



S T R A N G E S R S

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COMMUNITY GROUP LEADER

WELCOME TO IMPACT

We are so excited that you are a Community Group Leader this year at Impact! We are honored for you to be here! We praise God for you, and we thank Him for his grace in your life. God is so big, good, and holy. This weekend is all about Him, His glory, and His fame!

In the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, the God who created the world is recreating it, and he has invited us to be a part of it! In Jesus, God is summing up all things (Eph. 1:10), reconciling all things (Col. 1:20), restoring all things (Acts 3:21), and renewing all things (Matt. 19:28). We are invited into the promises of God, and we are set apart to live as strangers and exiles in a home that is not our own.

This weekend, we are praying that people will surrender their lives to King Jesus, would take their next step of obedience in discipleship, and would embrace their calling to make much of Him as strangers and exiles in a world tainted by sin.

What's better than this? We know that none of this is possible without the work of the Spirit: "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all" (John 6:63). It is the Spirit who opens the eyes of the heart, that people may know the hope that God has given us, and the riches of his "glorious inheritance" in the saints (Ephesians 1:18). We are praying that we would fill ourselves with God's thoughts and not our own (Isaiah 55:8-9), and that the Spirit would move in everyone's hearts. This is all done through the message of Jesus and Him crucified (1 Corinthians 2:2).

This is our message this weekend. Not good advice, not helpful hints, not "steps to get better," but the finished and sufficient work of Jesus in the place of sinners, like you and me. Let this good news overwhelm you! As people give their lives to be disciples of Jesus and follow Him with everything, we pray that He will be their only King, and that his kingdom will reshape and reorient their lives, so they become salt and light in their everyday lives. May Jesus and his kingdom forever be worth more than all the lesser treasures of this world, and may we truly live to see Jesus' kingdom come and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

We love you and are standing here beside you. We are for you and with you. We are laboring alongside you and praying for you constantly.

In Christ,
Impact Team



THE GOSPEL

The good news that the just and gracious Creator of the universe has looked upon hopelessly sinful men and women and has sent his son, Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, to bear His wrath against sin on the cross and to show his power over sin, so that everyone who turns from their sin and themselves and trusts in Jesus as Savior and Lord will be reconciled to God forever.

1) The Character of God

(Romans 1:18-20, 2:1-16, 3:22-24, Isaiah 43:6-7)

- Biblical truth: God is the just and gracious Creator of all things.
- Biblical response: Realize that we belong to Him, are accountable to Him, and are created to glorify Him.

2) The Sinfulness of Man

(Romans 1:21-25, 3:9-20, 3:23, 6:23)

- Biblical truth: We are each created by God, but we are all corrupted by sin. - Biblical response: Admit areas of rebellion, be honest with God about sin, and turn from it.

3) The Sufficiency of Christ

(Romans 3:21-26, 4:25, 5:6-10, 5:18, 8:1-4)

- Biblical truth: Jesus Christ alone is able to remove our sin and reconcile us to God through His death. He alone satisfies the wrath of God for our sins.
- Biblical response: Recognize that we are helpless to be reconciled with God apart from Jesus Christ.

4) The Necessity of Faith

(Romans 1:17, 3:20-31, 4:22-25, 6:11-14, 8:10-11, 10:9-13)

- Biblical truth: We are reconciled to God only through faith in Jesus. There is nothing we can do to become right with God.
- Biblical response: Faith that leads to salvation involves turning from our sin and our self-sufficiency. We turn to Jesus and trust in Him as Lord. Confess Him as Lord and Savior.

5) The Urgency of Eternity

(John 3:14-16, 36, John 10:27-30, 17:3, 1 Timothy 1:16-17, Hebrews 9:12, 1 John 5:11-13)

- Biblical truth: Our eternal destiny is dependent on our response to Jesus.
- Biblical response: Cry out to God to save you from your sins, put your faith in Jesus Christ, and confess Him as Savior and Lord.

PRAYER POINTS

Pray that above all else, our desire, our labor, and our heart would be for God's glory.

Romans 11:36 *"For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen."*

Psalms 115:1 *"Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory, for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness."*

Psalms 127:1 *"Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain."*

John 3:30 *"He must increase, but I must decrease."*

Pray that during Impact weekend, some students would come to know Jesus as their Savior for the first time. Pray that some would be convicted of sin, that some would lay their burdens at His feet, that all would take their next step of obedience in discipleship. Pray that we would be more like Jesus after Impact is over.

Romans 10:9 *"If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raises him from the dead, you will be saved."*

Psalms 51:10-12 *"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation."*

2 Corinthians 3:18 *"And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit."*

Ephesians 4:23-24 *"Be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness."*

Romans 8:29-30 *"For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified."*

Pray that we would learn truth, believe truth, and be equipped to live truth. Pray that we would embrace our calling to live as strangers and exiles. Pray that there would be nothing that can distract or deter us from this pursuit.

