



## Community Group Guide: Nov 18/19, 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. Is there something the Holy Spirit highlighted for you?
- Engage a guided reflection on Scripture. **The primary text from the weekend sermon was John 15:1-17.**

- **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:** John 15 records the last of seven “I AM” statements of Jesus in John’s gospel with “I am the true vine” (John 15:1). We’ll discuss what this means further in step 3, 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 where the newer version of something you have was far superior - a huge upgrade - to the previous version and/or maybe replacing something that didn’t work as well as it could be. (A new vehicle with better fuel economy?)
    - (With Christmas coming, perhaps you’re hoping for a “new” thing to replace a faulty, outdated, or insufficient old thing - or perhaps last Christmas you got such a new thing as a gift! A new phone with a better camera? New socks that don’t have holes?)
- Try to imagine what’s happening in this scene through these observations.
  - The idea of “bearing fruit” is central to this passage.
    - What does Jesus say the source of fruit is? (15:1-5)
    - What happens to branches that don’t bear fruit? (15:2, 15:6)
    - What happens when branches do bear fruit? (15:2, 15:8)
  - Observe Jesus’ motives in this passage. What are they in...
    - ...15:11?
    - ...15:17?
  - 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.

- The imagery of the “Vine” has many Old Testament connections.
  - Look up Isaiah 5:3-7 and Jeremiah 2:21.
    - Who are these verses towards?
    - What similar language from John 15:1 is used?
    - What is different from these verses in comparison to what Jesus says about himself in John 15?
- Look up 1 John 4:13-21. How does John’s writing expand on or clarify what Jesus is saying in John 15:1-17?
- 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 “fruit” do you think God currently wants to produce in your personal life and/or sphere of influence?
- How does the knowledge that Jesus produces the fruit help you as you consider your weaknesses?
- Is there anything from this text that has encouraged you to “remain” or “abide” in Jesus with increased intentionality this week?
- Loving others is a way we abide (15:10, 12, 17). But to do this, we must live in community with others.
  - How has the repeated call to love one another the past several weeks been used by God in your relationships?

- Where are you struggling with this? What ways could you pray “in Jesus’ name” (15:7, 16) - a way that is aligned with what God desires (as expressed in his word) - to see new fruit?

## 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?

***Note from the Discipleship Team:***

***\*\*CHRISTMAS AT NORTHVIEW\*\* - With Christmas rapidly approaching, our team has rallied around several projects to serve our city: Christmas Hampers, and Toy Drive! These are ideally suited to do with your Community Group! Check out [northview.org/Christmas/](http://northview.org/Christmas/) for more information.***

- Is there something we as a group should plan to do to spend time with someone who doesn’t yet follow Jesus?