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Small Group

Faith-sharing

The Word of Life!

Come and See!

six sessions

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Introduction

In the past three decades, Christian church bodies have attempted to rediscover the value of the small group faith-sharing and Bible study. Both small group faith-sharing and small group Bible study allow Christians to connect in a personal way with the Word of God and with one another.

That connection is what *The Word of Life!* proposes through small group study. In a comfortable setting with three to twenty people, participants will be comfortable sharing their faith with others and inviting their families and friends to join. *The Word of Life!* contains three series for faith-sharing within twelve months, and each series contains six sessions. When we share something, we are normally left with less of it ... or none; when we share our faith, however, we are left with more than we started with. We grow in it and we bless others with the faith the Holy Spirit has worked in our lives. This process is therefore guaranteed to be rewarding.

The first series called *Come and See!* offers participants the opportunity to answer Jesus' question, "Who do you say I am?" While in this series, members may invite family, friends, relatives, neighbors, colleagues and others to the faith-sharing meetings, it is preferable, however, that at first the participants do not make an effort to invite others. The members of a congregation should first meet amongst themselves to share faith with one another so that when they invite others to join, they may have had enough experience sharing their faith to be effective with newcomers.

The second series, *Go and Tell!*, allows participants to reach out to their families, friends and other acquaintances and invite them to join the faith-sharing meetings. The existing participants will have experienced faith-sharing and will now be better prepared to tell others about its benefits and lead them in faith-sharing!

And the third series, *Dwell in My Love!*, explores the great commandment of love. The participants should make a greater effort at inviting others.

For many reasons, it is preferable that the small group only have three to twenty people. One practical reason is that a larger group may become difficult to accommodate in members' homes. Another practical reason is that, since everyone is expected to share, the gathering may end up lasting longer than most members would want to stay. While we suggest that gatherings take place in members' homes, a group may also choose to meet in a place that is most convenient to its members. Each group determines the best place and time for its members to meet. This model of small group ministry is a powerful tool for evangelism because it's rooted in the Word of God, empowers those who believe in Jesus Christ to be comfortable sharing their faith and inviting others to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Finally, *The Word of Life!* makes it very easy for the whole congregation to embark on faith-sharing by providing evangelism training to the entire congregation! As a congregation becomes experienced with faith-sharing, the benefits to the individuals, small groups and to the entire congregation are countless.

Welcome to *The Word of Life!* and to the first series ... *Come and See!*



Session 1



Group Leader Welcome and Introductions



Opening Prayer *Psalm 95*

¹ Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD;
let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.

² Let us come before him with thanksgiving
and extol him with music and song.

³ For the LORD is the great God,
the great King above all gods.

⁴ In his hand are the depths of the earth,
and the mountain peaks belong to him.

⁵ The sea is his, for he made it,
and his hands formed the dry land.

⁶ Come, let us bow down in worship,
let us kneel before the LORD our Maker;

⁷ for he is our God
and we are the people of his pasture,
the flock under his care.

Today, if only you would hear his voice,

⁸ “Do not harden your hearts as you did at Meribah,
as you did that day at Massah in the wilderness,

⁹ where your ancestors tested me;
they tried me, though they had seen what I did.

¹⁰ For forty years I was angry with that generation;
I said, ‘They are a people whose hearts go astray,
and they have not known my ways.’

¹¹ So I declared on oath in my anger,
‘They shall never enter my rest.’”

Notes:

- a. Psalm 95:8 Meribah means quarreling.
- b. Psalm 95:8 Massah means testing.



Text from God's Word

Mark 8:27-30

Peter Declares That Jesus Is the Messiah

²⁷ Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, "Who do people say I am?"

²⁸ They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets."

²⁹ "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Messiah."

³⁰ Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him.



Read and Share

Read the text and share a word that catches your attention.



Read and Share

Re-read the text and share a sentence that catches your attention.



Real World Example

Read and discuss

Two thousand years ago, Jesus asked his disciples, "Who do you say I am?"

Today's world religions have given different answers to this question: some say Jesus is a great prophet, but not the Messiah; others see him as a Jewish star but nothing more. Many individuals throughout the world are also answering this question with various responses. Every year many people are baptized in the Christian faith, while many also join other religions like Islam, Buddhism and others. Like Peter, we, Christians, confess Jesus as the Messiah promised to the world by the Father, the Son of the Living God, and our Redeemer.



Personal Reflection and Sharing

1. Who is Jesus in my life?
2. How does my life inspire itself on the life and teachings of Jesus?
3. Do I know people who have not accepted Jesus as their Savior?
4. How can I help them come to know Jesus and believe in him?



Announcements



Prayer of Intercession

Leader: Let us, with confidence, bring to the Lord in prayer, our praises, our needs and the needs of others.

