

# LIFE GROUP LEADER GUIDE

For the week of February 21, 2021

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

## LEADER NOTES

### ⇒ MID-QUARTER TRAINING

Make sure you attend the Mid-Quarter Training session for Leaders and Hosts (Vista Campus groups only). Click the link to RSVP: [lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/mid-quarter-training](http://lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/mid-quarter-training)

## MEETING NOTES

### ⇒ SERVE YOUR CITY

As Life Group leaders and hosts, we want you to be the first to know more about this exciting news! Watch [this short video](#) from Community Service Pastor Connor McFadden for a first look at our upcoming project, Serve Your City.

#### ***What is it?***

Serve Your City is a church-wide, three-week campaign coming after Easter. Each week, we will focus on serving our community in three intentional and practical steps:

- Week 1: **GIVE** (*donate financially*)
- Week 2: **SERVE** (*participate in community service projects with your Life Group, with your family or on your own*)
- Week 3: **LOVE** (*intentionally show love to someone in your life*)

#### ***When is it?***

March 6: **Serve Your City project sign-ups open!**

Week of April 11: **GIVE** *financially*

Week of April 18: **SERVE** *on a project*

Week of April 25: **LOVE** *someone*

#### ***How can you help?***

1. Tell your group members about Serve Your City! Feel free to share this video with your group. We will be sending a promo video and info to all Life Group members in the weeks to come.
2. **Starting March 6:**
  - Head to [northcoastchurch.com](http://northcoastchurch.com) and click on "Serve Your City" to view service projects that have been created for you to serve. *Note, you may also create your own.*
  - Sign up to serve! We love to see Life Groups serving together! You will have the option to sign up your whole group for a project, or you can also sign up as individuals.

Stay tuned for more details in the coming weeks and month! In the meantime, if you have any questions, feel free to reach out to your Life Group Pastor. We are so excited to serve together with you on this amazing project!

### ⇒ PRAYER

- Take prayer requests.
- If you haven't divided into male/female groups already, you may want to do so for prayer.

### ⇒ 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)

Find all of our leader resources online: [lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/leader-tools](http://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 something that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

## MY STORY

**Facilitation Tip:** You could use either one or both of the "My Story" questions to break into smaller groups (one-on-one or three or more), either physically if you're meeting in person or in breakout rooms if you're meeting on Zoom. The second "My Story" question would be especially good for a smaller group discussion because it would allow more time to unpack each person's answer.

1. In this weekend's message, we heard Chris say, "Don't ever let the problems of life overshadow the promises of God." Another way to say that is, "Never doubt in the darkness what God has said in the light." Has there ever been a time in your life when you had to work hard to keep focused on God's promises instead of your problems?

If so, what helped you keep your focus on God's promises?

**Additional Question:** *What would you say to someone who was struggling to focus on God's promises and not their problems?*

2. We heard this weekend how Paul had little impact on the government officials he talked to during his two-year imprisonment in Caesarea. What is your response to the fact that even the Apostle Paul, as experienced as he was in talking to people about Jesus, wasn't able to convince everyone he talked to?

**Possible Answers:** *Scary (If he can't persuade everyone, then how can I expect to persuade anyone?), comforting (Not even arguably the greatest evangelist ever could convince everyone, so I'm not a failure.), sad (There are people so set in their beliefs that they can't be convinced by a great evangelist.), informed (It's not up to us to win people. We have a responsibility to plant and water, but it's God who produces the results.)*

## DIGGING DEEPER

**Facilitation Tip:** *Don't feel like you have to get through all of the questions. It is better to go deeper on one of the "Digging Deeper" questions and not do the other one than it is to go shallow so you can answer both of them.*

1. As Chris mentioned this weekend, we often equate success with results while God equates success with our faithfulness. How does 1 Corinthians 3:5-9 reinforce this idea that our responsibility is to be faithful to what we are called to do and not be concerned with the outcome?

### **1 Corinthians 3:5-9 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>5</sup> What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task. <sup>6</sup> I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. <sup>7</sup> So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. <sup>8</sup> The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor. <sup>9</sup> For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building.

#### **Additional Questions:**

- *What can we learn from this passage about what it looks like to partner with God in ministry?*
- *Chris talked about remaining from [John 15](#). What connection do you see between the John 15 passage and this passage?*

We also don't want to miss the fact that God does reward our faithfulness. What motivations to live a life of faithfulness and obedience do you find in the following passages?

### **Colossians 3:23-24 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>23</sup> Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, <sup>24</sup> since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

#### **Additional Questions:**

- *How do you learn to view your work as being done for the Lord and not your boss or company?*
- *What does "work at it with all your heart" look like in your context?*

### **Matthew 19:27-30 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>27</sup> Peter answered him, "We have left everything to follow you! What then will there be for us?" <sup>28</sup> Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. <sup>29</sup> And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life. <sup>30</sup> But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first.

**Matthew 25:14-21 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>14</sup> “Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. <sup>15</sup> To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. <sup>16</sup> The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. <sup>17</sup> So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. <sup>18</sup> But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money. <sup>19</sup> “After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. <sup>20</sup> The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.’ <sup>21</sup> “His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’

**Note:** The response to the servant – “Well done, good and faithful servant” – reflects a compliment on both the character (good and faithful) and the competency (well done) of the servant. Remaining, as talked about in John 15, is the way we go about growing both our character and the fruit we produce.

**Additional Question:** How well do you understand what God has entrusted to you as your “talents” that He wants you to invest?

What would you suggest to someone who has been faithful but is now growing weary because of a lack of visible results?

