



EST. **NORTHVIEW** 1980
COMMUNITY CHURCH

Community Group Leaders' Guide: Nov 4/5, 2023

This guide is designed to help you be and become “deeply rooted followers of Jesus” by contributing to increasingly authentic and loving relationships with one another and with God.

You will find that it's not possible to fully cover each of the sections (Gather, Grow, and Go) in this guide. Prayerfully consider how much from each would be right for your group week to week.

GATHER

Deeply rooted through a *community based context*. This section is meant to heighten your awareness of God's presence in your time together, and give one another space to talk about what's really going on in life.

- Pray. Thoughtfully acknowledge God's presence in the room. Commit your time together to him.
Leaders note: This is a helpful way to start an organized discussion and calibrate everyone to this essential reality.
- What practical needs should everyone know about? What can we do as a group to help?
- What decisions are you facing? Is there any input you'd like from us as a group?
- What are you praying about right now? How can we as a group join you in prayer?
- Does anyone have a story of where you've seen God at work? Is there something we can join you in celebrating?

Leaders note: This could be a way to follow up with the application plans from a previous group discussion.

****We'd love to share and celebrate stories from our Community Groups to honour God and encourage one another! (Please get permission and pass them on to us as regularly as possible.)****

GROW

Deeply rooted through *biblically based content*. This section is meant to overlap with the current weekend teaching at your Northview campus and position you, as a group, to be formed by studying Scripture.

- Pray - acknowledge God's presence, and ask for his help to hear what he's saying.
- Revisit the weekend sermon. Is there something the Holy Spirit highlighted for you?

Leaders note: *discussing the sermon people heard may take considerable time.*

Don't feel pressure to rush through this guide and move on.

- Facilitate a guided reflection on Scripture. **The primary text from the weekend sermon was John 14:1-14.**

Leaders note: *There's always more in the text than we'll be able to put into a guide.*

We've chosen a few items to draw your attention to.

- **Step 1: Read The Text**

Familiarize yourself with the section of verses.

- **Step 2: Understand Their Story**

Ask *observation questions* to understand what the author is communicating to the original audience.

- Icebreaker: Jesus describes several significant "big picture" realities in this passage that are beyond the scope of the immediate events that will take place over the next hours of his life. Share a bit from your life to get a feel for this dynamic in the text (while also helping others get to know you).
 - Describe a time where you were in a place that had an extraordinary viewpoint.
(Could be anything from the view from a summit of a hike, to a sunset on a vacation, to the top of a tall building in a city.)
- Try to imagine what's happening in this scene through these observations.

You will hopefully find these simple to answer. They are here to a) highlight some key details that contribute to the questions in the later steps ahead, and/or b) help you look deeper at something that might be easy to miss.

 - What does Jesus say is true about himself in verses 6 and 9?
 - ***He's "the way". (v.6)***
 - ***He's "the truth". (v.6)***
 - ***He's "the life". (v.6)***
 - ***No one comes to the Father except through him. (v.6)***
 - ***Whoever has seen Jesus has seen the Father. He's equal with God! (v.9)***
 - What does Jesus say *will* be true about the disciples in verses 3, 12-14?
 - ***Jesus will take them to a place he's prepared (v.3)***
 - ***Their belief will lead to doing the same works as Jesus (v.12)***
 - ***Their belief will lead to doing greater works than Jesus (v.12)***
 - ***Whatever they ask in his name he will do (v.13-14)***
 - Keep these observations in mind as you proceed to the next 2 steps.

- **Step 3: Connect To God's Story**

Ask questions to understand how this text fits in the larger gospel story.

- Look up Revelation 21:1-4 in connection with John 14:1-3. What characterizes the future “place” Jesus is preparing? How does the scene in Revelation expand on the one from John’s gospel?
 - **History is heading towards a “new heaven and new earth” (21:1)**
 - **The “Holy City” comes down from heaven (21:2)**
 - **In both texts, we see that where God is, we too will be! God will dwell with us. (21:3)**
 - **There will be a new order of things: no more death, mourning, crying, or pain (21:4)**

Leaders note: the picture of what God is preparing is often bigger than we think or imagine. The wider witness of Scripture paints a more comprehensive idea of the future hope. But aside from the various descriptions of “heaven” and the “new creation” the central idea is that God himself will truly and fully be “with us”.

- As noted in Step 2 above, the identity of Jesus is described vividly in John 14.
 - Look up Acts 4:8-12. How does what Jesus says in John 14:6 connect to what the early church preaches?
 - **As Jesus said, there’s no other way to the Father. And, one of the first “sermons” after Jesus’ departure indicates that there’s “no other name” and no other way to be saved.**

Leaders note: Despite what some say (“there’s multiple ways to get to heaven”, etc) the unified witness of Scripture is that there’s no other viable option than Jesus. You could also ask if anyone has any other texts that come to mind along these lines.

- Check out Colossians 2:9. How does what Paul says connect to what Jesus says in John 14:9?

- **Jesus was fully man, but not just man. He is fully God!**

Leaders note: Despite what critics say (“Jesus never claimed to be God”, etc), the unified witness of Scripture is that Jesus and the Father are one! You could also ask if anyone has any other texts that come to mind along these lines.

○ Step 4: Apply To Our Story

Ask questions to discern what God is telling us to do with the help of the Holy Spirit.

- Jesus doesn’t want his disciples’ hearts to be troubled, despite the events that have unfolded and will eventually unfold in later chapters. Reflect further on John 14:1-3 and the future hope we have.
 - In light of what you may be burdened by today, how do Jesus’ words in 14:1-3 comfort you? Is there someone you could comfort with future hope this week?
- Reflect further on the “exclusivity” of Jesus’ claims in John 14:6.
 - How does this land in our “inclusive” culture? Do you find the idea of “one truth” or “one way to God” an easy thing for people to accept? Why or why not?
 - How does this concept land for you personally as you think about or interact with those who believe something different than you about God/faith/life/Jesus? (Does it cause you to wrestle? Does it motivate you to do something different this week? etc)
- There isn’t space to enter a full “theology of prayer” and “greater works” from John 14:12-14, but for this week consider Jesus’ concern for the glory of the Father (14:13)
 - What types of answered prayers have you seen that have increased your belief in God?
 - Ever forget to honour or thank God amidst wanting him to do something? Even after he’s done it, how can we give him “glory” more authentically?
 - Why / how do we “ask” in “Jesus’ name practically?”¹

Leaders note: After discussing this, try it as a group in the “GO” section below!

¹ “Praying “in Jesus’ name” does not refer to some magic formula added to the end of a prayer. It means to pray in keeping with his character and concerns and, indeed, in union with him. The disciples, through their union with Christ, are taken up into his agenda. This agenda, as throughout his ministry, is to bring glory to the Father (v. 13).”

GO

Deeply rooted through *culturally relevant applications*. This section is meant to prompt practices that bring the life of God's kingdom into us and out to others.

- Pray for your group's **5x5x5** lists!
Leaders note: This is something that we're putting deliberately at the top here. Every time. If you don't know what these are, "5x5x5 cards" are available at each campus on the weekend, or at <https://northview.org/5x5x5/>)
- Is there something that seems especially relevant for us to do personally based on our discussion?
Leaders note: This is something that may overlap with the "Apply To Our Story" step in the "GROW" section above, but here it is meant to help narrow down a specific thing that people actually plan to commit to doing.
- Is there something we as a group should plan to do together based on our discussion?
Leaders note: Depending on the applications you've discussed in the "GROW" section, there could be opportunities to serve others as a group.
- Is there something we as a group should plan to do to spend time with someone who doesn't yet follow Jesus?