

LIFE GROUP LEADER GUIDE

For the week of April 16, 2023

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

LEADER NOTES

NEED HELP WORKING OUT AN ISSUE, TRYING TO GET EVERYONE IN YOUR GROUP TO PARTICIPATE, HAVE A DOMINATOR TAKING OVER, OR ANYTHING ELSE? If so, we'd love to help! Don't hesitate to contact your Life Group Pastor to help you process and strategize to keep your group and you moving forward. lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/staff/

HELP YOUR GROUP GET SIGNED UP FOR SERVE YOUR CITY April 29/30

- You can sign up as a Life Group or as individuals for multiple time slots on a single location or across multiple projects.
- See additional Projects suggestions at end Leader Guide
- **Sign-up Tutorial** - [Watch the video here!](#)

Search for a project by selecting your campus:

Optional: Pick up a Serve Your City T-Shirt at your campus for \$10 and wear it to your project!

VISTA

CARLSBAD

FALLBROOK

HILLSBORO

PAUMA VALLEY

RAMONA

RANCHO BERNARDO

SAN MARCOS/ESCONDIDO

TEMECULA

NATIONWIDE

Looking for a light-duty or projects suitable for children?

FOOD AND TOILETRY DRIVES

LIGHT-DUTY PROJECTS

FAMILY-FRIENDLY PROJECTS

Pray for Serve Your City:

- That we can get everyone signed up.
- For the many details and gathering of resources that need to happen over the next two weeks.
- That people will be flexible throughout the sign-up process and while they serve.
- That we can impact our community for Jesus.

Ideas for your Social this quarter

Because it's a shorter quarter this spring you may want to make your Serve Your City Project serve as your social also. Or you may want to plan your social for the week after your service project and use some of that time celebrating and looking back on your Serve Your City project(s) and how you saw God work.

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

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

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

Special Note About This Week's Sermon Topic: This weekend we heard another great message on how we as the church can love those around us in such a way that the truth of the gospel has the power to be received. Our hope is that your group can have an open discussion on the topic and focus on the point from Chris' outline that "The bridge that truth will travel over is love." If your group's discussion does begin to get off track as a leader feel free to refocus your group by reminding them the point of this week's message is not to address moral or political issues in our country or culture, but rather how we as a church can love others who will have different beliefs and lifestyles than us to help them hear the truth and power of the gospel. Here are a few additional verses you may want to add to the discussion. (Ephesians 4:29; John 13:34-35; Colossians 4:5-6; Luke 18:9-14)

QUICK REVIEW

This weekend we saw how people were celebrating the truth of God's deliverance and love in one moment but failing to see how it changes how they live in the next. Was there anything that caught your attention, stood out, challenged how you live, or confused you from the message this weekend?

MY STORY

1. Have you ever had a person in your life who spoke meaningful words to you that were hard to hear but stuck with you? If so, what did they say and why did it stick? Is it still shaping you today?

Not everyone may have a story here, and that's all right.

Alternative Question: *(For someone who may not have a story) How do you think you would respond to someone who told you something meaningful that you needed to hear even if it was hard?*

2. Have you ever been in a situation where you felt out of place with the rest of the people there, like at a party, work, or church, for example? What would have helped you feel more comfortable in that situation?

The goal of this question is to help us be able to see how others experience awkward or uncomfortable situations and to move toward being compassionate to those around us.

DIGGING DEEPER

1. Jesus taught truth that can be difficult to accept at times. The truth of God's Word is something that points us to the realization that He wants a relationship with us not just knowledge of information about Him. We can spend time celebrating and appreciating God's love for us one moment, only to forget that it changes our lives and actions the next.

As you read through the following lessons that Jesus taught, write down in your own words what you think Jesus is trying to teach us.

Most people will probably have one-sentence answers. Compile the group's collective thoughts to get a more full picture together about what the passages are teaching.

Luke 10:25-37 New International Version (NIV)

²⁵ On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

²⁶ "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?" ²⁷ He answered, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" ²⁸ "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live." ²⁹ But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" ³⁰ In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. ³¹ A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. ³² So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. ³⁴ He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'" ³⁶ "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" ³⁷ The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

Matthew 7:24-27 New International Version (NIV)

²⁴ "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. ²⁶ But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

Oftentimes, we read this passage and think it says we are to build our lives on Jesus, which is good, but not Jesus' point. Instead, what it is actually telling us is to do the things He teaches us to do, even when things get difficult.

Of the two passages, was there one that you most needed to hear? Why?

This allows our group to continue to process both Scriptures while hearing from our others as to why that passage was significant to them.

If a close friend or family member had to identify you as one of the characters in the passage you chose, which would they choose? Why?

We all have blind spots. By trying to see through a friend's eyes, we may be able to get an idea of what those who know us best see in our own lives by how we live.

Think of a loose acquaintance, someone whom you know from work or the neighborhood but haven't really spent much time with. If that person had to identify you as a character in the passage, which would they choose? Why?

Just like the above question, this allows us to think from a perspective of how our actions, conversations and overall demeanors are perceived from an outsider's eyes. Would someone who does not know us well be able to see we are living for Christ and loving others, or is there nothing in our lives to point to as evidence to Him?