**Additional Questions:**

- Have you ever grown weary of being faithful because you haven’t seen any tangible results?
- Have you ever been in a situation where you were looking for a certain outcome and totally missed what God was doing because you were too focused on how you thought He would work?

What role do you think gaining rewards should play in our faithfulness?

**Note:** Some people may suggest that we should only do things with selfless motives and not expect anything in return. But the Bible does talk about rewards for faithfulness. [2 Corinthians 5:10](#) talks about us appearing before the judgment seat so that we may receive a reward. Here’s how one commentator explained this:

“It is clear that this is not a judgment resulting in salvation or damnation. Nevertheless, it is an important judgment, for it will determine what responsibilities Christians will have in the coming kingdom ([Matt 25:21](#)). According to Paul, some will come through with very little to show for their Christian lives, saved as though “through the flames” ([1 Cor 3:15](#)). What he means is that some Christians will be saved but with little, if anything, to show for their years on earth. Whether because of wrong motives or laziness or misplaced priorities, they will conclude their lives with very little of any eternal worth to show. While the whole salvation process is a gift ([Rom 6:23](#) ; [Eph 2:8-10](#)), rewards are the result of human effort and are earned ([1 Cor 3:14](#) ).” [biblestudytools.com](#)

**Additional Question:** How do we avoid making our faithfulness all about rewards so that we’re only being faithful for our own benefit?

2. Chris talked about how Paul had little apparent impact on government officials Felix, Festus, and Agrippa during his two years of imprisonment at Caesarea. However, in his other writings, Paul describes his desire to share the Gospel with others and the impact he was able to have in people’s lives despite his incarceration. What can we learn about Paul’s attitude regarding how he views his problems and sharing the Gospel from the verses below?

**Philippians 1:12-14 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>12</sup> Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually served to advance the gospel. <sup>13</sup> As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. <sup>14</sup> And because of my chains, most of the brothers and sisters have become confident in the Lord and dare all the more to proclaim the gospel without fear.

**Additional Question:** How do you think Paul was able to maintain his positive attitude in the midst of his imprisonment and the constant threat of execution?

**Colossians 4:2-6 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>2</sup> Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. <sup>3</sup> And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. <sup>4</sup> Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. <sup>5</sup> Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. <sup>6</sup> Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

What does Paul's prayer request reveal about what is involved in being a faithful spokesperson for Jesus?

**Note:** Paul's request for his evangelistic efforts while in prison has two parts – open doors (hearts) for the message and that he would explain things clearly.

**Additional Question:** What do you think Paul means when he says he wants to explain the Gospel "clearly?"

How might Paul's instructions on how to act toward "outsiders" influence the way you relate to people?

Paul's instructions involve three actions: 1) be wise in our behavior toward outsiders, 2) make the most of every opportunity and 3) our talk is to be with grace so we can respond appropriately.

**Additional Questions:**

- In Colossians 4:5, Paul told us to "make the most of every opportunity." Can you think of one or two opportunities already in your life right now that you could do more to make the most of?
- Can you think of any opportunities that have recently come across your path that you could have taken advantage of to serve or be a testimony to someone?
- What does it sound like to have graceful speech?
- What does it mean that our speech is "seasoned with salt?"
- Is there anyone in your life you would like to pray for the door to be open to share about Jesus with them or invite them to church?

**TAKING IT HOME**

1. Is there anyone in your life with whom you want to act with more wisdom toward as Colossians 4:5 talks about? What are some ways others can pray for you regarding this relationship?

2. Take a moment to pray the following prayer as a way to reinforce the reality that when it comes to serving God, our part is faithfulness, and His part is producing the fruit (John 15).

"Lord, help me to be faithful to the gifts, abilities and opportunities You have given me according to the strength You give me (see Colossians 1:28-29). Then give me the grace and faith to leave the results to You."

**Colossians 1:28-29 New International Version (NIV)**

*<sup>28</sup> He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. <sup>29</sup> To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me.*

**PRAYER REQUESTS**

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**SKILLED/TRADE PROFESSIONALS NEEDED:**

We're excited to let you know we have an amazing volunteer opportunity coming your way starting April 11 called Serve Your City. During this three-week campaign, we will focus on helping others by the way we give, serve and love our community. More info to come.

If you have a **professional skill such as carpentry, painting, landscape etc.**, and are interested in working on a hands-on project during Serve Your City, please contact Chandler Pine at [cpine@northcoastchurch.com](mailto:cpine@northcoastchurch.com).



**WOMEN'S CONFERENCE**

Ladies of North Coast Church, join us for a two-day conference March 26-27 as we dig into the theme of learning to trust God with all aspects of life. Hear from speaker Megan Fate Marshman and enjoy breakout sessions, worship and more! Register today at [northcoastchurch.com/womens-conference/](http://northcoastchurch.com/womens-conference/)

## Is Our Relationship With God Personal Or Profitable?

### Three chapters, two years of testimony and nothing to show for it?

Acts 23:12-26:32

Telling the story:

### PowerPoints from prison:

Acts 24-26

Don't ever let the **PROBLEMS** of life overshadow the **PROMISES** of God.

Faithfulness is always measured by **FAITHFULNESS**, never the **OUTCOME**.

You will always reach your goal in life if your **GOAL** in life is to be a **TESTIMONY**.

Our greatest goal in life has to be more about where we are **IN CHRIST** than where we are **IN LIFE**.

### Is it personal or profitable?

Acts 24-26, Matthew 7:15-28, John 15:1-17, Matthew 16:24-27

Whether our relationship with God is **PERSONAL** or **PROFITABLE** will truly determine if we have a **RELATIONSHIP WITH** God.