

LIFE GROUP LEADER'S GUIDE

For the week of January 30, 2022

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

LEADER NOTES

ANNOUNCEMENTS

⇒ 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.

⇒ 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

SOCIAL OPTIONS

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

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

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

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

⇒ ONLINE GROUPS

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

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 something that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

MY STORY

1. This weekend we learned about the importance of wise counsel in our decision-making process. What is the wisest advice you have ever received? (Potential areas to think through: relationships, marriage, parenting, finances, spirituality, work, etc.)

Can you think of a piece of advice you didn't take, but in hindsight, wish you would have?

***Discussion Note:** Have fun with this question. You can focus it on one specific area for your group based on the dynamics or make-up of your group. If you want to talk about parenting, singleness or marriage (see the various ideas above), this is a great place to do it.*

2. When we can be tempted to respond in the flesh, Pastor Larry mentioned there are many things that influence our response (i.e., feelings, thoughts, calculations, friends, prevailing culture). Which one may be more difficult for you when it comes to not responding in the flesh?

***Discussion Note:** Larry mentions this in his message. This could be a great starter to Digging Deeper #1 because it focuses on the way we respond while walking with the Spirit or flesh.*

Additional Question: If a movie was made about your life, what actor/actress would play you? What would be the title of that movie?

Note: If your group is newer or if you have had a delayed start (or lots of absences) to the quarter due to COVID/illness, this can be a fun icebreaker. Any time we can learn more about our group members, it's a win.

DIGGING DEEPER

NOTE: The two Digging Deeper questions are focused on walking in the Spirit vs. our flesh. In Digging Deeper #1, we will focus on our RESPONSES. In Digging Deeper #2, we will focus on our DECISIONS.

1. As we look at Saul and David's relationship beginning to unravel, we notice some key differences in their response to fear and uncertainty. We notice Saul responding out of the flesh and David mostly responding out of the Spirit. All of us face similar challenges of walking in the Spirit or responding in our own flesh. When it comes to how we respond, what are some of the guidelines the Apostle Paul gives in Romans 12:17-21 to help us understand what a Spirit-filled response looks like?

Romans 12:17-21 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. ¹⁸ If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. ¹⁹ Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. ²⁰ On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Discussion Note: Commentary - <https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/romans-12/>

You can also expand your reading of this passage to Romans 12:9-21 for further discussion. There are lots of practical application points in this passage to help us respond out of the Spirit vs. our flesh.

Which one of the guidelines you identified comes most naturally to you? Which response may be more difficult for you?

Discussion Note: This is a follow-up to the question above. In the "additional question" below, it has four of the guidelines from Romans 12:17-21. Feel free to use those to help your group get started. Spend some time here talking about what it looks like to live these guidelines out. Ask for examples. Ask "what does this practically look like?"

Additional Question:

Which one of the guidelines you identified come to you most easily? Which response may be more difficult for you?

- ➔ Return good for evil
- ➔ Live at peace with everyone
- ➔ Wait for God and not respond with revenge
- ➔ Feed an "enemy" who is hungry

Paul's call for us to live at peace with everyone doesn't mean we ignore wrong behavior or become passive. Depending on the situation, there will be times that call for us to engage in healthy conflict resolution or confronting sinful behavior or injustice. When you know something is wrong, how do you decide whether to remain silent or to engage in resolving the situation?

Discussion Note: All of the three options above are appropriate and Biblical responses at the right time. This question gets us to discuss about how and when we decide to respond. If your group struggles getting started, throw out a few examples. (i.e., a good friend does something unethical in their business, a cashier or server responds to you disrespectfully, your kid's youth sport coach is very negative to the kids during a game or contest.)

Additional Question: When responding to someone with whom you may not agree, what does it look like “to live at peace with everyone”? What does it not look like?

Can you think of a time when you were in the wrong and the other person, instead of returning evil for evil, responded to you in a godly way?

Discussion Note: This question takes a different approach by coming at another angle for how we respond. Sometimes, putting ourselves on the other side helps us to learn. It might help for the leader to go first with an example.

Additional Question: (If yes, to the question above) As you reflect back, what might you be able to learn from that experience?

