

LIFE GROUP LEADER GUIDE

For the week of January 22, 2023

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

LEADER NOTES

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SPECIAL NOTE TO LEADERS: We trust you in continuing to be safe, aware and ready to flex with the needs of your group. Anyone who is sick or has recently tested positive with COVID should not attend your group. **If this week is your group's first meeting due to having many unable to attend last week, feel free to treat this week's meeting similar to your first meeting. See last week's leader guide for your first meeting agenda.** Also, listen to this week's leader audio for more explanation. And please know the Life Group Pastor Team is ready to help with any needs you may have.

⇒ BEGIN 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

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

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

LEADER INFO

⇒ LIFE GROUP COMMITMENT FORM

Go over the Commitment Form with anyone who missed the first week. If anyone did not sign the Commitment Form, remind them to do so.

⇒ SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT WEEK #2

Remember we're on week #2 with your group. People are still acclimating, especially any new people. Lead your group through the questions according to how well everyone knows each other. There are plenty of questions in this guide to take you deeper. **AND REMEMBER, as a leader, your goal each night is to lead your group in such a way that you hear from everyone and use the Bible as your guide.** Know that if you do this each week, the people in your group will grow! **Remember you don't need to cover all of the questions. Great conversation and connection are far more important than covering all of the questions.**

⇒ PRAYER NOTE

Check out the **Tips on Group Prayer at the end of this Leader's Guide.** If you have new people in your group, please make sure you go over this. **And NEVER make someone pray. Group prayer is similar to public speaking, which is the #1 fear people have.** More than once, we've had people tell us they quit a Life Group because a well-intentioned person required everyone to pray.

⇒ 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/

PRO-TIPS TO KEEP YOUR ONLINE EXPERIENCE GREAT AND AVOID ZOOM FATIGUE

- 1) **Shorten meetings to 75 minutes or less.**
- 2) **Use breakout rooms to personalize conversation.** (If possible, try to do this at least 5-10 minutes every meeting.)
- 3) **Coach people on how to engage and speak up online.** (Practicing this can really help.)

WHITE WATER VACATION ADVENTURE

for Leaders & Hosts
July 19-23



Join us for an adventure of a lifetime. Led by Life Group Pastor Dave Enns and his wife Koreena enjoy nature, community, and a time to be refreshed and encouraged! Space is limited. Click for details.

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

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Discussion Tip for Online Groups – If you have more than eight screens open when you meet, consider utilizing breakout rooms to create smaller groups where more people can talk, which will make for better discussion. Either of the first two questions below would be good to discuss in a breakout room, which would allow people more time to unpack their answers. Please see the Tips and Tutorials for Online Groups on the Leader Tool homepage at lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/pro-tips/.

Discussion Tips:

- Go around the circle and have everyone answer or open it up to the group and ask someone who doesn't talk much to answer. Remember, giving the group time limits helps keep one person from dominating the discussion.
- Question 1 is designed to bring some fun discussion. Hearing from everyone at the beginning of your discussion helps people to feel comfortable sharing. These questions often bring things out of people you may not know. Over time, these types of questions can be insightful and helpful in building relationships in a group, even if your group has been together for a long time.

The first two weeks we don't have a "Quick Review" section, but you can find a similar question in #3 under "Getting To Know You."

SPECIAL NOTE ON THIS TOPIC: Beware of where your group is at in their spiritual journey. There are people in our groups who have not stepped over the line to follow Jesus. They are obviously spiritually interested since they are in a Life Group. We have attempted to write the questions in such a way that all can answer them. Know that this topic alone may encourage people to a commitment to Jesus even in our groups.

1. Tell us a little more about yourself... *Good question to have everyone answer. Have fun with it.*

- What three words best describe you?
- If you could win an Olympic medal for any sport, real or fake, what would it be?

2. As followers of Jesus we're called to live out His purpose and plan to reach others for Him. What's your response? (Check any that apply.) *Good question to have everyone answer. This will give you a feel as to where your group is at on this topic.*

- ☐ Yes!
- ☐ Yikes!
- ☐ What?
- ☐ Other?

3. This week we were given "Five Things to Keep in Mind" when we have the opportunity to share our story. Which one was most important for you to hear? *Good question to hear from everyone.*

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? *This can always be a good question to ask. Some weeks we may have a lot of feedback, others, not so much.*

DIGGING DEEPER

1. As followers of Jesus, God has given us the privilege to help others see who Jesus is. Our hope is to be effective—to live a life "that earns the right to be heard." How do the following verses guide us in what that kind of life looks like? As you read each passage, jot down anything that speaks to reaching and impacting others for Jesus.

Discussion Suggestion: Read each verse with the group and hear what they wrote down. Use the questions below after each verse to give you the option to ask more questions. Direct your questions to various people so you're hearing from everyone. Use the final sub-question after the last verse to find out where they are more specifically at.

1 Corinthians 9:19-23 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁹ Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. ²⁰ To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. ²¹ To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. ²² To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. ²³ I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.

To earn the right to be heard, we need to "get in their shoes" to show we genuinely care about their perspective in life. This is true for all of us. The enemy wants to keep us from seeing this.

Check out The Message Translation of this passage: biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+9%3A19-23+&version=MSG
Even though I am free of the demands and expectations of everyone, I have voluntarily become a servant to any and all in order to reach a wide range of people: religious, nonreligious, meticulous moralists, loose-living immoralists, the defeated, the demoralized—whoever. I didn't take on their way of life. I kept my bearings in Christ—but I entered their world and tried to experience things from their point of view. I've become just about every sort of servant there is in my attempts to lead those I meet into a God-saved life. I did all this because of the Message. I didn't just want to talk about it; I wanted to be in on it! - The Message Translation

Additional Question: Is there a situation or context you find yourself in with someone at your work, in your friend group, school, etc. in which you need to work at understanding their world to relate and understand them?