Group members lift to God the Lord's Prayer

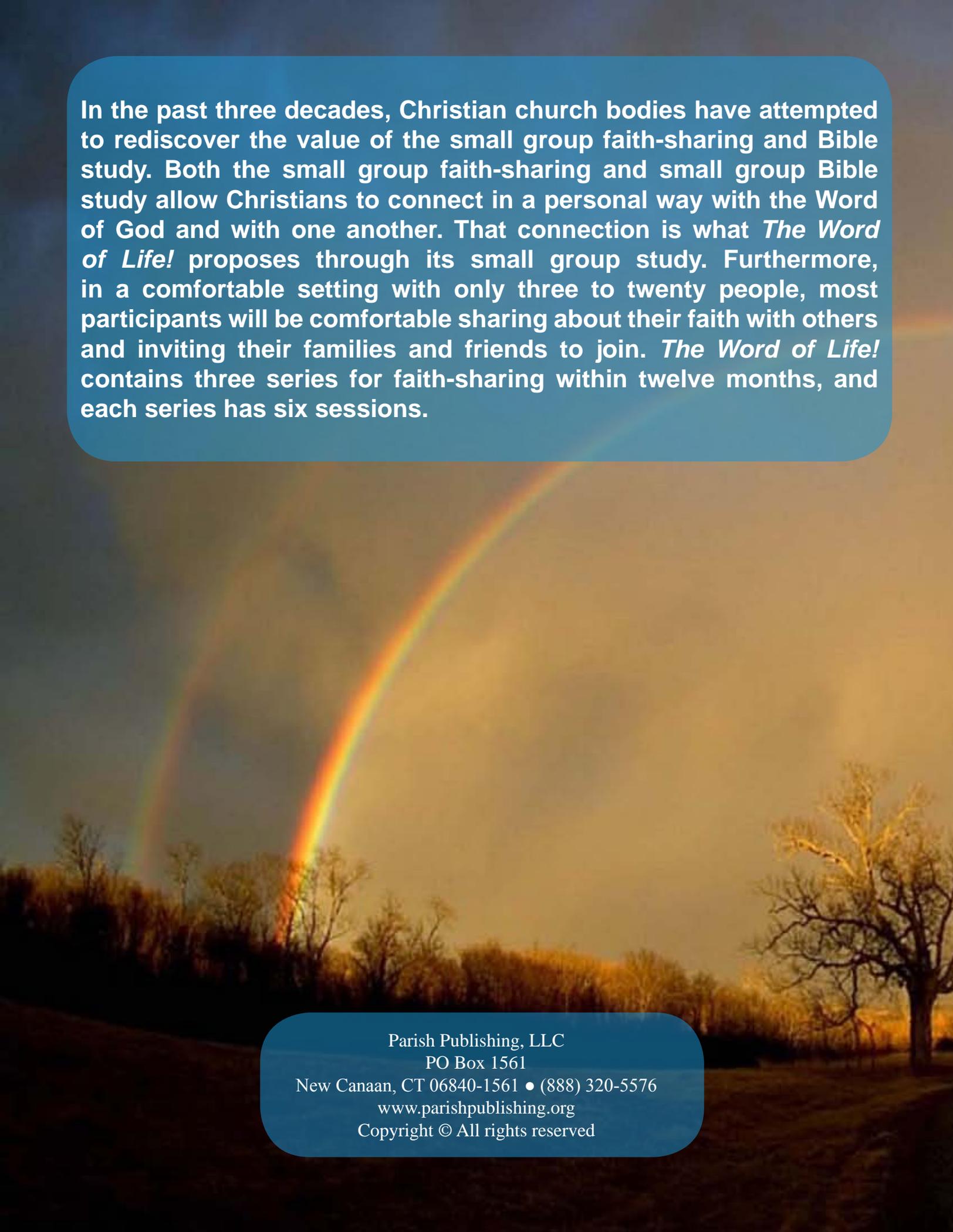
Leader: Our Lord Jesus said to his disciples, "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." As the Holy Spirit moves us, let us now present our prayers to the Father through Jesus Christ, his Son:

All: Our Father, who art in heaven...



Snacks to be Shared

Closing

A vibrant rainbow arches across a landscape of trees at sunset or sunrise. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue, with the rainbow's colors clearly visible. The trees in the foreground are silhouetted against the bright light of the sun.

In the past three decades, Christian church bodies have attempted to rediscover the value of the small group faith-sharing and Bible study. Both the small group faith-sharing and small group Bible study allow Christians to connect in a personal way with the Word of God and with one another. That connection is what *The Word of Life!* proposes through its small group study. Furthermore, in a comfortable setting with only three to twenty people, most participants will be comfortable sharing about their faith with others and inviting their families and friends to join. *The Word of Life!* contains three series for faith-sharing within twelve months, and each series has six sessions.

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