



Community Group Guide: January 13/14, 2024

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

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.
 - 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 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.

- **Pray.** Acknowledge God's presence, and ask for his help to hear what he's saying.
- **Share a takeaway from the weekend sermon.** Is there something the Holy Spirit highlighted for you?
Unlike most weeks, most of the direct connections to the message this week are in the "Go" section.
- **Facilitate a guided reflection on Scripture.** The text this week is the one used in the January 6/7 sermon, as we anticipate returning to our "Gospel of John" series next weekend: **John 17:1-19.**

Start with an "Icebreaker"

In this passage we get a unique window into the prayer of Jesus for his disciples.

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 one another).

Icebreaker Question: Was there a time someone prayed for you and it left an unforgettable mark on your life?

- *(For example: It could have been because of "who" it was, "how" the prayer built your faith, encouraged you, or was answered by God later, etc.)*

Step 1: Read The Text

Familiarize yourself with this section of verses.

Step 2: Understand Their Story

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

- How does Jesus define eternal life? And, who receives it? (See 17:1-5)
- *What* does Jesus ask for himself? And what does this text indicate as to *why*? (17:1-5)
- *What* does Jesus ask for his disciples? And what does this text indicate as to *why*? (17:6-19)
- 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.

- "This is eternal life..." - What Jesus describes and provides goes beyond a "location people go after they die". How does the wider witness of Scripture reinforce this? Look up Revelation 21:2-4 and compare with the promise of Jeremiah 31:33-34 and list how "eternal life" is further described.

- "Keep them" - Jesus' prayer acknowledges that his followers will be in the world, amidst the presence of the "evil one". Look up Ephesians 6:10-18. What are Paul's instructions that connect to these realities?
- What you've discussed above 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 do you think the difference is between knowing "about God" and "knowing God"?
 - What things do you do (or should you do) to experience and enjoy the type of union with God that this prayer describes?
- Is there a way in which Jesus' prayer for you is something others can pray for you today?
 - Facing a challenge that is testing your faith? Perhaps you could be prayed for along the lines of God "keeping you" in close union with himself and away from the schemes of the evil one.
 - Struggling with an area of sin or temptation that you're open to sharing? Perhaps you could be prayed for along the lines of God "sanctifying you" in his truth.
 - Seen God at work in your life through him keeping or sanctifying you? Perhaps there are prayers of thankfulness to be prayed, too!

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.

- Pray for the "lost" in your sphere of influence. Use the **5x5x5 cards** as a tool.
- What would this practically look like to seek and "pray for the peace of our city"? Reflect and pray.
Note from Discipleship Team: This connects to a takeaway from the weekend message and the Jeremiah 29:7 reference.
- 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?
Consider some upcoming Northview events that might be especially helpful to attend as a group!
 - **Parent Discipleship Night** on January 25: "How To Build Your Kids' Faith" - Register at northview.org
 - **Grief Service** on January 28.
 - Synopsis: "There are various kinds of grief, and for many, this burden is carried in silence. Some have felt the pain of loss for many years. Northview Downes Road is hosting an event for individuals and families who are navigating the challenges of grieving the loss of a loved one, experiencing infertility and for those who have lost a child of any age, including miscarriage, abortion, stillbirth, and infant loss."
 - **Short-Term Mission Trip?** Have you considered participating in short-term missions? Plans are underway for a trip this summer! Join us as we travel to South Asia alongside our Northview-supported global workers, with opportunities to share the Good News, work with children in education programs, take part in leadership development, and encourage young adults and leaders who are learning and serving there. Go to northview.org/short-term-trips to learn more. Application deadline is January 31, 2024. For more info or questions, email globalmissions@northview.org

- 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?

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