

LIFE GROUP LEADER GUIDE

For the week of April 7, 2019

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

LEADER NOTES

ANNOUNCEMENTS

⇒ BEGIN TO MAKE PLANS FOR YOUR SOCIAL & SERVICE PROJECT

Begin to think about what project you would like to do. Check our website for some options - northcoastcommunityservice.org

THE MEETING

⇒ COVENANTS

Go over the Covenant with anyone who missed the first week. Remind anyone who hasn't signed the Covenant to do so. Email it to your [Life Group Admin](#), turn it in by mail, or drop it off at the office or at the Welcome Booth on your campus by Sunday, April 14.

⇒ SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT WEEK #2

Remember we're on week #2 with your group. People are still acclimating, especially any new people. Lead your group through the questions according to how well everyone knows each other. Keep name tags on for the first three weeks if anyone is new to your group. **AND REMEMBER, as a leader your goal each night is to lead your group in such a way that you hear from everyone and use the Bible as your guide.** Know that if you do this each week the people in your group will grow! **Remember you don't need to cover all questions. Great conversation is far more important than covering all the questions.**

⇒ PRAYER NOTE

Check out the [Tips on Group Prayer on the back of this Leader's Guide](#). If you have new people in your group, please make sure you go over this. And NEVER make someone pray. Group prayer is similar to public speaking, which is the #1 fear people have. More than once we've had people tell us they quit Life Group because a well-intentioned person required everyone to pray.

LEADER INFO

⇒ **Leadercast is back!** Be a part of an extraordinary event that will make you an even better leader. It is the largest, one-day simulcast leadership event on the planet, with more than 100,000 current visionaries and future world-changers attending each year. **As a Life Group Leader or Host we'd like to honor you and provide you with a special ticket rate.** Utilize the code **LGLLeader** to take advantage of **special pricing at just \$69.**

To register, visit: northcoastchurch.com/leadercast

Date: Friday, May 10th

Time: 8am-2:30pm

Location: The Edge, Vista Campus

Simulcast Speakers: Andy Stanley, Patrick Lencioni, Juliet Funt, Marcus Sameulsson, and many more.

⇒ 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

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1

The following list has some of the greatest movie series of all time. What would be your top three? *The Lord of the Rings, Star Wars, The Godfather, The Fast and the Furious, Harry Potter, Bourne, Mission Impossible, Toy Story, Indiana Jones, or other.*

As funny as this sounds, you may need to set up parameters for this to go well. Example: No one is allowed to comment on anyone else's answer.

2

Simply put, empathy is our attempt to put ourselves in "someone else's shoes." How might empathy help us care for someone who is going through a trial or hardship that doesn't seem like a big deal to us?

Helps us to understand how they're feeling. It becomes less about our opinion and more about their feeling. Empathy requires us to be good listeners and ask good questions.

Helps us validate their feelings.

Additional Question: *How would those closest to you rate your empathy skills?*

Can you think of any trials you've gone through that helped you have compassion for people going through similar trials?

This may be hard for everyone to answer if it's a new group.

3

When someone is going through a tough time, it can be tempting to quote a Bible verse as an encouragement to them. But this could sound patronizing or cliché to a person going through a hard time. What would be some of your considerations before quoting a Bible verse to someone going through a rough patch?

Does this person believe in Jesus? Is Scripture encouraging to them? Did they ask for a verse? What would be most helpful for this person right now? Does what I want to share minimize the other person's feelings?

4

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

Additional Questions: *How have trials brought you closer to or farther from God? [James 1](#) is a great passage that helps us know how to handle trials. Read through [James 1](#) and mark any verse that deals with trials and then answer the following questions: What are some of the reasons why we go through trials? What might be some consequences of not going through trials? How can trials change our lives?*

DIGGING DEEPER

1

David is known for many things in the Bible; a great king, but also someone who faced his fair share of trials. In one trial, David was pursued by King Saul even though he was serving Saul and God by fighting the Philistine army. After you read through the story in [1 Samuel 24](#) and hear David's response in [Psalm 142](#), answer the following questions:

David's trial was:

Saul was trying to kill him.

David's feeling about the trial:

Fear, conflicted, conscience stricken.

David's response to God:

He pours out his heart, "I pour out before him my complaint," feels no one cares for him, sees God as his refuge.

What did David do to overcome the trial?

Submitted to Saul, humility, honored Saul as God's anointed, obedient to God.

How did God work through David's trial? *God used David to be Israel's greatest king. God used David for great things despite his many failings and flaws.*

Video on Ein Gedi, the place where David hid from Saul:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B_X8ior8Yfo

Additional Verse: 2 Corinthians 1:4 - *who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.*

Cross out the name David and write in your own name in the questions above as you answer the same questions about a trial you've gone through. What are some of the valuable lessons you learned through your trial(s)?

