

# LIFE GROUP LEADER GUIDE

For the week of October 4, 2020

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

## LEADER NOTES

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### ⇒ CONTINUE 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](http://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

#### ⇒ NEED HELP WORKING OUT HOW YOUR GROUP IS MEETING?

No matter how your group is meeting, whether it's online, in-person or hybrid, we realize people's preferences or comfort levels in how your group is meeting could change. Due to COVID, people may feel less comfortable meeting in person, or the opposite could happen, and they no longer want to meet only online. We want to give grace to anyone experiencing this and understand that life and how we respond is just not normal right now. Remember to be flexible with people if this occurs in your group. We realize people may want to change or drop out of groups more than usual because of this. If this happens, please let your Life Group Pastor know about it. Know they are there to help. We want to make sure everyone is being cared for during this crazy time.

#### ⇒ ATTENDANCE

Submit your group's attendance online at [northcoastchurch.com/attendance](http://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](http://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](http://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 Republicans, Independents, Democrats, 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?

## GETTING TO KNOW YOU

*This week, there are three questions. Feel free to choose the question that works best for your group. Remember, a successful group meeting is one where we hear from everyone and keep God's Word at the center. The "Getting to Know You" questions are designed to help start conversation off in a positive direction and to help all group members feel comfortable to share. This builds momentum toward the "Digging Deeper" questions.*

1. This weekend we saw how Paul persuaded the Jews to join him in following Jesus. Growing up, were you more likely to:
  - persuade one of your friends and/or family members?
  - be persuaded by one of your friends and/or family members?

**Discussion Note:** *This question is intended to be a fun opener, especially if your group is newer or has new people. The answers to this question are a safe and low level of vulnerability. This helps newer people feel comfortable beginning to share.*

2. As we are continually learning to love God with our minds, we tend to show love to others and receive love from others in preferred ways. One common way to describe these expressions of love is by using the 5 love languages. (Take the quiz here: <https://www.5lovelanguages.com/quizzes/>) From the list below, which one or two love languages tend to mean the most to you? Which one or two are your least favorite?

- Acts of Service (doing things for others they might like)
- Quality Time (sharing undivided attention)
- Words of Affirmation (expressing love with words that build others up)
- Gift Giving (giving a meaningful or thoughtful gift)
- Physical Touch (providing physical, non-sexual contact)
- Other

**Discussion Note:**

- *Love Languages were in the homework on the third week of the Fall 2019 Quarter. Feel free to use it again or skip it this week.*
- *On the Love Languages website, there are different quizzes and resources for various stations in life (couples, singles, men, military, children & teens). One way to use this question would be to have everyone take out their phone and take the quiz. It takes 3-5 minutes. This question should be helpful in getting to know your group. If you have married or dating couples in your group, it is a helpful tool to practice healthy communication and understanding of differences.*

3. This weekend, Christopher mentioned the Shema (Jewish prayer), which Jesus reaffirmed as one of the greatest commandments, to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. Which one of these four elements of loving God do you tend to lean into most often?

Which one might seem the most unclear or difficult?

**Discussion Note:**

- **Shema – Deuteronomy 6:4-9 NIV**– <sup>4</sup>Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. <sup>5</sup>Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. <sup>6</sup>These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. <sup>7</sup>Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. <sup>8</sup>Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. <sup>9</sup>Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.
- **Greatest Commandment – Mark 12:28-33 NIV**– <sup>28</sup>One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?” <sup>29</sup>“The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. <sup>30</sup>Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ <sup>31</sup>The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.” <sup>32</sup>“Well said, teacher,” the man replied. “You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. <sup>33</sup>To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.”

**Discussion Note:** *This question would be best for a veteran group who knows each other already. If you are a newer group or have new people and want to ask the question, use Q1 or Q2 above first. This question builds off of how Christopher starts his message talking about the Shema – love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. The message describes how to love God with our minds, but opening it up to allow people to discuss all four elements of loving God could be helpful.*

## DIGGING DEEPER

*This week, there are two questions. Feel free to choose the question that works best for your group. Whether your group is meeting in person or online, it is helpful to share with your group the goal of a successful meeting: to hear from everyone and keep God’s Word at the center. Ask the group to help you as the facilitator to create this environment. This will help you interact with dominators (person who dominates the conversation) later on. ☺ Mention this early and often in your group. If you are meeting in person, going around the circle is a helpful tool. If you are online, use the ‘popcorn’ or ‘pass the baton’ method to help conversation move and ensure everyone has a chance to share. As always, let everyone know it is ok to pass or not answer a question. This helps build trust with group members who may not feel 100% comfortable sharing vulnerably yet.*