2. Another area where we need to be led by the Spirit is in our decision-making. Pastor Larry taught that when we make a decision, we need to run through the filter of God’s Word, wise counsel and promptings of the Holy Spirit. Take a look at the Proverbs below as they help guide us into making wise decisions.

Proverbs 2:6 New International Version (NIV)

⁶ For the LORD gives wisdom;
from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.

Proverbs 3:5-6 New International Version (NIV)

⁵ Trust in the LORD with all your heart
and lean not on your own understanding;
⁶ in all your ways submit to him,
and he will make your paths straight.

Proverbs 11:14 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁴ For lack of guidance a nation falls,
but victory is won through many advisers.

Proverbs 12:15 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁵ The way of fools seems right to them,
but the wise listen to advice.

Proverbs 15:22 New International Version (NIV)

²² Plans fail for lack of counsel,
but with many advisers they succeed.

Discussion Note: These Proverbs give us great Biblical wisdom to complement Pastor Larry’s message and teachings on making decisions rooted in walking with the Spirit.

Do you have someone you would lean on for wise counsel? Is it the same person in every area of your life, or do you have different people for different areas of your life?

Discussion Note: This is a great place to see who people lean on and have in their life. There are some helpful follow-up questions below based on how your group responds.

Follow-up Questions:

- Where is a good place to look for someone who can provide wise counsel?
- How do you know if someone is the kind of person who can provide wise counsel?
- Should we have one person who we rely on for all of our wise counsel? Or is it ok to seek wise counsel from different people, depending on the area in which we are seeking counsel?
- What could we do if we don’t have anyone who can provide us with wise counsel?

Make a list of the characteristics you would look for in someone whom you would consider wise.

Discussion Note: *This is a great question to have your group make a collective list. Possible answers: experienced, godly, rooted in Scripture, someone who listens, a learner, encourager, truth speaker, graceful, someone who knows you, responsible, someone who has experienced failure or “walks with a limp.”*

Is there a characteristic you listed above that you most want to work on to become wise counsel in someone else’s life?

Discussion Note: *This question is a great follow-up to the list you make in the question above. It helps us think about becoming the kind of person who is wise and seeks after God to walk in the Spirit. This could also be a Taking it Home question.*

Additional Questions:

- *Is there one of the characteristics you listed above that you most admire?*
- *Have you ever received advice that did not align with God’s Word. How did you handle the situation?*

TAKING IT HOME

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

Additional Question: *As you think of the people you regularly interact with (family, friends, social media, co-workers/boss, neighbors, etc.), is there an area of your life where you want to adjust how you have responded or will respond in the future?*

PRAYER REQUESTS

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COMMUNITY SERVICE IMPACT

Looking to serve with your Life Group? To check out all your options, go to

NorthCoastCommunityService.org

Who You Gonna Listen To?

The Rise Of A Shepherd / The Demise Of A King

1 Samuel 15-17/ 18:5-11 & 19-30

The Turning Point:

1 Samuel 16:13-14

Two Options:

Proverbs 3:5-6/ Galatians 5:16-17

1. Trust in the **LORD** and respond **HIS WAY**
2. Trust in **MYSELF** and respond **MY WAY**

Walking In The Spirit: Five Important Observations

1. We have one big advantage David didn't have.

The Holy Spirit is not just **WITH** us, He is **IN** us.

John 14:15-17/ 16:7-11

2. Walking in the Spirit is simply **TRUSTING** God enough to **DO** what He **SAYS** *no matter what*.

Two Areas Where That Is Really Hard To Do:

1. Returning **GOOD** for **EVIL**

Romans 12:17-21/ 1 Peter 2:21-23 & 3:9

2. Waiting for God's **PERFECT TIMING**

1 Peter 5:6/ Matthew 4:1-11/ Proverbs 20:22

3. God's will is more like a **GAME PLAN** than a **BLUEPRINT**.

4. There will always be some **STATIC** on the line.

Romans 7:15-25/ Acts 16:6-10/ Daniel 9:20-23 & Daniel 10:11-14

5. The Holy Spirit will never **CONTRADICT** Himself.

2 Timothy 3:16-17/ Proverbs 12:15/ John 14:26/ Romans 12:2