

LIFE GROUP LEADER GUIDE

For the week of May 1, 2022

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

LEADER NOTES

LEADER INFO

⇒ ROSTER CONFIRMATIONS COMING NEXT WEEK

There are four Life Group meetings left in the quarter. Next week we would like you to begin to talk to your group members about their plans for being part of your group in the fall. You will be receiving an email reminder about this next week. Once you have heard from your group members, please let us know any changes or any roster updates.

⇒ BEGINNING TO THINK ABOUT NEW GROUPS FOR THE FALL

With our weekly church attendance continuing to climb, we foresee a significant need for additional groups in the fall. Please be praying with us as we begin to see who might be able to lead those groups.

⇒ 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

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?

Discussion Note: *This week's sermon addressed an "elephant" in the story of the life of Saul. Pastor Larry addressed suicide head on, as well as mental health and other areas of struggle that may or may not come up in your group discussion this week. Our Life Group Team wanted to remind you that we are here to walk alongside you if/when you find yourself navigating a particularly hard and challenging situation with someone in your life group (or if you are that someone). Please reach out to your Station of Life Pastor for wisdom and counsel as needed. We also have an incredible [Counseling Center](#) if there is someone in your group that would need a referral.*

Reminder: Pray for your discussion this week and for your members as they come. If there are dark circumstances (depression, mental health, sin issues, etc.) that seem hopeless, the prayer is that your group would be the safe place for those things to come up and be brought to the light.

Larry mentioned the sermon he gave this past August about the topic of suicide. You can listen to this message here: northcoastchurch.com/messages/a-special-message-for-the-north-coast-church-family/

MY STORY

1. Larry mentioned in the sermon his fear of being impaled and how that affects his life. It seems like we all have at least one irrational fear or phobia. Can you think of one you have (or someone you know has)? If so, in what ways does it impact your (their) life?

Discussion Note: *This is intended to be light but could certainly take a turn if someone has a very difficult or challenging fear. There's a phobia for everything. Don't be surprised if a spouse offers up their partner's phobia for discussion. Check out this list of fun phobias. therecoveryvillage.com/mental-health/phobias/related/weird-phobias/*

2. We were reminded this weekend about the adage, "Be careful what you wish for." Have you ever wished for something that you eventually got, only to realize it wasn't what you expected or thought it would be?

Discussion Note: *Like question #1, this could go a variety of ways in the answers you get from group members. As this question gets discussed, you may have an opportunity to point out that there's usually good and bad, positives and negatives that come from receiving our wish. Think of Aladdin for example. He had a genie and was granted wishes, but even becoming a prince, while it brought status and riches, was not without its challenges... enemies, pressures to perform, a complicated relationship.*

DIGGING DEEPER

1. Larry's point that "God always has a remnant and a plan" is encouraging because it means that no matter how tough life gets, there is always a reason for us to have hope! Hope is more than just wishful thinking; it's a firm confidence that God will work everything out in the end. How do the following passages describe what it means to live with hope and how it is developed in our lives?

Romans 5:3-5 New International Version (NIV)

³ Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; ⁴ perseverance, character; and character, hope. ⁵ And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

Romans 8:22-25 New International Version (NIV)

²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. ²³ Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

Romans 15:13 New International Version (NIV)

¹³ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Hebrews 10:23 New International Version (NIV)

²³ Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.

Discussion Note:

- Maybe start with, "Before we get into the questions below, how would you define hope?"
- According to dictionary.com:
 - In noun form, hope is defined: the feeling that what is wanted can be had or that events will turn out for the best
 - In verb form, hoped/hoping is defined: to look forward to with desire and reasonable confidence

What's the most important or encouraging aspect of hope to you from these passages?

Additional Question: Why did you pick that particular aspect?

Has there been a time in your life when you felt hopeless? If so, what was life like for you during that time?

Additional Questions:

- What helped you deal with that hopeless season?
- Was there someone who was a beacon of hope for you during that time?

Has there been anything in your life that has helped you to become more hopeful?

Additional Questions:

- What can someone do to become more hopeful?
- Do you think some people are just more hopeful by personality than other people?

What actions or attitudes would you associate with a person who is "overflowing with hope"?

