving our brothers and sisters.

Evangelism

As you experience a deeper understanding of God's love for you and others, the Spirit will encourage you to reach out to those who don't know Jesus and live available for him to share his love for them through you.

Discussion Questions for “experience Life - Session 4: Life Expressed”, 1st
half - 11 minutes:

1. Have you ever thought about the idea that the God of the universe has the heart of a servant? How could that impact us?
2. Pete talked about how we are to invest time and resources in others. Where do you invest your time and resources that gives you the most joy? Are there any other areas that you would like to see served?

Discussion Questions - for “experience Life - Session 4: Life Expressed”, 2nd
half - 11:00 - 19:34:

Ask someone to read **Matthew 28:18-20** out loud to the group:

¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

1. Does this passage seem like it’s only for missionaries? Why or why not?
2. What most encourages you about this passage? How could a small group engage in missions?

Do LifeMaps that haven’t been shared.

Prayer:

Move into prayer groups only this time try a different approach to praying from the options listed in the “Prayer in the Small Group” sheet in Appendix C, page 72.

Week 6

Additional Actions/Items needed:

- Copies of “Areas of Service” sheet (page 84).
- Copies of the “Group Agreement” (page 79).
- A copy of “*Christ in You: Alive & Free*” book, or enough copies for each group member to have and purchase them from you.
- Soularium Cards.
- Blank index cards and pens and/or pencils.

Meetings Focus: It’s a Party! Celebrate making it through these 1st 6 weeks together forming community with one another!

Open with Prayer:

Ice Breaker: Soularium Cards – Pick a card that best illustrates what you have gotten out of our past 6 weeks (or as many as you have attended) of being a part of this group. Share why you picked that card! Take time to celebrate encouraging things that are shared about the group!

Finish LifeMaps: Explain for those who might be here for 1st time if new people are still joining your group.

Discuss where this is group going?

1. **Reiterate the original plan:**
 - Original commitment was to attend this group for 6 weeks. Tonight is the 6th meeting!
 - Our original goal was to take those who signed up and see if we could meet for 6 weeks and then evaluate if we would like to continue meeting for another 6 weeks.
2. **Ask** – What would your preferred future look like for this group? (Ask each person to write their response on an index card anonymously and turn their answers back in to you. Read these out loud to the group.)

If the group is going to continue...

3. Give copies of “**Areas of Service**” to any who did not receive one during the 3rd meeting.

- Also hand out the completed sheets back to those who originally filled these out during the 1st or 2nd meetings.
- Ask them if they still feel that the areas they picked for service best reflect what they want to do?
- How could these areas of service work in our small group?

4. **Confirm meeting places, times and frequency:**

- Decide if it needs to meet at the church because of childcare.
- Determine where the group will meet next and thereafter if leaving the church building.
- Confirm the date and time the next meeting will be and decide whether to meet weekly or move to a twice a month format.
- Talk about what this group might study together? Encourage members to stay together for another 6 weeks and work through Bent Tree’s latest publication, “*Christ in You: Alive & Free!*” You can get a copy from your community pastor and members can pick up their copy at the Coffee Bar kiosk in The Lobby of the church.

5. **Group Agreement:**

- Review the group covenant originally shared with the group at the beginning.
- Give copies to each member.
- Ask volunteers to look up the verses and read them out loud for the group.

Pray in smaller groups: See “*Prayer in the Small Group*” sheet in Appendix C, page 72 for different options.