Even if your group is new, this may be a good question to ask. For a brand new group you may ask instead, "What are some of the lessons we learn by going through trials?"

2

As Christopher reminded us this weekend, suffering was something the disciples experienced and something we'll also experience as followers of Jesus. This means a shift in our perspective from hoping suffering doesn't happen, to being ready for when it does. As you read through the following verses, how could they prepare us to face any suffering, trials or hardship that may come our way?

Romans 5:1-5 – Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ²through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. ³Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; ⁴perseverance, character; and character, hope. ⁵And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.
Suffering helps change us and produces perseverance. Perseverance leads to character and character hope.

"A runner must be stressed to gain endurance. Sailors must go to sea. Soldiers go to battle. For the Christian, tribulation is just part of our Christian life. We should not desire or hope for a tribulation-free Christian life..."

"I would rather have God just sprinkle perseverance and character and hope on me as I sleep. I could wake up a much better Christian! But that isn't God's plan for me or for any Christian." – David Guzik

Hebrews 10:24-25 – ²⁴And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, ²⁵not 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.
Surround yourselves with people who have faith. Keep meeting together and doing life. Go to Life Group!

2 Timothy 3:12-15 – ¹²In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, ¹³while evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. ¹⁴But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, ¹⁵and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.
We will all be persecuted.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 – ¹⁶Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. ¹⁷For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. ¹⁸So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

Yes we are all getting older and feel the breakdown of our bodies. But inside, we are being renewed daily by God.

Additional Questions: Read **1 Peter 1:6-8** – *“In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials.⁷ These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.⁸ Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy”*

How difficult is it for you to rejoice when going through trials? What’s your first reaction when Peter says to rejoice? When we rejoice in our trials, how does that change us? What do you show those around you when going through a trial? Can you think of anyone you’re tempted to blame when going through a trial?

Additional Verse: James 1:2-4 – *“Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. ⁴Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything”.*

Which of the verses is most challenging to you and why?

TAKING IT HOME

Looking back on this week’s sermon and study, are there any trials or roadblocks where you may need to change your perspective?

Prayer Transition and Optional Question: *The #1 fear most people have is speaking in public. Group prayer falls into this category. If you have new people in your group, going over “Tips on Group Prayer” (at the end of the study questions) is crucial. It’s also, in most cases, a good reminder for returning groups. More than once, we’ve had people tell us they quit a Life Group or didn’t join a group because they had to pray out loud.*

Additional Question (an important one for new groups): *Prayer is an amazing avenue God has given us to communicate with him and he with us. But we also come to it with a lot of different thoughts and feelings. Which of the following statements are most true for you?*

- *Prefer to pray silently instead of out loud*
- *Find my mind wandering when praying*
- *Like to write out prayers*
- *Look forward to time in prayer*
- *Don’t really know how to pray*
- *Other*

PRAYER REQUESTS



TIPS ON GROUP PRAYER

Prayer is an important part of being in a Life Group. Over the years we’ve found that group prayer goes better when we follow three simple guidelines.

NEVER MAKE ANYONE PRAY

While we’d love to see everyone in group praying, we also understand not everyone feels comfortable praying out loud. No one is required to pray.

KEEP PRAYERS SHORT AND SIMPLE

Group prayer goes better when members keep their prayers short and to the point. When someone prays for a long time, it’s hard for the other members to stay focused. Long prayers tend to intimidate those who are just learning to pray out loud in a group.

DO WHAT WORKS BEST FOR THE GROUP

This could mean breaking up in guy/girl time, praying together as a whole group, praying in twos, having multiple people praying for one person, praying to the person to the left, etc.



COMMUNITY SERVICE IMPACT

Community Service is dedicated to being the hands and feet of Jesus and showing God’s love in tangible ways through service to the community. There are many options for you to serve. For ideas, check out NorthCoastCommunityService.org

Jesus Calms the Storm

Making sense of the storm:

1. God is perfectly **loving**.
2. God can do **whatever** he wants.
3. There is **evil** in the world.

Logical problem:

It's logically inconsistent for a God to allow **evil**.

Response:

1. We can't think of a **good reason** for evil.
2. God could have reasons we don't **understand**.
3. He is limited by **logic** and his **character** in what he can do.

Emotional problem:

I refuse to believe in a God who would allow **evil**.

Response:

Taking it home:

Romans 8:18-21, John 17:1-5, Psalm 90:2, Philippians 3:8-10, Isaiah 53

1. We are in a state of **rebellion**.
2. The **purpose** of life is...
3. God's view stretches beyond this life and into **eternity**.
4. Knowledge of God is an **incommensurable** good.
5. **Suffering** can't mean God is absent.