

# Life Rules

## Group Curriculum—Session One



### Leader Check-in

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What do you hope to gain from this study? Why do you think community is important?

### Discover

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What rules did your parents put in place when you were a child? Which one was the hardest to follow? Which one makes the most sense right now?

What rules typically associate with Christianity? How are Christians expected to behave? In what ways are they different from the rest of the world?

**Read 1 John 2:3-11.** What are some of the rules laid out by John in his letter? How is there a connection between our relationship with God and our relationships with others?

Do you agree or disagree with Andy's statement, *"The health of your relationship with God is graded by the health of your relationships with others?"* Why?

### Fully Own

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Why is it hard to love others? Why is it difficult to step outside your comfort zone?

**Read Matthew 5:23-25.** How does this verse apply to us today? How should our life change after reading this verse? What principle from this passage is still true today?

Based on your current relationships, whom would others assume you follow? Would they assume you follow Jesus of Nazareth?

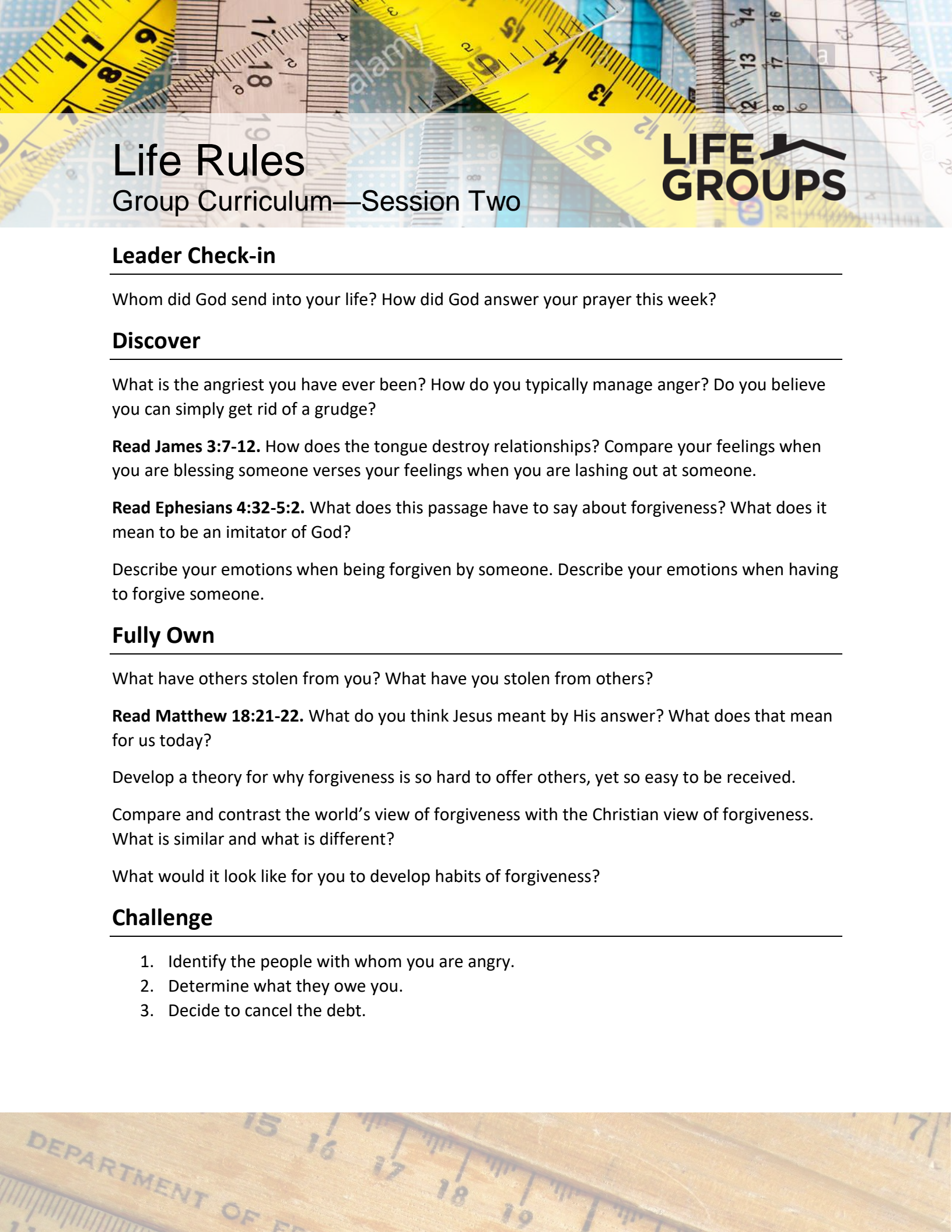
**Read John 13:31-35.** What needs to change radically in your life in order for you to obey Jesus's new command?

