

LIFE GROUP LEADER GUIDE

For the week of October 23, 2022

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

LEADER NOTES

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NORTH COAST MEN'S CONFERENCE - OCTOBER 28 & 29 - LAST WEEK TO SIGN UP!

This is a great opportunity for the men in your Life Group to get connected at a new level. Pastor Ricky Jenkins will be our guest speaker this year along with Chris Brown. We'll be raising money once again for one of the women's resource centers in our community that helps women and families in distress. There will be multiple ways to contribute including raffles for prizes (Big Screen TV, Indoor Skydiving, etc.), along with various tournaments and activities including ax throwing, pitching cage, cornhole, pickleball and disc golf tournament.

If you have something of value you'd like to donate for the raffle, please contact Vikki at valmond@northcoastchurch.com.

LEADER INFO

⇒ MEETING REMINDERS

- **NEED HELP / SUPPORT?** If you need support for your group, please don't hesitate to reach out to your Life Group Pastor – we're here to help! Find a list of who to contact online at lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/team.
- It's okay to have some weeks that focus more on discussion, and some that focus more on prayer! If you haven't taken the opportunity to break into **men-only/women-only groups**, try it this week.

⇒ LEADERSHIP COMMUNITY GATHERINGS / MID-QUARTER TRAINING

Our Mid Quarter Trainings are beginning to take place on our campuses on a variety of days, times and locations. It's a great opportunity for you to connect with other leaders and be encouraged in how God is using you as leaders or hosts. And know we always cover childcare for you to enable you to attend. Watch for communication coming your way with more details.

lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/mid-quarter-training

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

Find all of our leader resources online: lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/leader-tools

QUICK REVIEW

What stood out to you most from what you heard or read in this weekend's message?

MY STORY

1. If someone called and told you that a lion escaped the zoo and was looking for you, what would be your first course of action?

Have fun with this! Would you lockdown in a hidden location? Would you grab a weapon or something to try to defeat the lion? Would you make armor for yourself? This is a fun question, but also makes the connection to our spiritual enemy, who prowls around like a roaring lion seeking to devour us (1 Peter 5:8).

2. When you hear that we, as followers of Jesus, have a spiritual enemy and are in a spiritual battle, what thoughts, images or words come to mind to describe your experience with or understanding of "spiritual battles"?

Note: *Everyone will probably have a difference experience with this—some may be very familiar and comfortable thinking about spiritual warfare and the enemy, whereas for some, it may be something they don't think about or don't like to think about. This question will be a good way to gauge where everyone is at in your group with this topic.*

DIGGING DEEPER

This weekend, we heard about the spiritual battle we are in as followers of Christ and how to be alert and sober-minded in order to survive the attacks. This week, we are doing something a little different and taking a long look at the spiritual armor of God laid out in Ephesians 6:10-18. Read the passage and take note of any insights, questions or key observations that stand out to you, then answer the following questions about each piece of spiritual armor.

Ephesians 6:10-18 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. ¹³ Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, ¹⁵ and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸ And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

Discussion Note: The format this week is different than we normally do because we wanted to take a longer look at the armor of God. You will most likely NOT be able to cover the questions for each piece of armor as a group due to length. A few different suggestions for ways you could facilitate this week's questions in your group:

- Ask your group members which piece of armor they most often forget to put on, or would like to focus on the most, and pick 1-2 of them to discuss as a group based on their answers.
- Split into small groups for discussion and have each group discuss 1-2 pieces of armor, then come back and share highlights together with the group.
- Divide up the pieces of armor and hear from 2-3 people for each question, rather than hearing from everyone for each question.
- Text your group members ahead of time and ask them to be thinking about which questions they'd like to discuss and decide based on their input.
- Also feel free to just discuss each piece of armor and what you think it means or looks like to put it on and live it out, without covering the specific question under each one.

Additional Verses: Reading different versions of the same text can sometimes pull out or illuminate different things. Try reading [The Message](#), [Amplified Bible](#), or another version as a group, and see what stands out to people.

Additional Questions:

- How might each piece of armor help us not fall for the enemy's schemes, as Chris talked about this weekend?
- Do you notice anything about the enemy and his schemes based on what the pieces of armor are—that these are the things we must have to be able to fight against him?
- How might knowing what to expect from an opponent (or our enemy) help us know how to survive the battle?
- Can you think of a time you felt like you were in a battle or facing a giant? Did you see any of these pieces of spiritual armor play a role in how you dealt with that battle? If so, explain. If not, is there one or more of these pieces of armor you think could have made a difference in that situation?
- Which piece of armor do you most often forget to put on? Which piece of armor is usually easiest for you to put on?