1. This weekend Christopher said, “The Gospel calls us to practice love in the way we think and respond to an increasingly reactive world around us.” In many ways, our current culture climate is similar to what Paul and Silas experienced in Acts 17. The hopeful thing for us is we can lean into God’s Word, know we are not alone and that we are not the first group of people to walk through a similar situation. How might James 1:19-27 help us in our response to the world around us?

### **James 1:19-27 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>19</sup> My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, <sup>20</sup> because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires. <sup>21</sup> Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

<sup>22</sup> Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. <sup>23</sup> Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror <sup>24</sup> and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. <sup>25</sup> But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.

<sup>26</sup> Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless. <sup>27</sup> Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

*Note: If your group prefers a circle/highlight/underline, feel free to have them do that as you read the verses out loud as a group.*

Just as we look at our face in the mirror (verse 23) to remember who we are and what we look like, how might viewing the Word of God like a mirror help us to remember who God is?

*Note: The goal here is to point back to how the Word of God helps shape our view of Him. This is more about practical Bible study methods and helpful tips. Depending on your group members' maturity level, this question (or the additional question below) can help members get ideas to try to help them engage in their Bible more often. If you are wanting your group members to read their Bible more, this could be a great question.*

#### **Additional Questions:**

- *As a group, take 60 seconds and brainstorm some practical ways for the Word of God to help us remember who God is. (Make a group list - i.e. journaling, daily reading, praying scripture, have a verse on our desktop/mirror/bed side table/in our car, reading a verse of the day, watching the Daily Dose, memorizing scripture, etc.)*

How does remembering who God is help us to respond to the world around us?

*Note: This question is more about the practical application of interacting with and studying God's Word.*

In the passage above, verse 19 says, "...everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to become angry." Can you think of a time when you might have made a better decision if you would have applied this wisdom?

*Note: This is a reflective question where everyone will probably have unique answers. As a facilitator, the level of vulnerability you share will direct the rest of the group. If you share vulnerably, the rest of the group typically follows. If you share on a surface level, your group will follow. How vulnerably should you share? Appropriately vulnerable 😊 - How long has your group been together? What is the trust level in your group? Use your best judgement, keeping in mind that if you answer first, it will guide the group.*

If someone wants to apply the "quick, slow, slow" principle (verse 19), what are two to three steps they could take to actively pursue this truth in their life?

*Note: There are many possible answers. Some examples: pray before walking into a conversation, pray twice/post once, take a deep breath before responding, repeat back what you heard someone say, social media fasting, watch less news, pray/journal for perspective, etc.*

#### **Additional Questions:**

- *As a group, take 60 seconds to list as many ways to apply the quick, slow, slow principle in your life.*
- *As a group, brainstorm 10 ways for someone to apply the quick, slow, slow principle in their life.*

James mentions that our tongue has high consequences and has the power to make our religion worthless (verse 26). When you think about all the ways we use our words (speaking, writing, typing, texting, posting, etc.), think of a person who lives this out well in their life. What makes them unique?

*Note: Various answers here. This could be used as an application question to the study and/or sermon.*

**Additional Questions:** *When you think about the words you use (speaking, typing, texting, posting, etc.)...*

- *What is one area you want to work on?*
- *What is one area you could use some improvement in?*
- *What is one area you have noticed growth in?*
- *Can you think of someone who uses their words really well? What makes them unique?*
- *Can you think of a time when you observed someone use their words to lift others up? What impact did that have on you?*

2. This weekend we were given nine “Proverbs (bits of wisdom) to think through in this season.” As you look through the list below:

- Put a *star* next to the two to three items you feel come most easily for you
- Put a *checkmark* next to the two to three items that resonate most as an area of growth for you

**Discussion Note:** *This question is pointing back to the nine proverbs from Christopher’s message. The verses are below. When facilitating this question, it may be helpful to read each verse with the group. You could have members volunteer to read. Keep in mind, a very common fear is reading out loud in public.*