### Challenge

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Pray this prayer before your group time is over, *"Jesus send people into my life that do not look like me, talk like me, or believe like me. Help me then to love them as You love them. Amen."*

Commit to keeping an open mind and heart this week for people who you need to love.



# Life Rules

## Group Curriculum—Session Two



### Leader Check-in

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Whom did God send into your life? How did God answer your prayer this week?

### Discover

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What is the angriest you have ever been? How do you typically manage anger? Do you believe you can simply get rid of a grudge?

**Read James 3:7-12.** How does the tongue destroy relationships? Compare your feelings when you are blessing someone verses your feelings when you are lashing out at someone.

**Read Ephesians 4:32-5:2.** What does this passage have to say about forgiveness? What does it mean to be an imitator of God?

Describe your emotions when being forgiven by someone. Describe your emotions when having to forgive someone.

### Fully Own

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What have others stolen from you? What have you stolen from others?

**Read Matthew 18:21-22.** What do you think Jesus meant by His answer? What does that mean for us today?

Develop a theory for why forgiveness is so hard to offer others, yet so easy to be received.

Compare and contrast the world's view of forgiveness with the Christian view of forgiveness. What is similar and what is different?

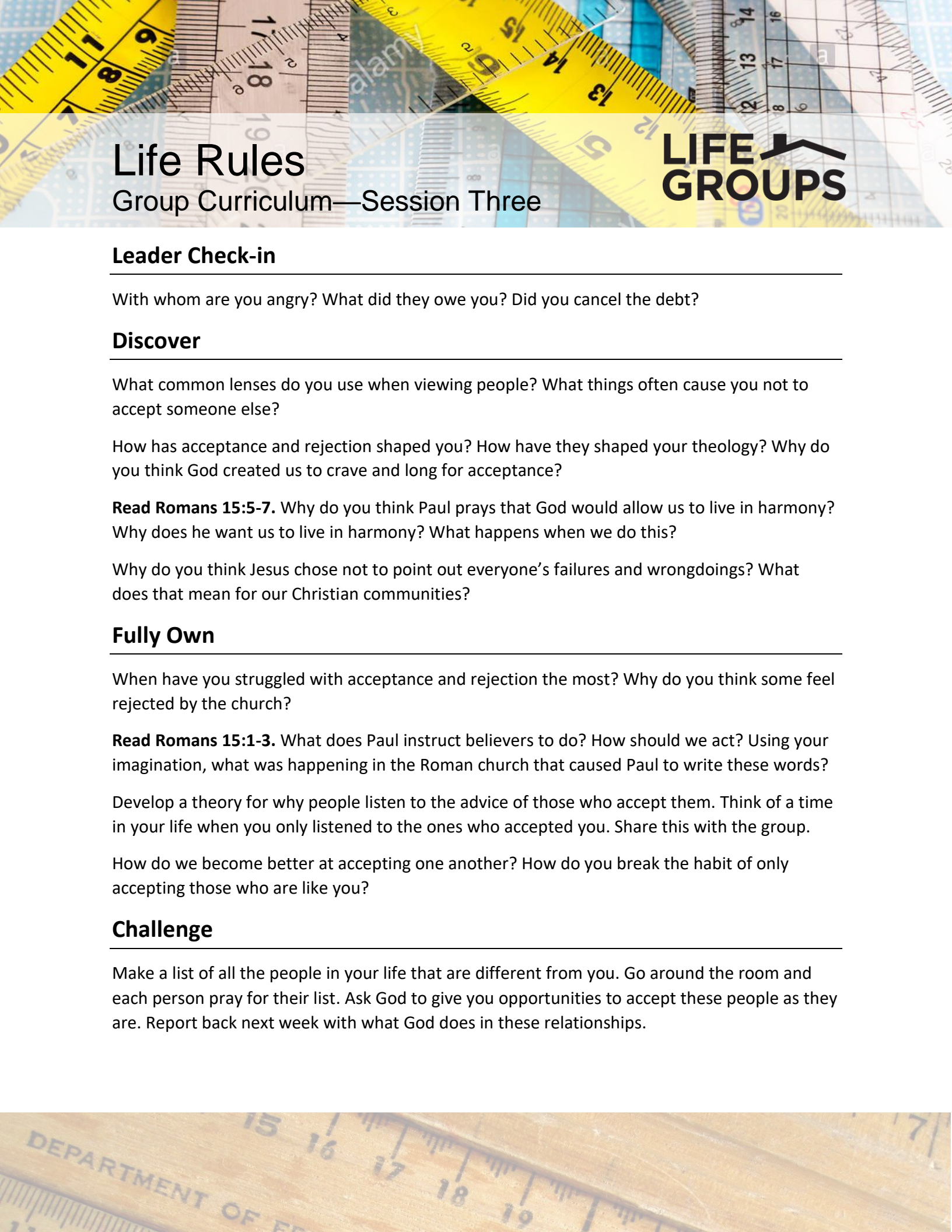
What would it look like for you to develop habits of forgiveness?

