

LIFE GROUP LEADER GUIDE

For the week of February 10, 2019

This guide is designed to give helpful hints in preparing & leading your group in discussion.

LEADER NOTES



90 Second Leader Tip

lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/leader-guide-winter-week-5

Check out this 90 second leader tip from Connor McFadden on serving and improving group dynamics.

⇒ MID-QUARTER TRAINING

Make sure you attend the Mid Quarter Training session for Leaders and Hosts (Vista Campus based-groups only). Click the link to RSVP: lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/mid-quarter-training

Arise – Mar 19	Parents of Kids, K-6 – Feb 24	Union 2535 – Mar 3
Empty Nest – Feb 23-24 & Mar 3	Parents of Teens – Feb 23-24 & Mar 3	Targeted – Feb 23-24 & Mar 3
General – Feb 23 & Mar 3	Senior Adults – TBA	Young Families – Mar 16 & 17
Grupos de habla hispana – Mar 3	Singles – Mar 16	Young Marrieds – Mar 16 & 17
Military – Mar 17	Special Studies – Feb 23-24 & Mar 3	

MEETING NOTES

⇒ DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

- Remember you don't have to answer every question!
- Choose questions best suited to your group.
- Listen to the [Audio Guide/Podcast](#) for more discussion suggestions.

⇒ PRAYER

- Take prayer requests
- If you haven't divided into male/female groups already, you may want to do so for prayer.

⇒ ATTENDANCE

Submit your group's attendance online at northcoastchurch.com/attendance. If you're not sure how to post attendance, you can check out the guide here: lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/how-to-post-attendance

Find all of our leader resources online: lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/leader-tools

Mark Reading Challenge

- Read Mark in one sitting (takes about 1-2 hours)
- One chapter per day – read through Mark twice in a month
- Bible Apps w/ Text or Audio – Bible Gateway App or The Bible App by YouVersion

QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

FOUR FRIENDS

1

The four friends from the sermon absolutely would have wanted a front row seat to see Jesus, but instead went out of their way to bring their paralyzed friend through a roof. As you think about their great sacrifice, what comes to mind about your own willingness to serve others?

Additional Questions: *Can you think of any people who've been willing to punch holes in roofs for you? Carry you on a stretcher? Can you think of anyone who you've been willing to punch holes in roofs for? Carry them on a stretcher?*

Note: *Be mindful of setting up a situation where people are naming others in the group. The concern would be people feeling left out if not named.*

The story of the four friends in the other Gospels: *Matthew 9:1-8, Luke 5:17-26*

2

Proverbs 27:17 points out how two friends have the ability to "sharpen" each other, similar to how iron is able to sharpen iron. Can you think of any ways friendships have helped sharpen your faith?

Examples: *Accountability, encouragement, calling out sin, feeling loved, pushing me to read my Bible, asking me "how's your walk with Jesus going?"*

Can you think of any ways friends can do the opposite and make each other dull?

Peer pressure often heads in a negative direction. We often let our guard down with the people we trust, leading us to do things with friends we wouldn't normally do. If you have children you have heard this a million times from your kids. "So and so did it first!"

3

How could the following verses help us in developing our friendships?

Proverbs 12:26 – The righteous choose their friends carefully, but the way of the wicked leads them astray.

The righteous choose their friends carefully. Pick friends who live out their faith.

Proverbs 27:5-6 – ⁵ Better is open rebuke than hidden love.
⁶ Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.

A true friend will be honest, even when it's hard to do. Pick friends who care enough about you to call you out if you're sinning, unhealthy or unsafe.

Proverbs 13:20 – Walk with the wise and become wise, for a companion of fools suffers harm.

All relationships are contagious, they rub off on us! If you pick wise people to surround yourself with, you'll become wise. The opposite is also true.

Additional Questions: *What do you see as the top two or three ways friends can help sharpen each other's faith? What friends have helped sharpen you the most?*

OUR "INSTEADS"

Let's face it, there are plenty of things God asks us to do that are really challenging. Like the story we heard this weekend, we can find ourselves giving excuses ("insteads") for why we aren't following God when we disagree, or want to do things our own way. Below are several examples for the types of excuses we use.

- **Justification:** Here's why what I'm doing/not doing is ok
- **Minimize:** What I'm doing/not doing isn't really a big deal
- **Compare:** What I'm doing/not doing isn't as bad as that person
- **Ignore/Deny:** What problem? It's not really a problem

When you look at the verses below, write down at least one example of an excuse that someone might use to avoid putting these verses into action.

Proverbs 3:9 – Honor the Lord with your wealth,
with the firstfruits of all your crops;

Justification – "I'll give when I make more money." "It's only in the Old Testament which means we don't need to follow it."

Minimize – "I give enough."

Compare – "I give more money than my brother does."

Ignore/Deny – "I don't believe this verse."

John 15:12 – My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

Justification – "They haven't earned love."

Minimize – "It's not that big of a deal."

Compare – "I'm pretty loving, just ask my friends."

Ignore/Deny – "I don't believe this verse."

Matthew 20:26-28 – ²⁶ Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ²⁷ and whoever wants to be first must be your slave— ²⁸ just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Justification – "I would serve if I had more time"

Minimize – "This verse doesn't really apply to me because I give a lot of my money to the church."

Compare – "I serve more now than I used to."

Ignore/Deny – "I don't have to serve anyone." "I don't believe that."

Luke 6:27-28 - ²⁷ "But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.

Justification – "I would love him if he acted more loving to me."

Minimize – "She doesn't care if I'm not loving."

Compare – "I used to be a lot worse."

Ignore/Deny – "I don't think it's a big deal."

Additional Verses: *Ephesians 5:21-27, Romans 12:2, Philippians 2:14-16, Philippians 2:3-4.*

Additional Question: *The story of Moses is a biblical example of someone who had clear direction from God but still let "insteads" get in the way of carrying them out. As you read through the passages below, what "insteads" do you see Moses give? How might God's response to Moses encourage you to overcome any excuse you make to not do things God's way? Exodus 3:11-12, Exodus 4:1-5, Exodus 4:10-11, Exodus 4:13-16.*

Which of these "insteads" do you find yourself using the most?

Can you think of any tools, people or strategies that help when you're tempted to use "insteads?"

Examples: People who are good sounding boards in your life, maybe a journal that keeps you grounded, prayer.

Optional Question on Forgiveness:

A crucial piece to our relationship with Jesus is understanding how our sin keeps us from the relationship he wants to have with us. Despite this, Jesus paid the penalty for our sin to open the door to a relationship with us. 1 John 1:9 gives us a great picture of how this works. As you read through it, how would you sum this up in your own words?

"Forgiveness is the greatest miracle that Jesus ever performs. It meets the greatest need; it costs the greatest price; and it brings the greatest blessing and the most lasting results." (Wiersbe)

TAKING IT HOME

As you look back on the sermon and study questions, can you think of any friends/co-workers/family you want to be more intentional in serving in the next few weeks?

PRAYER REQUESTS

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Jesus Breaks It All Down

Understanding the Jesus stories

The way Jesus dealt with **people then**:

- ✓ Is the way he deals with **us now**.
- ✓ Is the way we should deal with **people now**.

Mark 1:40-45

When we approach Jesus we enter into his **willingness** not his **reluctance**.

The struggle for a Christian will always be between God's **greater plan** and **our desires**.

Mark 2:1-12

Our greatest need is to **be forgiven**, not to get our **needs met**.

Truly understanding **forgiveness** is the key to our:

- ✓ **Love**
- ✓ **Commitment**
- ✓ **Sacrifice**
- ✓ **Worship**

Going All-In