

## **Cure for the Common Life**

Max Lucado

The focus of this study is to identify, and then engage, your sweet spot. Your sweet spot is the way you engage the world, and those in it, that also brings you joy, increases your energy, and meets a real need in real lives.

*"The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."* Frederick Buechner (Wishful Thinking, A Seeker's ABC)

## **Week One: Week of January 16, 2022 Group Life Leader Notes**

### **Opening Questions:**

1. What was the very first paid job you had? Describe your boss from that first job. What did you like most about that job, and what did you like least?
2. What do you think is the greatest need in our world today?

### **Study Week One:**

- Read pages 1 - 61 (*while the style and format make reading this book easier than most this is a lot of pages! It is by FAR the most you'll be asked to read in a given week. Reading assignments for the remaining weeks are typically 5 to 10 pages.*)
- The first section, pages 1 - 46 sets the foundation for the entire book.
- The chapter for group discussion is found on page 53.
- Study Questions begin with questions for chapter 6 found on pages 175-178.
  - Due to the late arrival of the books I will include the study questions from the book below.

Questions for Chapter 6 "Take Big Risks for God". Pages 175-178

### **Review the Diagnosis**

1. How you relate to the Master of the house colors everything. Dread him and you hate your work. Trust him and love it.
  - A. Who is the Master of your house? Explain
  - B. Do you see your work as a Kingdom assignment? If so, in what way?
  - C. How do you trust your Master on a day-to-day basis? How do you demonstrate your trust?
2. The only mistake is not to risk making one. Such was the error of the one-talent servant.
  - A. What kind of risks have you taken for God?

- B. What keeps you from taking risks for God?
- C. How has God shown Himself faithful in the risks you have taken for Him?

3. The first two invested. The last one buried. The first two went out on a limb. The third hugged the trunk. He made the most tragic and common mistake of giftedness. He failed to benefit the Master with his talent.

- A. How are you investing your talents for the Lord?
- B. In what areas might you be “burying” your talent or “hugging the trunk”?
- C. Are there talents you’re using – but not for the Lord’s benefit? Explain.

4. The Master repeated the assessment of the servant, word for word, with one exclusion. Did you note it? “I knew you to be a hard man.” The Master didn’t repeat the description he wouldn’t accept.

- A. What causes some people to think of God as a “hard” Master?
- B. Why won’t Jesus accept a description of His Father as “hard”?
- C. When people think of God as a hard Master, how do they normally react?

5. Who is this unprofitable servant? If you never use your gifts for God, you are. If you think God is a hard God, you are. And you will live a life of interred talents.

- A. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being unprofitable and 10 being profitable, how would you rate yourself? Explain.
- B. Have you ever thought of God as a hard God? What were the circumstances?
- C. Which gift could you use more fully for God? What steps could you take to begin “investing” it for him?

### **Read the Prescription**

1. Read Matthew 25:14-30

- A. To which of the three servants portrayed in this parable do you most relate? Why?
- B. How does the Master respond to each of the three servants in the parable?
- C. What general principal does Jesus outline in verse 29? How do you personally react to this principal? Explain.

2. Read Psalm 103:8-13

- A. How is God described in verse 8? Have you experienced God in this way? Explain.
- B. What is the main point of verse 12?
- C. To what does the Psalmist compare God in verse 13? Why is this important?

3. Read 2 Corinthians 11:24-28 and Philippians 4:12-13

- A. How did the apostle Paul risk his life for Christ?
- B. What do you think prompted him to take life-endangering risks for God? According to Philippians, what was Paul’s source of strength?
- C. How much are you willing to risk for God?

**Reawaken the Excitement**

1. What major personal strength did you identify in your S.T.O.R.Y.? Spend a couple of days in prayer, asking God how you might use that strength in taking a risk for Him. Once a clear idea of the risk you can take has formed in your mind, launch out and take the risk. Afterward, “debrief” with some mature Christian friends and discuss what happened. What did you learn? How can you use this experience to shape future risks you could take for God?
2. Read a biography of a courageous Christian who regularly took risks for God, such as William Carey, Amy Carmichael, George Muller, or Fanny Crosby. How can their examples embolden your enthusiasm for taking risks for God?

Grace of Christ Winter 2022 Group Life Study  
January 19 - March 23

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## **Week Two: Week of January 23, 2022 Group Life Leader Guide**

### **Opening Questions:**

1. What is something you enjoyed doing as a kid that you haven't done in a long, long, time? Is it something you should try doing again? Why or why not?
2. If there was one Guinness World Record you wish you held ... what would it be (holding breath the longest, jumping furthest, running fastest ...)?

### **Study Week Two:**

- Read pages 63 - 70 (Chapter 7: "Come to the Sweetest Spot in the Universe")
- Study Questions for chapter 7 are found on pages 179-182 of the book
  - Please contact the church office if you need a copy of the book or you have questions about the study, or about leading your group.

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## **Week Three: Week of January 30, 2022 Group Life Leader Guide**

### **Opening Questions:**

1. What award, trophy, honor from when you were a kid did you receive that you are still proud of (in a good way)?
2. Describe a time when you felt particularly close to God, a time when you were overcome with a strong sense of God's power and God's love.

### **Study Week Two:**

- Read pages 71 - 76 (Chapter 8: "Applaud God, Loud and Often")
- Study Questions for chapter 8 are found on pages 183-185 of the book
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## Week Four: Week of February 6, 2022 Group Life Leader Guide

### Opening Questions:

1. How far back can you go in your family genealogy (from memory)? Share two or three stories from your ancestors (where did they come from, where did they settle, what did they do?).
2. Who is your longest and oldest friend that you still keep in touch with? How far back do you go? When did you first meet and what brought you together? Why is that friendship still important to you?

