

**II. Group discussion** *Each number below includes a set of questions that relate to the scripture text. I offer a few answers, but your perspective may be better. The point is to discuss, not to get 100% agreement. Rule of thumb: the fewer questions you ask, the better. Save time for “the big question.”*

Read Acts 4:32-37 aloud.

1. How would you describe the mood of this group? What were some of the things they were doing?

How did these early Christians demonstrate that their lives had been changed by Jesus?

When has the church been a blessing to you?

Read Acts 5:1-10 aloud.

2. What happened in this story? How do you think the deaths of two wealthy members would have affected the mood of the group?

How do you think these deaths affected attendance at Jerusalem church gatherings?

How might this event impact evangelism in a negative way? In a positive way?

3. In Go Fish 4, Andy Stanley says the church can help or hinder evangelism. How could the church be an obstacle to people meeting Jesus?

*A recent book on the faith of young adults is entitled They like Jesus but not the church. What is implied in this title? Is it true?*

What would be the worst day to bring a visitor to our church?  
*I would love to hear the answers to this question, so let me know.*

4. How does our church help you talk about your faith?  
*When people hear about us serving, that creates positive feelings.*

What are some ways our congregation is welcoming to guests?

What do we do or say that would be strange for a guest, but it is okay for them to be confused?

*Lord's Supper, baptism, talking about sin, sacrifice, and giving. Believing that ancient texts can guide us.*

What do we do or say that would be strange for a guest, and we should change to be more welcoming?

*Using strange words – foyer, pew, partake, propitiation.*

*Coats & ties – our culture is more casual, so a lot of men do not own a coat & tie or they hate wearing them.*

*Ignoring newcomers – not speaking, not helping, not even noticing.*

*Treating women like they are less valuable than men.*

How do we distinguish between issues where we should adapt to our society and issues where we need to be distinct?

*Is it biblical? Does it draw people to Jesus or does it distract? Does it help people learn the truth about the world and themselves?*

5. What are some ways our LIFE group could help one another introduce unbelievers to Jesus?

6. Today's worship order included a copy of the preacher's job description (enclosed). How might the new preacher help our church be more attractive to non-Christians?

Last fall, Jim Woodroof told a group of our leaders that during a preaching interim, people “on the margins” are reluctant to increase their involvement. Is that happening? Who is someone our group could help to feel more connected?

† **The big question** *If you ask only one question, let this be it. Allow at least 20 minutes. Go around the circle and give each person an opportunity to answer. It's okay if they pass, but at least they get a chance to respond.*

Share the first name of a non-Christian that you are praying could know the joy of following Jesus. What is one way you can show Jesus to this person this week?

### III. Other resources

**The point** – Let’s work together to be the kind of group and church that God-hungry people love. Let’s open the doors to guests, and let’s help them fall in love with Jesus!

#### **Prayer ideas**

Pray for non-Christians by name. Ask God to bless them.  
Pray for opportunities to talk about Jesus with non-Christians.  
Thank God for the people who told you the story of Jesus.

Ask God to guide our congregation through the process of discerning whom he has prepared to preach at College Hills.

**Kid-friendly activity.** *An activity designed to help kids and adults grow in faith together. Do this first, then dismiss the kids so the adults can talk.*

Give each kid a foot-long strand of yarn. Tell them to grab it at the ends and break it in half.

Give the biggest kid six strands of yarn & tell him to break it. If he can break it, give him 12. Keep repeating the exercise until you get a bundle that even the biggest men in the group cannot break.

Read Acts 4:32-35.

What was this group doing? How were they working together?

How does it make you stronger to work with others?

What is hard about working together with others?

What are some ways that faith is a community effort?

If people saw that our group was a loving, sharing group, do you think they would avoid it or want to be part of it?

## **LIFE Group Guide**

### **Acts 4-5 – Fishing together**

By John Grant (jgrant@collegehills.org)

**The theme:** **The role of Christian community in drawing people to Jesus.**

I was thrilled to hear the wonderful response in the August 12 meetings. It was fun to talk with you last week – it seemed like every single group had a “God-sighting” in their meeting. Good reports from the LIFE groups are the highlight of my month. Please keep telling me the positives. They motivate me to do a better job as your ministry partner.

