

LIFE GROUP LEADER GUIDE

For the week of March 1, 2020

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

LEADER NOTES

Things to Remember:

- Drinks when people arrive
- *Spring Sign-Ups*: March 21-29
- *Spring Quarter*: March 21-May 30

Goals for the Evening:

- FINALIZE Spring Quarter plans
- Continue to build relationships
- Discuss the study questions
- Pray together

PLEASE MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO FINALIZE PLANS FOR THE SPRING QUARTER AT YOUR MEETING THIS WEEK. Confirm any changes to your group or indicate "NO CHANGES" when you submit your attendance. Please let us know this information ASAP. Thank you!

⇒ DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

- Remember, you don't need to answer every question!
- Choose the questions best suited to your group.
- Listen to the Audio/Podcast version of the Leader Guide 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.

LEADER INFO

⇒ 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

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?

MY STORY

1. Go back through the "Learning from Peter and John" section of your notes and rank yourself on the five things below from 1 (needs lots of work) to 5 (doing great).

Good question to have everyone answer

- Doing the right things at the right time
- Willing to be interrupted
- Paying attention to the needs of others
- Willing to give what they had
- Willing to promote God, not themselves

2. When it comes to making time for others, most of us can think of a few places where we do this well and a few places that need work. Can you think of any people, groups or situations where it's hard for you to make time for them?

Note: You may want to be careful with having everyone answer this question as this could turn into something that sounds negative or that alienates people.

Additional Question: We often avoid reaching out to people who are different than we are. Why do you think that is?

3. Sometimes we need someone to make a special stop or create time for us. Can you think of any people who have given you their time in a way that really impacted you?

Additional Questions: Throughout our study in Mark, and continuing in Acts, we see examples of Jesus healing broken people. How does Jesus' care for the poor, broken, downtrodden align/misalign with who you pick to help?

Chris mentioned the Christians in Acts 2 stayed where they were instead of going out into the world. Can you think of any reasons why people today stay put instead of reaching out to others?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. Mark 5 gives a good example of a time when Jesus was interrupted several times. As you read through the story, jot down at least five observations from the passage and then answer the following questions: *Questions follow passage.*

Mark 5 - They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes. ²When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an impure spirit came from the tombs to meet him. ³This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain. ⁴For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. ⁵Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones. ⁶When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him. ⁷He shouted at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? In God's name don't torture me!" ⁸For Jesus had said to him, "Come out of this man, you impure spirit!" ⁹Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" "My name is Legion," he replied, "for we are many." ¹⁰And he begged Jesus again and again not to send them out of the area. ¹¹A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. ¹²The demons begged Jesus, "Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them." ¹³He gave them permission, and the impure spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned. ¹⁴Those tending the pigs ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened. ¹⁵When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. ¹⁶Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man—

and told about the pigs as well. ¹⁷ Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region. ¹⁸ As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with him. ¹⁹ Jesus did not let him, but said, "Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." ²⁰ So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed. ²¹ When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around him while he was by the lake. ²² Then one of the synagogue leaders, named Jairus, came, and when he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet. ²³ He pleaded earnestly with him, "My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live." ²⁴ So Jesus went with him. A large crowd followed and pressed around him. ²⁵ And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. ²⁶ She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. ²⁷ When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, ²⁸ because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed." ²⁹ Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering. ³⁰ At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?" ³¹ "You see the people crowding against you," his disciples answered, "and yet you can ask, 'Who touched me?'" ³² But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. ³³ Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. ³⁴ He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering." ³⁵ While Jesus was still speaking, some people came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. "Your daughter is dead," they said. "Why bother the teacher anymore?" ³⁶ Overhearing what they said, Jesus told him, "Don't be afraid; just believe." ³⁷ He did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James and John the brother of James. ³⁸ When they came to the home of the synagogue leader, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. ³⁹ He went in and said to them, "Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep." ⁴⁰ But they laughed at him. After he put them all out, he took the child's father and mother and the disciples who were with him, and went in where the child was. ⁴¹ He took her by the hand and said to her, "*Talitha koum!*" (which means "Little girl, I say to you, get up!"). ⁴² Immediately the girl stood up and began to walk around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished. ⁴³ He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this, and told them to give her something to eat.

What interruptions did Jesus experience?

Demon-possessed man, Jairus the synagogue leader, the bleeding woman

Can you think of any legitimate reasons others in the story could have given for why Jesus shouldn't have stopped for the interruptions?