Belt of Truth

One of the most common descriptors of the enemy in Scripture is that he is a liar. Are there any lies that are easiest for you to believe, and can you think of any truths to combat them with?

Note: Take note if there are any similarities in the lies that people share in group. I.e., do we struggle with the same lies?

Additional Question: How can we remember these truths when we are faced with the lies?

Breastplate of Righteousness

Righteousness, or being right with God, involves being right in our minds, our hearts and our actions. Is there anything you have practiced to help you keep watch or be on high alert when it comes to these areas of our lives?

Note: When people share practical things they have done to help them live out the gospel, it can help the entire group have a fuller understanding or more ideas of how to do it in their own lives. Feel free to encourage group brainstorming on these types of questions.

Shoes of Peace

Peace makes our feet ready to walk (v. 15). Are there any situations or patterns that tend to rob your peace or keep your feet from being ready to move in a battle?

Note: Just as with the lies and truth question, take note of any similarities in the answers people share about what tends to rob their peace.

Additional Question: How might being aware of what robs your peace ahead of time help prepare you for the battle when it comes?

Shield of Faith

Faith can be described as assurance of what is not seen and an expectation that God will do what He says. Can you think of a time when you saw someone in your life hold onto faith while walking through a difficult season? If so, what did you observe about them?

Additional Question: Have you had a situation where you held onto faith in a battle? What difference did it make in how you handled that season?

Helmet of Salvation

Living every day with the helmet of salvation involves living with eternity in mind, which Chris mentioned this weekend. When you are in the middle of a battle or difficult season, what is more your default response: focusing on the moment in front of you or remembering God's victory in the end? Has there been anything that has helped you keep the end in mind?

Additional Question: How would you encourage someone else going through a battle or difficult season to keep the end in mind? What would you say to that person?

Sword of the Spirit/The Word of God

While every other piece of armor is a defensive tool or a piece of protective wear, a sword is the only one in the list that can be used as an offensive weapon to inflict harm on the opponent. Can you think of different ways we can pick up the sword of Scripture so that we can use it actively in our lives? (Listening to a favorite Scripture app, putting a physical reminder of verses in our homes, setting up calendar reminders with Scripture, etc. Be creative!)

Additional Questions:

- *This question is asking about practical ways to get Scripture in our lives so that when the battle comes, we have it already in our hearts and are prepared for the battle. Why is it important to have the Word of God in our lives?*
- *If you went into a battle with only defensive tools or protective gear, and no offensive weapon, your chances of actually defeating your opponent would be slim. Why do you think, of all the things, it's the Word of God that Scripture calls the sword, the offensive weapon?*

TAKING IT HOME

Looking back on the spiritual armor of God, which piece of armor is most important for you to remember to put on this week?

Note: Don't miss this Taking it Home question. This is a great one to hear from everyone. What's the piece of armor you need to remember to put on this week? You could also do a check-in next week and see how it went picking up that piece of armor.

PRAYER REQUESTS

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NORTH COAST CHURCH
MEN'S CONFERENCE

NORTH COAST MEN'S CONFERENCE

Join us Friday evening, October 28 & Saturday morning, October 29, for the second North Coast Men's Conference held at the Vista Campus! Come enjoy teaching led by pastors Chris Brown and Ricky Jenkins, along with worship, activities and tourneys! Register at

northcoastchurch.com/mens-conference/.

Because There Will Always Be More Giants...

How to be alert and sober-minded:

2 Samuel 21:15-22, 1 Peter 5:6-11, 2 Timothy 2:1-13

- ✓ We daily need to **REALIZE** that we are in **A BATTLE**.

- ✓ Don't fall for the **ENEMY'S SCHEMES**.

- ✓ Commit to follow a **DIFFERENT** set of **COMMANDS**.

Three keys to surviving the attacks:

1 John 4:4, 2 Corinthians 12:7-10, Luke 10:18, Romans 8:31-39, James 4:7, Ephesians 6:10-18

1. Success is found in our **WEAKNESSES**, not our **STRENGTHS**.

2. God's strength comes from **WHOSE** we are,
and who we are **WITH**, not **WHO** we are.

3. Live with the **END** in **MIND** because **ETERNITY**
will be well worth the **SACRIFICES**.