This guide looks at Go Fish session 4. I found the video disturbing because I once worshipped with a church where I was embarrassed to bring my friends. That is a terrible feeling. We need to work together so that College Hills will continue to be a good witness in the community and when guests are among us. Your group can be a big help on that.

**Leadership tip:** I hope you’re planning to attend the training on Sept. 7-8. Join the Small Group Ministers' Network for a dynamic small-group training event. Rick Rusaw, preacher at Life Bridge Church in Colorado and author of *The Externally-Focused Church*, will be at Smyrna First Baptist on Sept. 7 at 6:30 and Sept. 8 at 8:30 am. \$15 covers the conference and two meals.

**I. Relate** *Use a few to introduce the theme, check everyone’s spiritual pulse, and “break the ice.” No right or wrong answers – maybe goofy but not wrong! Look for opportunities to affirm and encourage through these questions.*

- ❖ What was your most recent fishing experience? Most memorable?
- ❖ How many of those fish stories were memorable because of the people who were with you on those trips? What does that say about us?

What do you remember about your first visit to our congregation?

## **Position Description for Minister of Preaching College Hills Church of Christ, 2007**

### **Ministry Duties:**

The Minister of Preaching has as a primary responsibility to prepare God's people for works of service. He shall be faithful in the exposition of Scripture so that the congregation may grow in their understanding and application of the Word of God. (Ephesians 4:11-14; Acts 20:28)

### **Qualifications:**

I Timothy 4 & 5 describe characteristics of Christians who aspire to serve the Lord in various capacities as elders, deacons, and ministers. The elders at College Hills desire that our Minister of Preaching demonstrate as closely as possible the same qualities as outlined in I Timothy.

Our Minister of Preaching must be a man of prayer, who humbly recognizes that God is leading him and the congregation. He must be actively cultivating a heart like Jesus in every aspect of his life and work.

Our Minister of Preaching must be a superior student of the Word so that he is equipped - and perceived by the congregations as being so equipped - to be capable of helping the whole congregation in its desires to mature spiritually.

Our Minister of Preaching must be gifted in delivering inspiring, relevant and effective sermons.

The Minister of Preaching must be able to lead the congregation toward achieving the visions established by the congregation, its elders and the leadership team.

The Minister of Preaching shall envision, develop, and implement new ideas, approaches, activities, and ministries, while continually working to invigorate congregational growth in both faith and outreach.

### **Tasks:**

We desire that our Minister of Preaching be able to inspire those that have not accepted Christ as their savior to want to do so. Our preaching minister should additionally be able to motivate the members of our congregation to develop and use their individual resources and talents to the fullest to witness to God's amazing grace as we work together.

The Minister of Preaching shall likewise be a competent teacher and capable of functioning as a member of our adult teaching team. He should be able to assist in planning adult teaching curricula. He should be able to provide leadership in congregational study of special issues.

The Minister of Preaching must be able to work effectively with members of the ministry staff team. We seek a collaborative relationship between ministry staff and our volunteer base.

The Minister of Preaching will serve as a key resource for our elders. He will participate routinely with our elders in leading theological reflections in the church. He will collaborate with the elders in managing pastoral or congregational crisis.

Our Minister of Preaching should be committed to maintaining a scheduled family time, including weekly protected time and annual vacation periods. He should recognize the need for personal free time.

### **Experience:**

The Minister of Preaching shall have a minimum of 10 years preaching experience. He will possess a Bachelor's degree, and a Master's of Divinity degree would be preferred.

### **Personal Status:**

We desire that our Minister of Preaching reflect the fruit of the Spirit in his personal life. If married, his family should reflect the influence of his godly leadership and should be supportive of his ministry. We expect our Minister of Preaching to be a good steward of all that God has provided. He should be a man of prayer – spiritually mature with unquestionable integrity.

### **Additional**

Our Minister of Preaching shall understand that there is within our congregation and its leadership considerable appreciation of differing opinions and beliefs. We further appreciate that all followers of Christ are at differing stages of their journey. As a Family of Faith, College Hills considers itself open to change, but at the same time appreciates the value of its heritage within the churches of Christ. We recognize that God's grace is central to all of our actions.