**17**

LifeGroup

resource guide

for the week of January 15, 2017

"Heptadecaphobia" is the fear of the number, "17". It plagues women and men, rich and poor, educated and uneducated... it even grips cultures like Italy where the number is linked to unfortunate events. Those with Heptadecaphobia are anxious that a year ending in “17” or the 17th day of each month may portend misfortune. Those with enhanced cross-cultural sensitivities fear “17” because it is the sum of “4” — an unlucky number in many Asian cultures including China and Japan— and “13”. That makes “17” a mega-unlucky number! While some followers of Jesus may have an unhealthy fascination with numbers we have never been imprisoned with fear by them. In fact for Jews and Christians the recognition of a new year traditionally provides us with opportunities -- to recount God's presence and grace in the previous year, to take spiritual inventory of our lives, and to anticipate His grace, promises, and leading for the next.

2017 is not a clean break or fresh start independent of 2016... there is continuity whether we like it or not! But a new year does afford us the opportunity to pause, reflect, pray, and be open to God's prophetic word in order that he might align us with His promises and catalyze our expectancy... A new year releases us to initiate change and challenge habits that distracts our vision and disturbs our peace.

2017 also is a fresh invitation to seize the opportunity to be an extended and intentional community of people who desire to be alert to God’s presence, God’s Word, and God encounters with others that He desires to love and serve through us… There is no better place to celebrate and share this than a LifeGroup!

As we kick-off the winter season do not take your LifeGroup for granted. Your LifeGroup is God’s gift *to you* and *through you…*

Happy New Year… and of course, enjoy your LifeGroup!



Revisiting our LifeGroup Expectations…

We are all different! We have different temperaments, experiences, gifts, and strengths. Yet, Jesus wants to bring us together to experience genuine friendship and authentic spiritual growth. Community does not “just happen”. It requires intentionality. Therefore, we have created the following expectations for our LifeGroups so that, together, we might experience:

a common call/story

a common set of values

a common expectancy

a common vision

We will meet on: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

We will arrive between \_\_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_\_ and we will meet from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.

We will express our commitment by attending weekly, completing the Resource Guide beforehand, praying, participating in the discussion, and relationally engaging. We recognize that these are key to a healthy group!

We will make a commitment to pray for one another in our gatherings and outside of our group meetings.

Reflecting on 2016 together…

If you could chose one word to describe 2016, what would it be?

What was your most meaningful experience of 2016?

Describe at least one prayer God answered for you in 2016?

Was there a particular LifeGroup gathering that challenged, comforted, or encouraged you?

How do you think God wants to grow your life and faith in 2017?

Praying for my LifeGroup…