**Journey – Week 2 (Life Groups)**

**August 19-20, 2017**

What’s going on, guys?! We are going to jump into Week 2 of our series called Journey!

We have talked about how important it is to jump in and be a part of a larger group to know that you are not alone and that you can do more together than you can alone. This week, we are going to talk about the importance of being in a life group. It’sjust like that game, Megga Jamm, that we played this morning. That was awesome!! It looked like some of the teams worked together really well. Notice how much fun you can have when you are all headed the same direction with the same purpose.

This is another essential relationship in your life that you absolutely need to continue on your faith journey. Here at Northview, we value Life Groups. These are groups of people in similar age groups that are in the same stage of life. The idea is to do life with a small group of people. This is exactly why we do group discussions every single week here at 5th/6th grade on Sunday morning!

God designed us for community…to do life with people for a number of different reasons. The main reason we want to talk about it today leads us to our THP! The THP this week is actually in the form of a question and it is meant to be a challenge to all of us…

**THP: Who am I going to surround myself with?**

If you are like me, you like to go fast…you like to get things done, you hate lines, you like to go at your own pace, you even eat fast, and sometimes, this pace doesn’t allow for other people to stay with you.  Our culture glorifies going fast!  It’s fun to be first because if you’re not first, you’re last…at least, it feels like you are losing. We have rewards for the fastest runner, we love fast wifi, we celebrate the fastest car in the Indy 500, we microwave food, we pick up fast food, there is even a competition every year where people eat hot dogs as fast as you can…

If you follow sports, maybe you have seen “The Freeze” where a guy dressed up like Frozone from the Incredibles races one random fan. Check it out!

**(Leaders Note: Show “The Freeze” video)**

Isn’t that hilarious? That guy thought he had won! Unfortunately, when you focus on going fast, you tend to forget things that might be more important. It’s easy to do because we’re all busy!

You are just heading back into school, and some of your teachers have probably already given you homework…who has gotten homework already?  See? Already busy and you just started back.

Many of you ride the bus to school, so you have to wake up early… But you wake up, maybe eat breakfast if you make time, go to school, shift from class to class, go to sports practice, dance lessons, or other clubs, and then come home and do homework. We get it…you are busy!

There is so much pressure from our parents, peers, teachers, and coaches to keep going at this pace, but I think we can all feel that something is off when we go throughout our days like this. Our personal life suffers, our relationships suffer, and we don’t perform, as well. If we just sprint through life without anyone’s help, eventually, we’ll just end up with our face in the dirt like that guy in the video.

The reality is that we need each other to follow Christ. It’s hard enough being a Christian and I would say it’s nearly impossible to be a Christian by yourself! Check out this verse from the New Testament: Hebrews 10:24-25: *“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”*

The earliest Christians made it a priority to meet together and worship, encourage one another in their faith, grow in their friendships, and pray for each other. I think we could all agree that these things are important, but if we are busy going so fast through life, then we could easily miss these things. **Listen, guys…you can go faster by yourself, but you can go further with other people.**

The groups you are in can serve as an amazing support system for you. You need people in your life to help you keep your spiritual commitments. The reality is we make time for what’s important to us. Yet, how many times in life do we cut out things that are essential to maintaining and growing a relationship with God? Prayer, reading our Bibles, consistent church attendance…and being a part of a life group.

Let’s be honest, our faith is going to be stronger if our group of friends is pushing us to grow and we can talk to them about what’s going on in our life. Do you have Christian friends like that? What are your conversations with your friends about? Is it about the stuff we talked about earlier: school, sports, video games, our busy life? None of that stuff is even remotely bad, but if our friendships are ONLY about that, we could easily get so consumed with that stuff that we forget about what is most important: relationships.

**Who are you going to surround yourself with? It always be easy to run fast, accomplish as much as we can, be the most popular, etc…however, in the long run of life, we will go much further with strong friendships. Your life group can be that for you, but you need to participate and do what the verse in Hebrews instructs us to do: spur one another on to good deeds, loving each other, encouraging each other, and worshiping God together. Let’s pray!**