- Am I **QUICK, SLOW, SLOW**?  
James 1:19
- Do I want to **UNDERSTAND** or only to be **HEARD**?  
Proverbs 18:2-3
- Do I expect **JESUS-LIKE** behavior from those who don’t follow Jesus?  
Matthew 7:6
- Does all of my wisdom begin in the **FEAR** of the Lord?  
Proverbs 1:5-7
- Do I think and live in an **ECHO CHAMBER** that doesn’t invite **WISDOM**?  
Proverbs 12:15
- Do I fall for the trap of those who just want to **PROVOKE** my anger?  
Proverbs 26:4-5
- Do I have a habit of **ENGAGING PEOPLE** who have no intent of **LISTENING**?  
Proverbs 26:4-5
- Do I control my **ANGER**, or does my **ANGER** control me?  
Proverbs 29:11
- Do I overreact to one side of the story, or do I leave room for the **TRUTH** to be revealed?  
Proverbs 18:17

Take a moment to reflect on the items you *starred* above. Why might those come more easily for you?

**Facilitation Note:** *Sometimes it is helpful to start from a positive perspective on areas we feel strong in before we go to areas of growth. We can also learn from others who may have success in an area. As you facilitate, it may be worth a reminder that we are not here to fix the people in our group or give them advice. If you see this happening, as a facilitator, you will want to stop them and gently redirect. Giving advice without someone asking for it is a quick way to shut down transparency.*

**Additional Questions:**

- *Take a moment to look at the items you check marked above. Is there one you might want to keep in mind going forward?*
- *Which one of the nine above spoke most to you?*
- *Which one of the nine above were most meaningful to you?*
- *Did one of the nine confuse you or cause a light bulb to go off?*

Pick one of these areas and share with the group what has helped you live out this wisdom.

**Note:** *This is an opportunity for group members to share best practices.*

**Additional Questions:**

- *Can you think of someone who has lived these practices well? What makes them unique? What did you learn from them?*
- *Can you think of someone who has lived one of these principles well? What impact did that have on you?*
- *Can you think of someone who has totally disregarded these principles (no names please)? What impact did that have on you?*

We all have areas in our life where we want to improve in this season. Take a moment to reflect on the items you *check marked* above. What is one step you could take to work on these areas of your life? (i.e. praying on a topic, sharing with a group, serving others, reading Scripture, talking to a wise mentor or friend, pausing and listening more)

**Note:** *There are many answers and various directions this can go. This question can help push toward a Spirit-driven application. You may choose not to have your group members answer this out loud, but instead have them take 60 seconds to pray silently (or you pray as a leader for the group), then have each person write down a next step or which of the nine they want to focus on. You might brainstorm together a list of steps someone could take, which might help group members think through possible steps for themselves.*

**Additional Question:**

- *As a group, can we collectively come up with a list of 10 (or you choose a number) steps that we could possibly take?*

## TAKING IT HOME

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

**Additional Question:**

- *As Hebrews 10:24-25 reminds us, one of the many benefits of meeting weekly with a group of believers in a Life Group is to encourage each other as we continue to become more like Jesus.*

*<sup>24</sup> And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup> 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.*

*After listening to your group members share, is there any encouragement you found that can help you apply the proverbs Christopher mentioned this week?*

## PRAYER REQUESTS



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### 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](https://northcoastcommunityservice.org)

<https://northcoastcommunityservice.org/community-service-impact/>

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### NORTH COAST CLASSES

Preparing for Marriage, The Unknown Road: An Unemployment Class, and more

<https://www.northcoastchurch.com/north-coast-classes/>

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### NEW: FAMILY SUPPORT MINISTRY

Find yourself suddenly teaching your kids at home? We have some help for you!

<https://northcoastfamilysupport.com/>

## Thinking Like Jesus

### Christianity is a Thinking Faith

#### Consider:

What does this **COST**?

Luke 14:28

What is the **NORTH STAR** of my life?

Luke 9:23

What does this **MEAN** for me **TODAY**?

Philippians 3:8

How am I living **SET APART**?

Romans 12:1-2

### Proverbs to Think Through in This Season

- Am I **QUICK, SLOW, SLOW**?  
James 1:19
- Do I want to **UNDERSTAND** or only to be **HEARD**?  
Proverbs 18:2-3
- Do I expect **JESUS-LIKE** behavior from those who don't follow Jesus?  
Matthew 7:6
- Does all of my wisdom begin in the **FEAR** of the Lord?  
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