



Community Group Guide: Oct 7/8, 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.

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 (which paused the Gospel of John series for a special “Global Focus Weekend”). Is there something the Holy Spirit highlighted for you?
- Engage with a guided reflection on Scripture. **The primary text from the weekend sermon was Matthew 25:14-30.**

- **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.

- Describe a time you attempted something (perhaps something “risky”) without a guaranteed outcome. You could tell a story where that choice led to something good or to something disappointing. (Could be anything from asking someone out on a date to attempting wakeboarding.)
- Quick hit observation questions:
 - What is this parable illustrating? Compare 25:14 to the 25:1 and 25:13.
 - What terms does the master use to describe the first two servants in v.21 and v.23?
 - What terms does he use to describe the third in v.26?
 - What reason does the third servant give for his actions in v.25?
- Try and imagine the weight of the “stakes” - both good and bad - for managing the Master’s money¹ here.
 - What results from proper use?
 - What results from improper use?

○ Step 3: Connect To His Story

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

- Jesus’ words in 25:29 are very similar to something he said previously in Matthew’s gospel. Look up Matthew 13:1-23.
 - In combination with the parable from Matthew 25:14-30, reflect on how these parables shape our perspective of discipleship.
 - What characterizes faithful discipleship?
 - What factors contribute to inauthentic discipleship?
- Christians have often struggled with the relationship between “faith” and “works” when it comes to salvation. The “Parable of the Talents” may have surfaced that tension. Several New Testament texts contribute to a biblical perspective on this. One to consider this week is Ephesians 2:4-10.
 - What does this tell us about how people become “saved”?
 - What does this tell us about what saved people do?
- All of this taken together, how should we view “good works” as Christians?

○ Step 4: Apply To Our Story

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

- Consider your relationship with Jesus compared to the servants with their master in this parable.
 - Reflect on what you have been given by God. What are the last things you’d be willing to give up for his Kingdom/mission? If comfortable, share these things and share “why” the discomfort is there for you.
 - Think of those you know that don’t know you’re a Christian currently. What makes us afraid to “hide” or “bury” what we have from God (perhaps our personal testimony)?
 - What would motivate or empower us to “double” what the master has given us?
 - Is there something that you’ve recently sensed the Lord is calling you to invest in more thoroughly for his glory? Or give up for his kingdom? Or pursue more intentionally for his mission?

¹ Most scholars believe that just 1 “talent” was an exceedingly large sum of money. Perhaps 15-20 years worth of annual minimum wage (in today’s terms, one talent might reasonably be estimated at \$670,000 based on the minimum wage in B.C. right now). The point being: the master is extremely wealthy and has entrusted a gigantic sum to each servant.

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!
Note from the Discipleship Team: 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?
- 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?