



## Community Group Leaders' Guide: March 2/3, 2024

This guide is designed to help you and your group be **deeply rooted followers of Jesus**.

**Leaders note: Feel free to take different approaches week to week.**

**Take 10-15 minutes and map out an approach for your next meeting in advance.**

**Here's a few examples:**

### **1 - BALANCE GATHER + GROW + GO.**

Our hope is that by the end of each semester, you've given attention to all 3 discipleship categories: *Gather*, *Grow*, and *Go*. But you won't be able to do the entirety of each of the 3 sections in 1 meeting. If you want a balanced approach in this meeting, select one or two items from the Gather and Go section in advance, and condense the Grow section (perhaps skip the sermon recap, and prioritize a few things from each step). You can also choose a different order (for example, maybe it works better to start with "grow" and end with "gather" + "go").

### **2 - EMPHASIZE BIBLE STUDY.**

If you want this meeting to have a higher "study" feel, skip the "gather" section, and work through the "grow" section". Then, at minimum, take one thing from the "go" section: *prayer for the lost*.

### **3 - EMPHASIZE SHARING LIFE.**

If you want this meeting to have a higher "relational" feel, work your way through the "gather" section, and leave the "grow" section for this week. But try, at minimum, to take *prayer for the lost* from the "go" section.

**You don't have to spend hours preparing like a scholar that "teaches".**

**You can spend your week a) walking with God to lead out of the overflow of that relationship, and b) taking 15 minutes familiarizing yourself with this guide to be a shepherd that "cares" and "facilitates".**

# GATHER

**Deeply rooted by sharing life seeking the presence of God.**

This community based context can 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.

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- Pray. Thoughtfully acknowledge God's presence in the room. Commit your time together to him.  
**Start here. This is an important way to start an organized discussion and calibrate everyone to this 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?

**This can be a way to revisit application plans or prayers from a previous group meeting.**

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

# GROW

**Deeply rooted by being formed through the word of God.**

This biblically based content overlaps with the current weekend teaching at your Northview campus and positions you, as a group, to be shaped by studying Scripture.

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- **Pray.** Acknowledge God's presence, and ask for his help to hear what he's saying.  
**Leaders note: you could ask another person to do this. A sample prayer: "Father, thank you for this time we have. We acknowledge that you are here with us and we ask for your help to hear what you're saying through your word by your Spirit. We commit our time to you for your glory and our good. Amen."**
- **Share a takeaway from the weekend sermon.** Is there something the Holy Spirit highlighted for you?  
**Leaders note: Be sensitive to time by indicating upfront if you plan to move through the other sections of the guide below. It might be helpful to say something like: "we want to start by hearing one thing God highlighted for you in the message, and then in a few minutes we'll move into a short study of the Scripture passage the speaker used."**
- **Facilitate a guided reflection on Scripture.** The text from this past weekend was **John 19:16b-30**

## Start with an "Icebreaker"

In this passage, Jesus faces the worst suffering any human has ever had to endure. In the following sections, we will explore the significance of his death and what his experiences must have been like. For now, share from your life to get a feel for this dynamic in the text (while also helping others get to know one another).

**Icebreaker question: Have you ever known someone who suffered well? What were the qualities or behaviours you admired most as you observed?** (Perhaps someone who experienced a crisis, but displayed a genuine faith, or a family member who struggled with a terminal illness but trusted God to the very end.)

## Step 1: Read The Text

Familiarize yourself with this section of verses.

**This week it may be good to be extra sensitive in the pace and tone in reading, as we arrive at the darkest moment of Jesus' life.**

## Step 2: Understand Their Story

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

**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 did Pilate have written on an inscription to put above Jesus on the cross in 19:19?

- **“Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews”.**
- What languages did Pilate write this inscription in?
  - **Aramaic, Greek, Latin**
- In a moment unique to this account of Jesus’ final moments, Jesus cares for his mother. How does he do this according to 19:25-27?
  - **He instructs “the disciple he loved” (John) to look after Mary as if she was his own mom and she goes to live with him.**
- Twice in this section of verses, John tells us that Scripture was “fulfilled”. Which verses indicate this and in what way was Scripture fulfilled?
  - **V.24 “They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.” This is a direct quote from Psalm 22:18, which will be looked at further in the next section.**
  - **V.28 “I thirst”. This is an allusion to Psalm 69:21, which we will look at further in the next section.**

Keep these observations in mind as you proceed through step 3.