### Challenge

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1. Identify the people with whom you are angry.
2. Determine what they owe you.
3. Decide to cancel the debt.





# Life Rules

## Group Curriculum—Session Three



### Leader Check-in

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With whom are you angry? What did they owe you? Did you cancel the debt?

### Discover

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What common lenses do you use when viewing people? What things often cause you not to accept someone else?

How has acceptance and rejection shaped you? How have they shaped your theology? Why do you think God created us to crave and long for acceptance?

**Read Romans 15:5-7.** Why do you think Paul prays that God would allow us to live in harmony? Why does he want us to live in harmony? What happens when we do this?

Why do you think Jesus chose not to point out everyone's failures and wrongdoings? What does that mean for our Christian communities?

### Fully Own

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When have you struggled with acceptance and rejection the most? Why do you think some feel rejected by the church?

**Read Romans 15:1-3.** What does Paul instruct believers to do? How should we act? Using your imagination, what was happening in the Roman church that caused Paul to write these words?

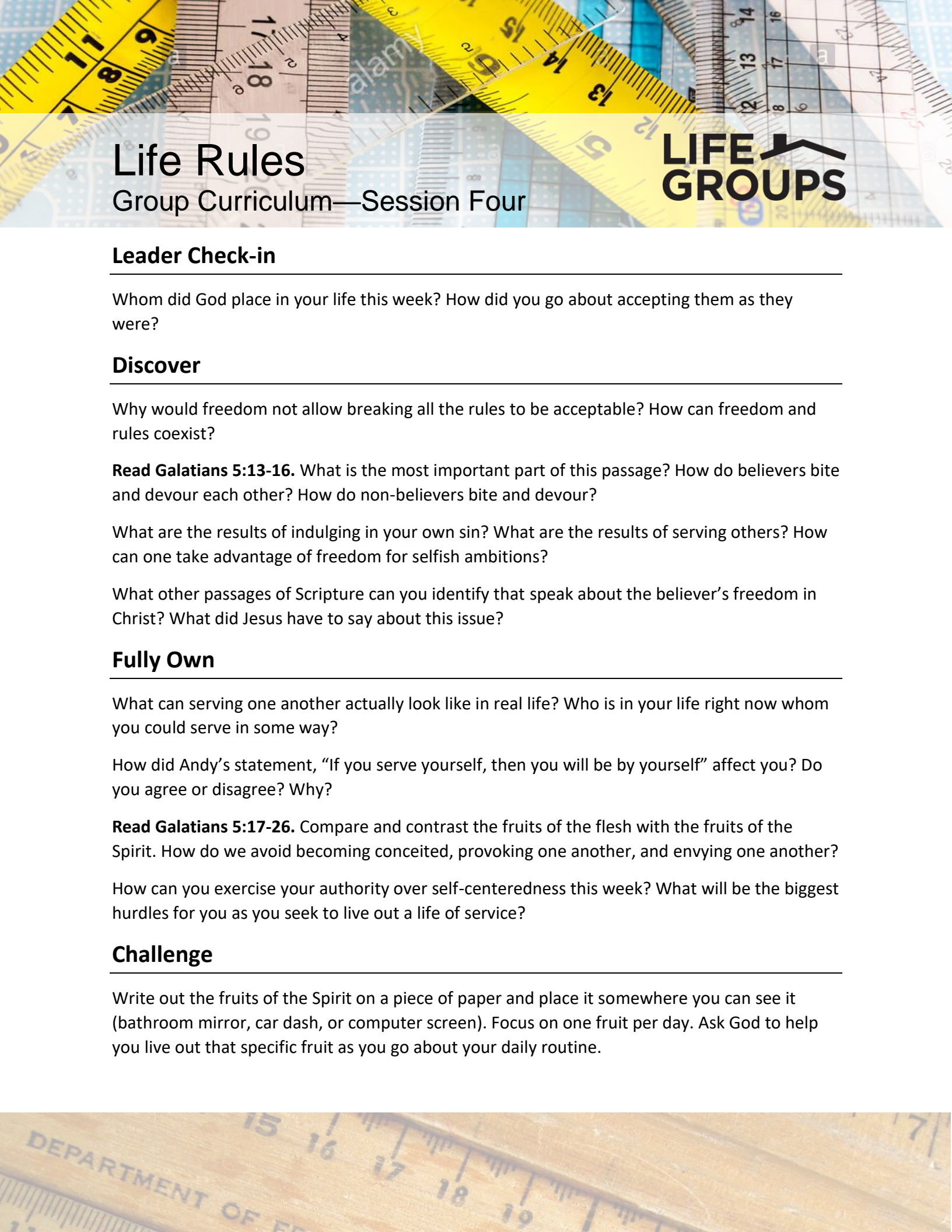
Develop a theory for why people listen to the advice of those who accept them. Think of a time in your life when you only listened to the ones who accepted you. Share this with the group.

