

LIFE GROUP LEADER GUIDE

For the week of September 27, 2020

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 service project you would like to do. Check our website for some options: northcoastcommunityservice.org

SOCIAL OPTIONS

Online Social Ideas: <https://lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/group-socials/>

In-person Social Ideas: <https://lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/suggestions-for-socials/>

***Please adapt in-person social options to comply with County social distancing guidelines for COVID-19.**

LEADER INFO

⇒ LIFE GROUP COMMITMENT FORM

Go over the Commitment Form with anyone who missed the first week. If anyone did not sign the Commitment Form, remind them to do so.

⇒ 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. There are plenty of questions in this guide to take you deeper. **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 of the questions. Great conversation and connection are far more important than covering all of the questions.**

⇒ PRAYER NOTE

Check out the **Tips on Group Prayer at the end 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 a Life Group because a well-intentioned person required everyone to pray.

⇒ 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

⇒ ONLINE GROUPS

Check out our Tips and Tutorials for Online Groups here: <https://lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/pro-tips/>

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

ABOUT POLITICS IN LIFE GROUP - *We believe it is important for Jesus followers to think through and process how they are going to vote and engage in politics. But due to the polarizing nature of our current political climate, we want to keep our Life Group meetings free of politics and focused on relationships with each other and God's Word.*

Presenting the Good News of Jesus' saving grace to all, and the unity we have as believers is vitally important to us. In light of this, remember to keep politics completely out of your Life Group discussions. We exist to minister to everyone who wants to know Jesus. Every election cycle we have Christians who become divided over issues and can be deeply offended by comments, jokes, and even prayer requests. We do not want to send the message that people who vote a certain way or have differing political views are not welcome. If someone in your group starts to take things in a political direction (be it with humor, a rant, or even a "prayer request" for a specific outcome), gently remind them that the body of Christ (and North Coast Church) is made up of followers of Jesus – some of whom are Republican, Independents, Democrats, etc.

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Have fun with the first question below. It's meant to be light-hearted and engaging for everyone. It's recommended to definitely ask the Quick Review question.

Group Discussion Tip: *Go around the circle and have everyone answer, or open it up to the group and ask someone who doesn't talk much to answer. Remember, giving the group time limits helps keep one person from dominating the discussion.*

1. Would you rather:

... always be 10 minutes late or always be 20 minutes early?

... have unlimited, international, first-class tickets or never have to pay for food at a restaurant?

... be without your phone for a week or without transportation for a month?

Fun question to have everyone answer.

Video Discussion Starter Option: 3 ½ minute [“I am Second”](#) Video with Stephen Baldwin. It talks about his transition from Living for himself to now saying “I am second; Jesus (and others) are first.” Below are a few follow-up questions. You can send the video link to your group to watch ahead of time and then discuss or watch it together when you meet.



Stephen Baldwin - I Am Second -

Video Questions: What caught your attention in this video? Can you think of examples of how the “I am Second” idea has or has not played out in your life? What do we learn from the maid in the story?

2. This weekend we heard about the importance of being able to set aside our rights in order to put others first. Of course, sometimes we find that isn’t too hard, while other times we totally miss the mark. When is it easy for to you serve someone? When do you find it more challenging? *Good question to have everyone answer.*

Additional Question: (Also added to Digging Deeper #2 – you may prefer to use it there.) How could our insecurity keep us from putting others first and serving them? In other words, how does insecurity keep us from being willing to forgive, encourage, speak truth kindly in love, confess, etc.?

QUICK REVIEW

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?

Make sure you ask this question this week. It gives people the opportunity to discuss questions or issues that come up beyond the written questions. People’s responses can often lead into one of the questions in the “Digging Deeper” section. Some weeks, this question will result in a lot of discussion, other weeks, there can be very little.

DIGGING DEEPER

Discussion Reminder: If you are hearing from everyone in your group, chances are you won’t have time to discuss every question. You may start with one that catches your attention so you don’t run out of time. For example, it’s not odd to start with question #2, then go to #3 and if you have time, come back to #1.

1. Putting others first and loving others sacrificially can be no small challenge with all life throws at us. What motivation and guidance do the following verses give when it comes to putting this kind of love into action?

2 Corinthians 5:14-15 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁴ For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. ¹⁵ And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

Additional Question: Can you think of ways you’ve seen or sensed God’s spirit work this out in your life or the way you think and live? Have you had a specific time you sensed God “compelling” you to understand this or do this? Was there anything specific going on that helped make that happen?

Additional Verse: Ephesians 2:10 (NIV) For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Galatians 5:13-15 New International Version (NIV)

¹³ You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. ¹⁴ For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” ¹⁵ If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

See sub question below to follow up this verse.