Examples: *Jesus had more important things to do, He should have been focused on saving more people/more "deserving" people, He had important plans*

How might Jesus' response to the interruptions in the story help us do a better job of responding to people in need today?

We can learn from His example. He was inconvenienced, His stops cost a lot of time and energy, He made a huge impact with His time, He had compassion on hurting people- two of the three stops were people were completely cut off from society and outcasts. Jesus helped bring them back into community.

What are some of the reasons/excuses/justifications you tend to give for not having enough time for people?

Examples: *busy, job, tired, overcommitted, don't feel called, feel weird about it, unsafe, they don't deserve it*

Additional Question: *How does your view of the story of the bleeding woman change when considering all of us were at one point distant and disconnected from God and in need of Jesus' sacrifice to bring us near?*

2. While it's true as followers of Jesus we are to help people, how we do this is incredibly important. In John 1:14-17 we read how Jesus came to us with both grace and truth, and we see Him carry this out in many of His interactions. Can you think of any examples in the Bible where Jesus' grace for people set up opportunities to share truth?

Examples: *Luke 19:1-10 Zacchaeus the tax collector, Mark 2:13-17 Levi the tax collector, John 8:1-11 the woman caught in adultery, John 4:1-42 the woman at the well*

John 1:14-17 - The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. 15 (John testified concerning him. He cried out, saying, "This is the one I spoke about when I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'") 16 Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. 17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

Why do you think it's important to balance the tension between both grace and truth when helping others?

Too much on either side can be unhealthy

What could be dangers of sharing truth with people without grace? Dangers of grace without truth?

Truth without grace most often sounds harsh. (Think guy on the street corner with sign and megaphone). People cannot hear truth unless they feel cared about and/or understood.

Grace without truth often times doesn't help people grow.

Additional Verses: Ephesians 4:15, Ephesians 5:1-14, 1 Peter 4:8-11

Ephesians 4:15 - *Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.*

Ephesians 5:1-14 - *Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.³ But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. ⁴ Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. ⁵ For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a person is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.⁶ Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. ⁷ Therefore do not be partners with them.⁸ For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) ¹⁰ and find out what pleases the Lord. ¹¹ Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. ¹² It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. ¹³ But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. ¹⁴ This is why it is said: "Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."*

1 Peter 4:8-11 - *Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. ⁹ Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. ¹⁰ Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. ¹¹ If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.*

In responding to others in need, where do you fall on a continuum between grace on one side and truth on the other?

3. In the examples given in the sermon and in the My Story question #1 of the homework, we see just how important "being willing" is in helping others. How do the following verses expand on what it means for the Spirit to work through our willingness?

1 Peter 5:2-4 - *Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve;³ not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.⁴ And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.*

Be shepherds of God's flock because you are willing, not holding it against them, eager to serve, being an example

2 Corinthians 9:6-11 — Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.⁷ Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.⁸ And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.⁹ As it is written: "They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor; their righteousness endures forever."¹⁰ Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness.¹¹ You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

"Each one of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion."

In light of the sermon and homework, when it comes to increasing your "willingness" to help those around you, what comes to mind?

Additional Question: *In Acts 3, we saw the story of a beggar who God wanted to give something far greater than what he was asking for. What do the following verses say about the gifts God gives vs. what we ask for?*

Ephesians 3:20 - *Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us*

John 4: 7-14 - *When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" ⁸ (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) ⁹ The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) ¹⁰ Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." ¹¹ "Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? ¹² Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?" ¹³ Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."*

TAKING IT HOME

As you think through your family, friends, neighbors, coworkers or those in your community, are there any you want to be more intentional about helping in the next few weeks?



COMMUNITY SERVICE IMPACT

Community Service is a ministry of North Coast Church 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

Remaining In The Spirit

What happened?

Acts 2:42-3:12

Pneuma: **SPIRIT, WIND, BREATH**

Ruach: **SPIRIT, WIND, BREATH**

Warning: Sometimes the Bible is telling us
what **HAPPENED**, not what **TO DO**.

Learning from Peter and John:

The Spirit was using people who were:

- ✓ Doing the **RIGHT** things at the **RIGHT** time.
Acts 3:1
- ✓ Willing to be **INTERRUPTED**.
Acts 3:4
- ✓ Paying **ATTENTION** to the **NEEDS** of others.
Acts 3:4
- ✓ Willing to give what **THEY HAD**.
Acts 3:6
- ✓ Willing to promote **GOD**, not **THEMSELVES**.
Acts 3:6-12

Learning from the beggar:

Acts 3:3-5

Instead of asking God to bless **OUR AGENDA**,
let's start praying for **HIS AGENDA**.