How do we become better at accepting one another? How do you break the habit of only accepting those who are like you?

### Challenge

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Make a list of all the people in your life that are different from you. Go around the room and each person pray for their list. Ask God to give you opportunities to accept these people as they are. Report back next week with what God does in these relationships.



# Life Rules

## Group Curriculum—Session Four



### Leader Check-in

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Whom did God place in your life this week? How did you go about accepting them as they were?

### Discover

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Why would freedom not allow breaking all the rules to be acceptable? How can freedom and rules coexist?

**Read Galatians 5:13-16.** What is the most important part of this passage? How do believers bite and devour each other? How do non-believers bite and devour?

What are the results of indulging in your own sin? What are the results of serving others? How can one take advantage of freedom for selfish ambitions?

What other passages of Scripture can you identify that speak about the believer's freedom in Christ? What did Jesus have to say about this issue?

### Fully Own

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What can serving one another actually look like in real life? Who is in your life right now whom you could serve in some way?

How did Andy's statement, "If you serve yourself, then you will be by yourself" affect you? Do you agree or disagree? Why?

**Read Galatians 5:17-26.** Compare and contrast the fruits of the flesh with the fruits of the Spirit. How do we avoid becoming conceited, provoking one another, and envying one another?


How can you exercise your authority over self-centeredness this week? What will be the biggest hurdles for you as you seek to live out a life of service?

### Challenge

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Write out the fruits of the Spirit on a piece of paper and place it somewhere you can see it (bathroom mirror, car dash, or computer screen). Focus on one fruit per day. Ask God to help you live out that specific fruit as you go about your daily routine.





# Life Rules

## Group Curriculum—Session Five



### Leader Check-in

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How was your week? Were you able to focus on a fruit of the Spirit every day? What changed about your life as a result?

### Discover

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Why are groups important? Why is community important? Why do you think the writers of the Bible made such a big deal about sticking together like a body?

**Read Hebrews 3:12-14.** What do we need to do according to this passage? Why do you think the writer of Hebrews wrote this? Do you agree or disagree with the pattern found in this passage? Why or why not?

What are your thoughts on sin leading to unbelief? Develop some reasons for why sin leads to unbelief.

How has your behavior affected your belief system over the years? Compare and contrast one's behavior with their belief system. How are they different and how are they connected?

### Fully Own

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Make a list of all the ways you can drift in your behavior and then make a list of all the ways you can drift in your belief.

Why do we tend to think our experiences are unique? What about our experiences makes them so special and different?

