

# LIFE GROUP LEADER GUIDE

For the week of November 15, 2020

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

## LEADER NOTES

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### ⇒ ONLINE FEEDBACK FORMS THIS WEEK

We'd like to have your group fill out Feedback Forms this week. Let your group know how important their honest feedback is for you as Leaders and Hosts.

##### Here's how the online forms work:

- Everyone in your group should have received their own personal email with a link to their Feedback Form on Sunday of this week. (Look for "Tell us about your Life Group!" in the subject.)
- Each unique email link is designed for that specific person and isn't meant to be shared.
- In the event that someone in your group can't find the email, you may share the generic link listed here with them. [lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/feedback](http://lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/feedback)
- Please take the time in your Life Group to have everyone complete the form if they have not already done so on their own.
- It's just a few questions and should take approximately two minutes to complete.
- We will be emailing you the results of your group's feedback in the week following the end of the quarter.

#### ⇒ DISCUSS PLANS FOR THE WINTER QUARTER & LAST MEETING

Find out from your group if they know their plans for being part of the group in the Winter. They can indicate their plans on the Feedback Forms. Also, let us know of any roster updates that you know of, or changes to your meeting day, time or location for the Winter Quarter when you submit your attendance.

#### ⇒ PRAYER FOR NEW WINTER LIFE GROUP LEADERS & HOSTS

Take some time to pray for new Leaders and Hosts to launch new Life Groups in the Winter.

## LEADER INFO

#### ⇒ NO LIFE GROUPS OVER THANKSGIVING

Just a reminder that there will be no Life Groups held over Thanksgiving Week, from November 22-28.

#### ⇒ IMPORTANT DATES

- Last week of Fall Life Group Quarter: November 29 – December 5
- Winter Sign-Ups: January 9-17
- Winter Quarter: January 17 – March 20

#### ⇒ 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: [lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/pro-tips/](http://lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/pro-tips/)

## 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?

## MY STORY

1. Chris talked about how the Ephesian church was focused on reaching out to others in the city. In your own life, can you think of anyone who reached out to you to tell you about Jesus? What do you remember about what they said and/or did that was helpful to you?

*Most people will have at least one person who had an influence on them coming to Christ.*

**Additional Question:** *Is there someone in your life you're currently influencing?*

2. We all struggle with trying not to define our identity by what others think about us or how well we perform. In the first “Digging Deeper” question, we’ll look at who God says we are, which is how we’re supposed to define our identity. As you were growing up, can you think of any ways you were impacted by trying to gain a sense of security and significance from what others said about you or how well you performed?

**Additional Questions:**

*What role did peer pressure play in your search for your identity, especially as a teenager?*

*How has your search for security, significance and identity changed over the years?*

## DIGGING DEEPER

Six years after Paul was in Ephesus, he wrote a letter to the church he had started there. We call that letter the book of Ephesians. In this letter, he gave instructions on how to live in a way that will make an impact on the city of Ephesus. This week we’re going to look at a few of the things he wrote to help us better understand how we can live so we can have an increasing impact on the world around us.

*The book of Ephesians can be broken down into two main sections. Section One is the first three chapters where Paul talked about what God has done for the believers and their identity and position in Christ. Section Two is the last three chapters and talks about how the believers are to live out this new identity. The hinge verse is 4:1, where Paul calls them to “live a life worth of the calling you have received.” This calling is what he talked about in the first three chapters.*

*Their new identity is what set up their behavior. Paul knew that in order for them to continue to make an impact on the city of Ephesus, they needed to understand who they were in Christ and then have that shape how they acted toward each other and everyone else in the city. So this week, we’re looking at those two sections to see what our new identity is and how we should live as a result of this new identity.*

1. Several times throughout the first three chapters of his letter, Paul reminded the Ephesians of who they were as followers of Christ. This new identity is not something we have to work for – it is ours because we are Christians. It means we no longer have to define ourselves by what others say, what our feelings say or what our successes and failures say. This new identity provides freedom and security and is the foundation of the changed life that Chris talked about.

The following verses paint a picture of our identity as Christians. Under each passage, jot down what it says about our identity in Christ, and then answer the questions below.

**Possible Answers:** *Someone who understands their identity in Christ would live a life of gratitude because of all the spiritual blessings they have been given. They would also be quick to forgive because they have been forgiven. They would be gracious to others because of God’s grace lavishly given to them.*

*They would recognize that they are a citizen of heaven and child of God, and that would cause them to focus on the eternal kingdom and treat things on this earth as only temporary.*

*They would live a life of freedom and confidence in their relationship with God, which would carry over in their relationships with people.*

**Additional Question:** *Do you know someone who consistently reflects these truths in their life? What is it like to be with them?*

### **Ephesians 1:3 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>3</sup> Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

**Note:** *If we’ve been blessed with “every” spiritual blessing (note the word “spiritual” as opposed to physical), then we have everything we need to live the Christian life. It’s already ours.*

**Additional Question:** *How does someone go about tapping into these spiritual blessings?*

### **Ephesians 1:7-8a New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>7</sup> In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace <sup>8</sup> that he lavished on us.