2. Chris reminded us this weekend that the truth of God's Word is already going to be difficult for us to hear and so we ought to be a community of believers who love well. This reflection of His love invited us and also invites others into God's family. Let's look at some family traits we ought to have as we are inviting the broken, lost and hurting, of which we all once were.

Additional Verses: 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

As you read 1 John 4:7-12 and 1 Peter 4:7-11 circle the phrases that teach us about what love is. What is the reason why we should love others based on the phrases you circled above?

1 John 4:7-12 New International Version (NIV)

⁷ Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹ This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. ¹⁰ This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹ Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹² No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

1 Peter 4:7-11 New International Version (NIV)

⁷The end of all things is near. Therefore be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray. ⁸Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. ⁹Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. ¹⁰Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. ¹¹If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

This can help us get a deeper understanding of why people think we should act a certain way. Is it to try and please God, or is it out of awe for His love for us and a desire to glorify Him? We know because of those passages that God loves us, so the motivation shouldn't be to earn it but to display it.

How would you distinguish the difference between someone who is a nice person versus someone who is a loving person?

Use the whole group on this one. Most will have had different experiences around when they have experienced a nice person versus a loving one, and with that comes a wide variety of examples that may be given. Make sure to leave room for people to wrestle with what it means for their lives and to allow the Holy Spirit to lead them, not another person to tell them how they must love someone.

Additional Verses: [Matthew 7:6](#), [Matthew 10:14](#), [Matthew 5:16](#), [James 1:27](#)

Examples: A nice person holds the door open for you or says hi at church. Maybe even lets you go in front of them in a busy grocery store checkout. A loving person may invite you over for dinner and hears about your life, or stops what they are doing to make time for you.

This weekend, what are some ways you and your group could see, connect with, and show the love of Christ to the lonely, hurting or new person who walks on your campus?

Some of us may be in online groups or only attend online, and that's all right. The goal is to think through how we as a community can reflect not just the truth of God's Word, but also the character of His love.

Memorization Option: If you would like to work on memorizing 1 John 4:19 as a reminder of why we love others, do it!

"We love because He first loved us." 1 John 4:19

TAKING IT HOME

Sometimes the best thing we can do for others is to pray for them. Set aside a moment this week to ask God to show His love to someone who randomly crosses your path. Your prayer could look as simple as this. "God would you please show your love to ____ in a way they can feel it and know it's You today."

PRAYER REQUESTS



GIVE and make Serve Your City possible! This year, 2023, each participating adult is encouraged to GIVE \$23. Any amount is appreciated and 100% of this special offering goes to fund these projects and materials. Scan the QR code or go to northcoastchurch.com.



Serve Your City Project Sign-up Guide

Reminder, the sooner you sign up, the higher likelihood that your group can serve together on a project!

Interested in serving outdoors with other people? Here are some great projects to consider:

- [Agua Hedionda Discovery Center & Lagoon](#) (Carlsbad)
- [REINS - Therapeutic Horsemanship Program](#) (Fallbrook)
- [D'Vine Path](#) (Fallbrook)
- [Brenge Terrace Park](#) (Vista)
- [Rancho Corrido Campground](#) (Pauma Valley)
- [Ramona High School](#) (Ramona)
- [Bernardo Heights Middle School](#)
- [Mayflower Dog Park](#) or [Rod McCloud Park](#) (Escondido)
- [Rising Tide Ranch](#) (Vista)
- [Ivey Ranch Park](#) (Oceanside)
- [Operation Hope](#) (Vista)

Prefer to work with a small group or do something at your home?

- [Craft, Thank You Cards, Prayer Walk](#) (Rancho Bernardo)
- [Cleaning and Organizing Boys n Girls Club](#) (Oceanside)
- [Blessing Bags for Seniors](#)
- [Baby Shower for a New Mom](#)
- [Create Laundry Kits](#)
- [Creek, Trail or Park Clean Up](#)
- [Sew a Sundress for Girls in Developing Countries](#)

Search by category:

- [Family Friendly](#)
- [Search Projects by Campus](#)
- [Virtual Projects](#)
- [Serve on a Welcome Team](#)

Find drives at every campus that are great for groups or individuals!

- [Food Drive](#)
- [Blood Drive](#)
- [Toiletry Kit Drive](#)

Why Church Is A Dirty Word

The problems with the Church back then:

John 7:1-36

Real **LOVE** has always been hard to **HEAR**
and hard to **ACCEPT**.

Real **TRUTH** has always been polluted by
PUBLIC opinion and hard to speak **PUBLICLY**.

The **ACTIONS** in the Church have been the
greatest **OBSTACLES** to God using His **CHURCH**.

What the Church has to be now:

Real love has to be **SHOWN** for it to be **ACCEPTED**.

Real truth has to come from **GOD**, not **CULTURE**.

The bridge that **TRUTH** will travel over is **LOVE**.

We are the Church:

We are both the **LOVE** and **TRUTH** of Jesus.

We are **PLAN A**, and there is no **PLAN B**.