Additional Questions:

- How do you think hope relates to faith and positive thinking?
- Is there ever a time when it's appropriate or healthy to give up hoping for something?
- How do you or can you practice living with hope?
- What are some practices for times/seasons of feeling hopeless?
- Did one of these verses bring you particular encouragement?
- How do living hopeful and having a positive attitude relate?

2. Even when we know God has a remnant and a plan, it can be hard to keep a positive attitude in the face of financial pressures, relational discord and worldwide chaos. The book of 2 Timothy is a letter written by the apostle Paul to Timothy to encourage him to keep going and continue living out his calling despite the challenges he was facing. In the passage below:

- Highlight or underline the things Paul wants Timothy to do so that he will continue to persevere despite the challenges he is facing.
- Circle anything that could be an encouragement to us to stay positive and keep following Jesus despite difficulties and challenges.

2 Timothy 1:3-14

³I thank God, whom I serve, as my ancestors did, with a clear conscience, as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers. ⁴Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy. ⁵I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also.

⁶For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. ⁷For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline. ⁸So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner. Rather, join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God. ⁹He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, ¹⁰but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. ¹¹And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher. ¹²That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet this is no cause for shame, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day. ¹³What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you—guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

Discussion Notes: *Since we are doing a circle/highlight/underline this week, maybe encourage your group to bring a highlighter or special pen to group. Some group members will come with this already done, but give everyone some time to do it in group. Encourage those who have already done it to look again to see if there is something they missed or if something jumps out in a new way. For some pre-study on this passage, check out biblegateway.com/resources/matthew-henry/2Tim.1.1-2Tim.1.18. The hope here is that groups have great discussion around ways and tools to keep going when faced with challenging circumstances. In the question above, we listed a few (financial pressures, relational discord and worldwide chaos), but more could include struggles with a disobedient child, navigating a hard decision, physical health, mental health, family dynamics, etc. You know your group, but this may be a section where new things are shared.*

Additional Verses:

- [John 16:33](#) tells us that in this world we WILL have trouble, but to take heart.
- [James 1:2](#) WHEN we face trials to consider it joy.

Can you think of someone in your life who has encouraged you to keep going in a season when you wanted to give up or quit? If so, what did they do that was so encouraging?

Additional Questions:

- *Has someone in our Life Group encouraged you? (You know your group, so use this if it will provide an opportunity for mutual encouragement and affirmation.)*
- *When you are in a hard season, how do you reach out to friends so they know you need encouragement and support?*
- *Can you think of someone you could encourage who might be struggling or wanting to give up?*

Is there one word or phrase you circled above that would be important for you to focus on or put into action this week? If so, explain.

TAKING IT HOME

Looking back on this week's sermon and study, what's most important for you to remember?

PRAYER REQUESTS

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GIVE HOPE: BABY BOTTLES & BELIZE

Support young women and children in crisis, locally and globally.

Baby Bottles - If you picked up a baby bottle to support life-affirming pregnancy care clinics, be sure to fill it with cash, check or change and return it the weekend of May 7-8.



Belize: Agape International Missions (AIM) - Partner with us as we help bring freedom to women and children trapped in human trafficking.

Together we can give hope! Donate online by scanning the QR code or going to northcoastchurch.com.

The End Of Saul's Story

A Tragic Ending

1 Samuel 31/ 1 Chronicles 10/ 1 Samuel 28

The Elephant In The Story

1. Suicide is never the **RIGHT PATH**.
Revelation 12:10/ Job 1-2/ 1 John 2:1-2/ 1 Corinthians 10:13
2. There is **ONLY ONE** unforgivable sin.
Matthew 12:22-31

Four More Life Lessons

2 Timothy 3:16-17

1. There is no such thing as a **PRIVATE SIN**.
1 Samuel 31:1-2, 7
2. A godly life doesn't guarantee **EARTHLY SUCCESS**.
It guarantees **ETERNAL LIFE**.
Genesis 3:1-4:8/ John 16:33/ 2 Timothy 3:12/ 1 Peter 4:12/ 1 Corinthians 10:13/ Proverbs 3:5-6
3. No matter how spiritually dark it gets,
God always has a **REMNANT** and a **PLAN**.
1 Samuel 31:11-13/ 1 Kings 19:14-18/ Psalm 73
4. Be careful what you **WISH FOR**.
1 Samuel 8:1-22/ Numbers 11:1-20/ Romans 1:28-29