John 15:9-14 New International Version (NIV)

⁹ “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. ¹¹ I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹² My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command.

Additional Question: Can you think of any life experiences or people that have helped you understand or have been great examples of what it means to live by denying themselves and putting others first?

When it comes to the “freedom” talked about in the Galatians passage, do you need to be more careful using your freedom or less tied to the rules?

Which one of the verses above is most motivating to you and why when it comes to living out “It’s not all about me?” *Good question to hear from everyone.*

2. Based on Paul's skills and abilities from his past, there were many reasons for him to be confident. What do you learn in Philippians 3:4-11 about Paul's attitude regarding the strengths in his life? *People in your group may have the same answer for this, but it's still a good idea to check and see what everyone has to say. See the sub question to find out varying responses.*

Philippians 3:4-11 New International Version (NIV)

⁴ though I myself have reasons for such confidence.

If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: ⁵ circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.

⁷ But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. ¹⁰ I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹ and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

There's nothing wrong with being confident in our abilities. However, when our abilities get in the way of putting Jesus first, it becomes a problem. In fact, confidence in ourselves and who we are in Christ is a key to being able to serve others. When it comes to your own self-confidence, which of the following can trap you and affect your ability to serve and put others first?

Additional Question: (Also in Getting to Know You #2.) How could our insecurity keep us from putting others first and serving them? In other words, how does insecurity keep us from being willing to forgive, encourage, speak truth kindly in love, confess, etc.?

Good question to have everyone answer below.

- Over confidence
- Lack of confidence
- Unaware of how God can work
- Other

Examples of the confidence confusion that can happen: God is blessing me in a business situation, so I must be okay; I read my Bible regularly, so I must be doing well; my children are following Jesus, so I must be doing well spiritually. None of these things are wrong, but we can begin depending on them instead of really looking into our own lives and what Christ has done for us or is wanting us to do. Of course, you could invert all of those examples of success and it wouldn't mean you are in a bad place or should lack confidence.

3. Humility is a character quality that is vital to putting others first. It allows us to have the vision to see God at work. How do the following verses help us evaluate if we really are humble, as well as understand who we are and who God is?

James 3:13 New International Version (NIV)

¹³ Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.

Romans 3:23 New International Version (NIV)

²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

Deuteronomy 8:17-18 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁷ You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." ¹⁸ But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today.

Proverbs 15:32-33 New International Version (NIV)

³² Those who disregard discipline despise themselves, but the one who heeds correction gains understanding. ³³ Wisdom's instruction is to fear the LORD, and humility comes before honor.

Rank the passages above in order from one to four according to which is most helpful for you when putting humility into action? *Good question to have everyone answer.*

TAKING IT HOME

SERVICE CHECK: Is there somewhere or someone you need to adjust your posture toward and serve in new way? Family, friends, those you disagree with, other? *Because it is only the second week of group, it is recommended to not use names and keep people focused on using the categories for the responses and not a specific person.*

Looking back at your notes and study questions, what's most important for you to remember and why?

PRAYER REQUESTS

Prayer Transition and Optional Question: *The #1 fear most people have is speaking in public. Group prayer would fall into this category. If you have new people in your group, going over "Tips on Group Prayer" (below) is crucial. In most cases, it's also a good reminder for returning group members. 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*



TIPS ON GROUP PRAYER

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

WE PRAY FOR ONE TOPIC AT A TIME - Anyone in the group is free to introduce a prayer request either before prayer begins or during the prayer time. Once a topic is introduced, the group focuses on that request alone. Once it's covered, the group moves on to the next topic.

PRAY MORE THAN ONCE - Because the group is focusing on one topic at a time, each person is encouraged to pray several times during the prayer time for those topics they feel most led to pray about. No one is required to pray.

WE KEEP OUR 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 and long prayers tend to intimidate those who are just learning to pray out loud in a group. No one is required to pray out loud.

NORTH COAST CLASSES

Visit our website at northcoastchurch.com/classes for more info.

[United in Marriage](#) – Begins October 5

[The Unknown Road: An Unemployment Class](#)

One-Night Class on October 5

[Preparing for Marriage](#) – Begins October 12



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

What If This Isn't All About Us?

A story about Christians in conflict (once again):

Acts 16:11-40

What Paul & Silas knew, because of WHO they knew:

Acts 16, Philippians 2

- When it comes to our **PERSONAL** journey, every **PERSON** counts.
- If every **PERSON** counts, then all of our **ACTIONS** and **REACTIONS** count.
- God's **PURPOSE** is more important than our **RIGHTS**.
- Every **EARTHQUAKE** is an **OPPORTUNITY** to set others free.