Psalms 19:7 *"The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul."*

1 Peter 2:11-12 *"Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God."*

Hebrews 12:1-2 *"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God."*

PRO TIPS

Community Group Leaders are at the heart of Impact, because you are the ones investing in students and helping them take their next step of obedience in following Jesus. Being a community group leader can sometimes be a daunting and sometimes overwhelming task, but you are not alone. This is a list of ten pro tips put together by veteran small group leaders to help you navigate leading your group during the weekend!

1. Get to know your students.

Seek to know their stories, their personalities, their relationships with others in the group, their spiritual background, and their level of spiritual maturity. Connect with them relationally.

2. Keep the gospel first.

Your role as a Community Group Leader is not to be their best friend, to give them good advice, or to give them a 12-step program to a better life. Bring everything back to the gospel, the finished and sufficient work of Jesus.

3. Be prepared to guide your group conversations.

Don't wing it. Pay attention in sessions, and prayerfully have a plan for how you will guide group conversation. Use the resources given to you to help you prepare to lead them well.

4. But, be flexible.

If a student opens up, continue that conversation. If a question doesn't generate much conversation, ask something else. Re-word questions if students don't understand, or ask something similar that is more contextualized to your group. You don't have to rigidly follow discussion questions if conversation is going well.

5. Don't be afraid to steer the group.

If the group gets continually off-topic, don't be afraid to bring them back in. If one person dominates all of the conversation, don't be afraid to ask others what they think.

6. Ask questions.

And then, ask follow-up questions. Don't settle for vague answers, push further. Help them get to the root of issues, and help them draw actionable next steps from their takeaways. Ask about their support system, if they have Christian parents, good friends, a church family who can hold them accountable?

7. Be strong on the important things.

Do not waver if someone believes something that is contrary to the truth of Scripture. Communicate the truth in love. Bring everything back to God's Word.

8. Share your story, but don't overshare.

Know your audience. Sharing your personal testimony might be helpful, but some things may not be appropriate to share with middle or high school students. In any stories that you share about your past, be careful not to glorify sin or make yourself the main focus, but to keep the gospel at the forefront of your conversations. If you have a question about whether something is appropriate to share with students, ask your student pastor.

9. Get help.

Do not be afraid to ask for help from your pastor or leaders. If a student reports any abuse, self-harm, or suicidal thoughts, let your student pastor know.

10. Trust God.

At the end of the day, be encouraged that it is not up to you to change students' lives. Stay calm and flexible, trust that God loves these students more than you do, and be willing to let Him use you in any way that He chooses. Pray He would do mighty works in their lives, be faithful to speak truth, and point to Him in everything that you do.

ICE BREAKERS

- What's the weirdest food you've ever eaten?
- You can have an unlimited supply of one thing for the rest of your life, what is it? Sushi? Scotch Tape?
- What fruit or vegetable would you most want to be?
- Would you rather live in the ocean or on the moon?
- Would you rather meet your travel back in time to meet your ancestors or to the future to meet your descendants?
- Would you rather lose all of your money or all of your pictures?
- Would you rather give up your smartphone or your computer?
- Would you rather live without heat and AC or live without social media?
- What's the best piece of advice you've ever been given?
- When you die, what do you want to be remembered for?
- What is your favorite item you've bought this year?
- What is your absolute dream job?
- What was your least favorite food as a child? Do you still hate it or do you love it now?
- If you had to eat one meal every day for the rest of your life what would it be?

SESSION 3

STRANGERS AND EXILES LOVE THE CHURCH

Key Verses: Acts 2:42-47, 11:26

Summary:

This morning session will give a practical example of what it looks like to live faithfully as a stranger and exile: to love the local church. There is not any believer in the New Testament who is not connected to a local church, and there is not any evidence of a Christian who grows in love for God apart from a growing love for God's people. Acts 2 gives us a picture and an example to follow of the devotion that the early church had to one another.

Discussion Questions:

- What was something that stood out to you from this message? Why?
- Do you love your local church?
- Why do you think we place less value on this in our culture than the earliest Christians did?

SESSION 4

STRANGERS AND EXILES LOVE THEIR FAMILY

Key Verses: Ephesians 5:18-21, 6:1-3

Summary:

This main session will give us another practical example: as strangers and exiles, our lives will stand out by the way we love our family. The way that we live at home comes out of the overflow of the condition of our heart. Ephesians 5 and 6 give us a picture of how we should treat one another and what the attitudes of our heart should be, especially with our parents.

Discussion Questions:

- How do you normally interact with your parents? With your siblings?
- What excuses do you make as to why you can't honor your family the way that Scripture commands?
- How can you take practical steps to better love your family?