### **Ephesians 2:4-7 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>4</sup> But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, <sup>5</sup> made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. <sup>6</sup> And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup> in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

### **Ephesians 2:19-20 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>19</sup> Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, <sup>20</sup> built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.

### **Ephesians 3:12 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>12</sup> In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

How would you describe what a person would be like whose life consistently reflects the truths of these verses?

Which statement about our new identity in Christ would you say is most misunderstood or overlooked by Christians?

#### **Additional Questions:**

*What hinders Christians from consistently living in light of their new identity?*

*What difference does it make when Christians consistently remember their new identity?*

*What are some outcomes that occur when Christians don't consistently remember their new identity?*

*How would you benefit if you could consistently live out these truths?*

It's easy to forget about our new identity and the freedom and security it provides. What are some ways that could help us remember who we are as followers of Christ?

#### **Possible Answers:**

*Memorize a few verses that talk about our identity in Christ.*

*Read passages on our identity once a week.*

*Recruit a partner to regularly remind each other to live in light of our identity.*

*Find some online sermons that focus on our new identity in Christ.*

2. In the last three chapters of the letter, Paul switched his focus to helping the Ephesians live out their new identity in their relationships with each other and in the community around them. Which of Paul's instructions in the verses below do you find the hardest to carry out? Which is the easiest for you to follow?

*Good question to have everyone answer.*

### **Ephesians 4:1-2 New International Version (NIV)**

*As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. <sup>2</sup> Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.*

### **Ephesians 4:25-27 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>25</sup> Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. <sup>26</sup> "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, <sup>27</sup> and do not give the devil a foothold.

### **Ephesians 4:31-32 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>31</sup> Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. <sup>32</sup> Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Can you identify one or two areas Paul talked about in which you've seen significant growth in your life over the years?

*Note: To answer this question doesn't mean that a person thinks they have it all together in that area. It means they've come a long way, but they still may have a ways to go.*

Is there anything that has been particularly helpful in causing this growth?

*Possible Answers: The Bible, a book, a sermon, a spiritual practice, a person, etc. It will be interesting to see if there is a common theme in the answers people share.*

3. The verses in "Digging Deeper" #2 paint a picture of someone many of us would say is outside the realm of possibility of us ever becoming. But wait; there is hope. In order for us to consistently live this way, we need more than knowledge, willpower and effort. We also need the power that only God provides. Paul talks about how we can experience this power through the Holy Spirit in Ephesians 5:18. How does John 15:4-5 help you understand what it means to depend on God's power to live the Christian life?

### **Ephesians 5:18 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>18</sup> Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit,

*Additional Question: This verse brings together two very different experiences – getting drunk and being filled with the Spirit. In what ways does getting drunk relate to being filled with the Spirit?*

*When a person is drunk, they are being controlled by something outside themselves. Same with the filling of the Spirit.*

*When you are drunk, you say and do things you normally wouldn't do (usually things you later regret or are embarrassed by). Same with being filled with the Spirit, only the things you do under the influence of the Spirit are things you want to remember.*

*Note: The word for "be filled" in Greek refers to an ongoing process, not a one-time event. So it literally means "be continually filled with the Spirit."*

### **John 15:4-5 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>4</sup> Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. <sup>5</sup> "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

Can you think of any challenges people face in tapping into God's power to live the Christian life?

#### **Additional Questions:**

*Why don't we more consistently tap into God's power to help us live the Christian life?*

*What are some misconceptions people have about the Spirit-filled life?*

*What's been your experience or understanding of what the Spirit-filled life entails?*

*How has your understanding of the Spirit-filled life changed over the years?*

*How has your experience of being Spirit-filled changed over the years?*

Do you have any questions about how to tap into God's power in your life?

## TAKING IT HOME

Which point from this weekend's message or Life Group study is most important for you to remember?

## PRAYER REQUESTS

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### **COMMUNITY SERVICE IMPACT**

Looking for a great way to give back this Thanksgiving? North Coast has partnered with several local non-profits to help bring Thanksgiving meals to needy families. To sign up or for more information, go to [NorthCoastCommunityService.org](http://NorthCoastCommunityService.org) and search "Thanksgiving."

## How A Church Upsets A City

### About that time...

Acts 19:23

### What are we known for?

Acts 19:23-41, The book of Ephesians

The:

Way:

The church was:

**MISSIONAL.**

Pro-**JESUS**, not anti-**EVERYTHING ELSE**.

Known for **WHO** they **FOLLOWED**, not **WHAT** they were **AGAINST**.

About a **MOVEMENT**, not about **MOMENTS**.

About **LIFE** change that changed others' **LIVES**.