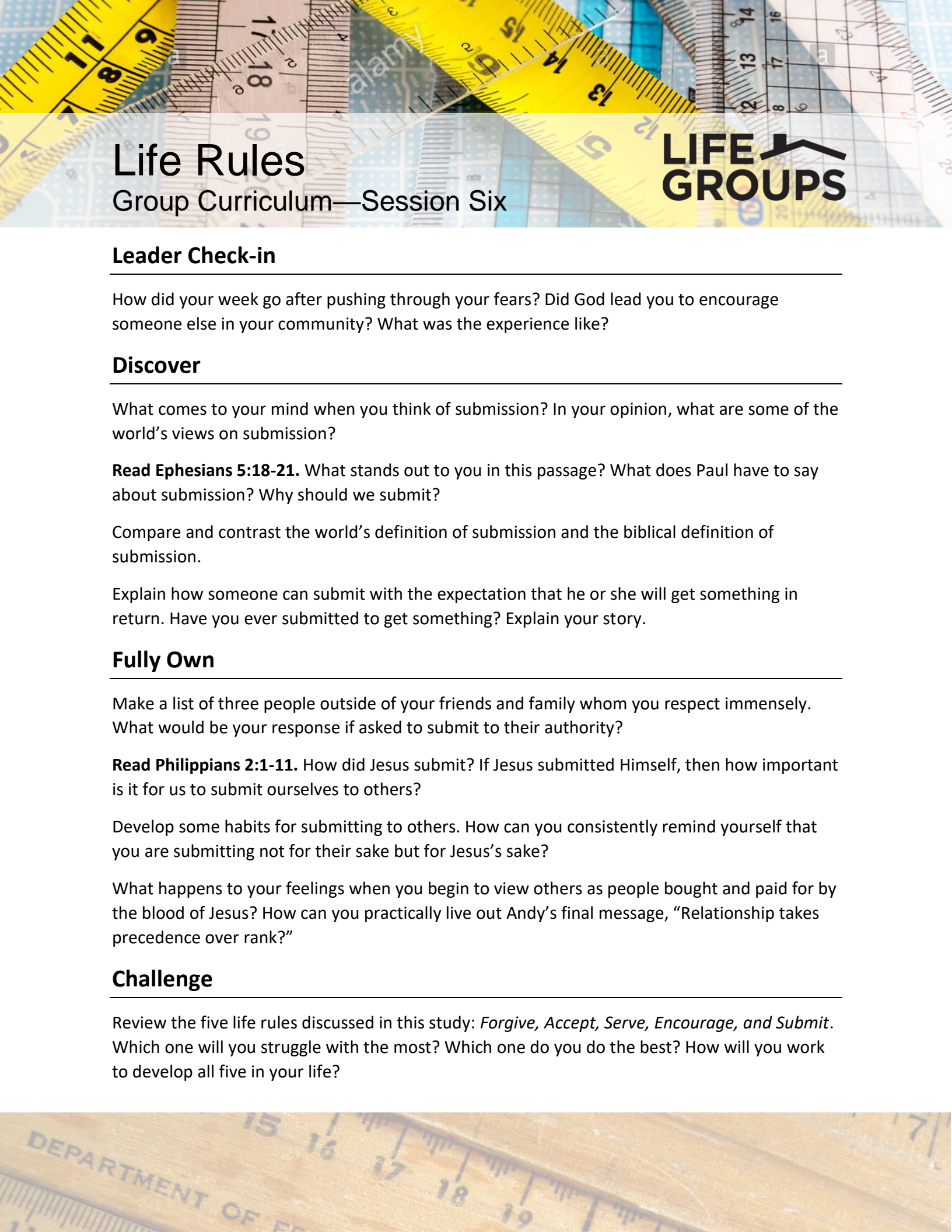
**Read Ephesians 4:15-16.** How is the global church like a body? How is the local church like a body? How is your Life Group like a body?

What are some common ways you can appeal, beg, urge, and exhort? In your opinion, how will your community react to that behavior?

### Challenge

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Which of the two fears affects you the most? Fear of awkwardness or hypocrisy? Share your fears with the group and then ask them for some advice on how to push through those fears. Implement this advice this week and come back ready to report to the group.



# Life Rules

## Group Curriculum—Session Six



### Leader Check-in

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How did your week go after pushing through your fears? Did God lead you to encourage someone else in your community? What was the experience like?

### Discover

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What comes to your mind when you think of submission? In your opinion, what are some of the world's views on submission?

**Read Ephesians 5:18-21.** What stands out to you in this passage? What does Paul have to say about submission? Why should we submit?

Compare and contrast the world's definition of submission and the biblical definition of submission.

Explain how someone can submit with the expectation that he or she will get something in return. Have you ever submitted to get something? Explain your story.

### Fully Own

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Make a list of three people outside of your friends and family whom you respect immensely. What would be your response if asked to submit to their authority?

**Read Philippians 2:1-11.** How did Jesus submit? If Jesus submitted Himself, then how important is it for us to submit ourselves to others?

Develop some habits for submitting to others. How can you consistently remind yourself that you are submitting not for their sake but for Jesus's sake?

What happens to your feelings when you begin to view others as people bought and paid for by the blood of Jesus? How can you practically live out Andy's final message, "Relationship takes precedence over rank?"

### Challenge

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Review the five life rules discussed in this study: *Forgive, Accept, Serve, Encourage, and Submit*. Which one will you struggle with the most? Which one do you do the best? How will you work to develop all five in your life?