### Step 3: Connect To God’s Story

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

**We’ve selected a few connections that are here to a) expand on the content of the passage, and/or b) clarify the content of the passage.**

- “...this was to fulfill the scripture...”
  - 19:24 cites Psalm 22:18. What similarities do you see from Psalm 22 and the crucifixion event?
    - **The full context of Psalm 22 expresses the type of anguish Jesus must have been experiencing. 22:1 - forsaken; 22:7-8 - being mocked; and especially 22:16-18 in connection with John 19 - being pierced, on display for others to see, having his clothes divided up.**
  - 19:28 connected to Psalm 69:21. Read Psalm 69:16-21. Who is the Psalmist speaking to? What is he experiencing?
    - **Addressing God, the Psalmist, like Jesus in John 19, is in anguish because of his enemies.**

**Leaders note: even in the darkest moment, where it may have looked and felt like God was absent, these events were not outside his knowledge or control.**

- “...they crucified him...” The significance of this moment cannot be overstated. Here’s a few connections to illuminate this further.
  - Go back to both John 3:14-15 and 12:31-33. How did Jesus explain what would happen to him in advance? What does he hope people will do in response?
    - **He’d be lifted up.**
    - **He’d draw all people to himself.**

- **He does this so that people may look, believe, and receive eternal life.**

**The King of the Jews, really is the King - and Saviour - of the whole world. Perhaps all the languages represented on display point towards this fact (19:20)!**

- "...it is finished..." Many New Testament texts describe the profound reality of what Jesus accomplished. What does Romans 5:1 and Hebrews 10:10 add to your understanding of this scene in John?
- **Paul says we've been given peace with God in Romans 5!**
- **Hebrews describes how we've been made holy by this one sacrifice, once for all!**

Take these reflections with you into Step 4 below.

### **Step 4: Apply To Our Story**

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

- As Easter approaches, is there something you could do to reflect on and savour the cross afresh this year?
  - Alternatively, what things commonly keep us from amazement?
  - What helps you keep the wonder and appreciation alive year after year?
- As we read at the moment of Jesus' imminent death, he alludes to Psalm 69:21. This Psalm voices the laments of a man suffering even though he is righteous. Sometimes, we experience suffering, and there seems to be no rhyme or reason, and that can feel disorienting. Perhaps you are suffering or know someone who is suffering, and yet there seems to be no reason behind it. Reflect on the idea of "lament".
  - Is there an area of suffering you or someone close to you is experiencing?
  - What would it look like to bring your pain to God in prayer by first lamenting with honesty (as Jesus does in his suffering) and then finding hope in one who hung on the cross?

# GO

## Deeply rooted by participating in the mission of God.

These culturally relevant applications are meant, with the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, to prompt actions that bring the life of God's kingdom into us and out to others.

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- Pray for the "lost" in your sphere of influence. Use the **5x5x5 cards** as a tool.  
**Leaders note: This is something that we're putting deliberately at the top here. Every time. ("5x5x5 cards" are available at each campus on the weekend.)**
- 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. Or, perhaps to gather for worship, prayer, and/or equipping together.**
- Is there something we as a group should plan to do to spend time with someone who doesn't yet follow Jesus? Or to make/strengthen connections with our neighbours?

**\*Opportunity from our Outreach team:** Diana Madden is head of the Brader Elementary PAC and would love Northview to help with Bradner May Day. It might be a great opportunity for a few community groups to help out at. *From Diana: If you haven't heard of it before, we're celebrating the annual 104th event on Saturday, May 25, 2024... The call is to be in community, reach the next generation, and marketplace. Our event can offer an opportunity for all of that and I would love for nothing more than to be a part of God's work.*

If you'd like to peruse and better understand what volunteering is all about, feel free to check out the links below and contact our Local Outreach Coordinator, Connor, directly to get involved at [cbelsher@northview.org](mailto:cbelsher@northview.org)

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