



EST. **NORTHVIEW** 1980
COMMUNITY CHURCH

Community Group Leaders' Guide: Nov 25/26, 2023

****NOTE: This is the FINAL Group Guide of 2023. We'll be resuming our weekly resource in January!****

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.

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..
- 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?

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?
- Facilitate a guided reflection on Scripture. **The primary text from the weekend sermon was John 15:18 - 16:4a.**

- **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:** This passage contrasts the identity of the disciples with the identity of “the world”. We’ll discuss what this means further in the steps below, but for now, share from your life to get a feel for this dynamic in the text (while also helping others get to know you).
 - Describe a time you felt “out of place” or like you didn’t belong.
(A sports fan in the wrong arena? Traveling to a foreign country? Visiting your in-laws for the first time?)
- Try to imagine what’s happening in this scene through these observations.
 - 15:18-25 contrasts the identity of the disciples with the identity of the world. What things describe...
 - ...the world?
 - ...Jesus’ followers?
 - What does Jesus promise the Holy Spirit will do in 15:26?
 - What are Jesus’ motives in telling his disciples these things?
 - 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 Mark 4:1-20, paying close attention to the explanation Jesus gives in Mark 4:16-17. How does this text overlap with what Jesus says in John 16:1-4a?
- John 15:22-24 at first glance may seem somewhat difficult to understand. How do other - texts expand on and/or clarify what Jesus is saying?
 - What does Ephesians 2:1-3 tell us about our state before God ‘made us alive with Christ’ (v 5)?
 - Romans 1:18-21?
- What you’ve discussed here can shape your thinking in step 4.

○ Step 4: Apply To Our Story

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

- What would you consider to be persecution (15:20) in our Canadian context? In what way do you think Christians are “hated” (15:18)?
 - Would you use the word “persecuted” or “hated” for anything you’ve ever experienced because you’re a follower of Jesus?
- Based on your discussion thus far, or based on the topic generally, are you anxious or fearful about opposition from the world?
 - Jesus explains some hard truths and shapes the disciples’ expectations for what’s ahead. What words of his do you find comforting or encouraging in this passage (15:18-16:4a)?

- Is there a way in which Jesus' promises in this text stir you to pray?
- How could these help you prepare yourself or others for potential experiences that have not yet happened, or may get worse if they're already happening?

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!
- Is there something that seems especially relevant for us to do personally based on our discussion?
- Is there something we as a group should plan to do together based on our discussion?
- Is there something we as a group should plan to do to spend time with someone who doesn't yet follow Jesus?

Have a very merry Christmas - full of hope, peace, and joy in Jesus!

(We hope to see you - and any guests you invite - on Christmas Eve!)

- Pastor Jesse