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

² Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. ³ 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. ⁴ Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. ⁵ Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. ⁶ Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

This is a powerful passage and offers more specifics when it comes to having an impact. Have your group list each one. You could focus here and ask which one continues to be the most important for them to remember.

Additional Questions: What does it mean to let your conversation always be full of grace? Also see [Proverbs 15:1](#). What does it mean and not mean to "make the most of every opportunity"?

The phrase "full of grace" means that their speech should be characterized by kindness, courtesy, and respect. This is important because as Christians, they are to be ambassadors of Christ and their words and actions should reflect the love and compassion of Christ. The phrase "seasoned with salt" is a metaphor that means their speech should be wise and insightful. Salt was used in ancient times as a preservative and a flavoring agent, and in the same way, the wisdom in their speech should have the power to preserve and enlighten others.

John 13:34-35 New International Version (NIV)

³⁴ "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

Our love for one another will help earn our right to be heard. How do you evaluate your reputation to others? When should that matter and not matter? Additional verse to look at in this context: [Philippians 2:12-16](#)

Choose a symbol below to indicate your reaction to what you wrote down in each verse.

Have everyone share their answers. Have them share specifically what they are referring to.

! = On it and don't want to forget it.

* = That sounds challenging.

? = Not sure what that means.

2. We heard this weekend that a powerful way of telling your "story" is simply sharing how God has changed your life and how He is at work now. Of course, when we hear that, some of us may still get nervous and unsure of what to say. Don't worry, that's why we're covering this. Now, to help us be reminded of what God has done and is doing, read Titus 3:3-8. Jot down what comes to mind about how God has been at work in your life!

Have everyone share what they answered along with the sub-question below included the two sub-questions below. Answers may be similar.

Additional verse to consider: [2 Cor. 5:17-18](#)

Titus 3:3-8 New International Version (NIV)

³At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. ⁴But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, ⁵he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, ⁶whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. ⁸This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone.

Which part of this passage catches your attention the most? *Have everyone respond.*

Is there anything else you would add to your story if someone asked? *Know that everyone won't have something to share here and that's OK.*

Thoughts to help you think through your story:

- Who was I before I met Jesus?
- What happened when Jesus found me?
- How is Jesus at work in my life now?

TAKING IT HOME

1. Looking back at this week's message and study, what's most important for you to remember?

2. Do you have any prayer requests regarding this weekend's message or for you personally?

Prayer Transition and Optional Question: *The number one fear most people have is speaking in public. Group prayer would fall into this category. If you have new people in your group, going over "Tips on Group Prayer" (below) is crucial. In most cases, it's also a good reminder for returning group members. More than once, we've had people tell us they quit a Life Group or didn't join a group because everyone was required to pray out loud in their group. We have also seen when handled correctly people move from never praying out loud in the group to actually participating regularly.*

Additional Question (An important one for new groups): *Prayer is an amazing avenue God has given us to communicate with Him and He with us, but we also come to it with a lot of different thoughts and feelings. Which of the following statements are most true for you?*

- Prefer to pray silently instead of out loud
- Find my mind wandering when praying
- Like to write out prayers
- Look forward to time in prayer
- Don't really know how to pray
- Other

TIPS ON GROUP PRAYER

Prayer is an important part of being in Life Group. Over the years, we've found that group prayer goes better when we follow three simple guidelines.

WE PRAY FOR ONE TOPIC AT A TIME - Anyone in the group is free to introduce a prayer request, either before prayer begins or during the prayer time. Once a topic is introduced, the group focuses on that request alone. Once it's covered, the group moves on to the next topic.

PRAY MORE THAN ONCE - Because the group is focusing on one topic at a time, each person is encouraged to pray several times during the prayer time for those topics they feel most led to pray about. No one is required to pray.

WE KEEP OUR PRAYERS SHORT AND SIMPLE - Group prayer goes better when members keep their prayers short and to the point. When someone prays for a long time, it's hard for the other members to stay focused and long prayers tend to intimidate those who are just learning to pray out loud in a group. No one is required to pray out loud.



**COMMUNITY
SERVICE**

IMPACT YOUR COMMUNITY

Looking to serve with your Life Group?

To check out all your options, go to NorthCoastCommunityService.org.

DESERT RAT EXPERIENCE - FEBRUARY 3-5

Attention, guys with desert toys! It's time again for the Desert Rat Experience. This is a man's weekend designed for guys who are into all kinds of off-roading and includes plenty of riding and eating. For more information or to sign up, visit northcoastchurch.com/rat.

Just Come And See

Why Sharing Your Faith Doesn't Have To Be Weird Or Intimidating

Three Key Stories:

A Man With No **ANSWER**:

John 1:35-50

A Woman With No **CREDIBILITY**:

John 4:1-42

A Man With A **STORY**:

John 9:1-41

One Common Theme:

All three told **THEIR STORY** and nothing more.

1 Peter 3:15

When It's Time To Share:

Five Things To Keep In Mind

1. Keep it **SIMPLE**.

Luke 10:21/ Matthew 18:1-3

2. Stay focused on **JESUS**.

1 Corinthians 2:1-2/ 1 Corinthians 5:12-13

3. Answer when **ASKED**.

Mark 6:11/ 1 Peter 3:15-16

4. Earn the right to be **HEARD**.

1 Peter 3:15-16/ 1 Peter 2:12/ Matthew 4:23-25

5. Leave the final results to **JESUS**.

Mark 4:1-20/ Proverbs 21:30-31