### Study Week Four:

- Read pages 77 - 82 (Chapter 9: "Join God's Family of Friends")
- Study Questions for chapter 9 are found on pages 187-190 in the book
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## Week Five: Week of February 13, 2022 Group Life Leader Guide

"He made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:7-8).<sup>1</sup>

### Opening Questions:

1. If you could be world famous for one thing what would it be? (World famous athlete, world famous movie star, world famous scientist or politician, world famous inventor, world famous humanitarian, world famous ...?). Be as specific as you can.
2. What was your relationship with God like when you were in High School? Who in your family was most connected to Jesus? Did you have any connection with a church as you were growing up? Why or why not?

### Study Week Five:

- Read pages 83 - 90 (Chapter 10: "Tank Your Reputation")
- Study Questions for chapter 10 are found on pages 191-193 in the book
  - Please contact the church office if you need a copy of the book or you have questions about the study, or about leading your group.

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<sup>1</sup> Lucado, Max. Cure for the Common Life (pp. 86-87). Thomas Nelson. Kindle Edition.

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## Week Six: Week of February 20, 2022 Group Life Leader Guide

"And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." (Colossians 3:17).

### Opening Questions:

1. If you were offered a great salary to do whatever you wanted to do ... what would you do? Would you still enjoy doing what you chose to do after 5 years? 10 years?
2. Who taught you the importance of showing up for work (on-time), working to the best of your ability, having a positive attitude at work, serving your boss, your clients/customers, well, putting in a hard day's work? Why is all this important, or if you disagree, not important?

### Study Week Six:

- Read pages 93-102 (Chapter 11: "Take Your Job and Love It")
- Study Questions for chapter 11 are found on pages 195-198 in the book
  - Please contact the church office if you need a copy of the book or you have questions about the study, or about leading your group.

On Wednesday, April 2, instead of offering separate classroom time, we will celebrate Ash Wednesday together

Soup and Bread served @ 6:00pm in the Gym  
Our Lenten Service begins at 6:30pm in the main Sanctuary



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## Week Six: Week of February 27, 2022 Group Life Leader Guide

"<sup>1</sup> The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. <sup>2</sup> He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. <sup>3</sup> He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake." (Psalm 23:1-3).

### Opening Questions:

1. Have you ever been in a meeting (or church service!) that went way way way too long. Describe how you felt. How did you keep your sanity? What did you want to do in the middle of that meeting (church service) that you did not do?
2. Describe a place you have been to that refreshes you? Describe how you feel when you are there. Why is that place so refreshing? When was the last time you were there? When are you going again?

### Study Week Seven:

- Read pages 103-110 (Chapter 12: "Pause on Purpose")
- Study Questions for chapter 12 are found on pages 199-202 in the book
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*"Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can."* John Wesley

## Week Eight: Week of March 6, 2022 Group Life Leader Guide

<sup>5</sup> Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, 'Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?' <sup>6</sup> He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do. <sup>7</sup> Philip answered him, 'Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little.' <sup>8</sup> One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, <sup>9</sup> 'There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?'" (John 6:5-9).

"What begins minutely ends massively" Max Lucado p113

### Opening Questions:

1. What was your favorite candy (sweet) when you were a child? Why did you like it and how often did you get it?
2. Share a small act of kindness you received that made a significant positive difference in your life?

### Study Week Eight:

- Read pages 111-117 (Chapter 13: "Trust Little Deeds")
- Study Questions for chapter 13 are found on pages 203 - 206 in the book
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## Week Nine: Week of March 13, 2022 Group Life Leader Guide

<sup>13</sup> For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. <sup>14</sup> I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. <sup>15</sup> My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. <sup>16</sup> Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them. <sup>17</sup> How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!" (Psalm 139:13-17).

"Don't see your child as a blank slate awaiting your pen, but as a written book awaiting your study." Max Lucado p122

### Opening Questions:

1. As a child what passion did you have that, somewhere along the way got beaten down, sucked dry, criticized, to such an extent that you abandoned it? When are you going to pick up that passion again? What is preventing you from doing that now?
2. Using five words describe who you were as a child. Do those same words fit you now? Why or why not?

### Study Week Nine:

- Read pages 119-127 (Chapter 14: "Decode Your Kid's Code")
- Study Questions for chapter 14 are found on pages 207 - 210 in the book
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**This is the final week in our 10-week Group Life study.  
We will launch our next study in late April.**

*"Every day do something you don't want to do. Pick up someone else's trash. Surrender your parking space. Call the long-winded relative. Carry the cooler. Doesn't have to be a big thing."* Max Lucado p134

## Week Ten: Week of March 20, 2022 Group Life Leader Guide

"<sup>58</sup> Throw yourself into the work of the Master, confident that nothing you do for Him is a waste of time or effort." (1 Corinthians 15:58 Message).

"Though none of His apostles washed His feet, He washed theirs. Though none of the soldiers at the cross begged for mercy, He extended it. And though His followers skedaddled like scared rabbits on Thursday, He came searching for them on Easter Sunday." Max Lucado p131

### Opening Questions:

1. Recall a time when someone did a "small" act of kindness for you. What made it "small"? If it was small why do still remember it?
2. As we end this 10-week study, what have you identified as your "sweet" spot, the place you enjoy serving others? How are you currently serving in your sweet spot? How will you serve in your sweet spot in the years ahead?

### Study Week Ten:

- Read pages 129 -135 (Chapter 15: "Don't Be Too Big to Do Something Small")
- Study Questions for chapter 15 are found on pages 211 - 213 in the book
  - Please contact the church office if you need a copy of the book or you have questions about the study, or about leading your group.