



## Community Group Leaders' Guide: January 27/28, 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.

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- **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?
- **Facilitate a guided reflection on Scripture.** The text from this past weekend was **John 17:20-26**.

### Start with an "Icebreaker"

In this passage we get a unique window into the prayer of Jesus which emphasizes "oneness".

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: Who in your family would you say you are the most "like" in terms of personality and preferences?**

- *(For example: Maybe you're more like your dad (or his side of family) - you like the same things, have the same mannerisms, sense of humour etc. Maybe you and a sibling are basically twins.)*

### 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.

- We're looking at the end of Jesus' prayer in this chapter. According to 17:20, who is he praying for?
- Jesus repeatedly expresses the desire "that they may be one". 17:21 and 17:23 indicate *why* he desires this. Look for the "so that" statements. What do you see?
- What things does Jesus want his disciples to experience in regards to...
  - His "glory"? (17:24?)
  - His "love"? (17:26)
- 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.

- "...that they may become perfectly one..." - What Jesus prays for becomes true as people believe in him and come to experience life *in* him. People who share life in God become God's family and this

new identity creates specific activity. For example, how does Ephesians 4:1-6 describe who we are and what we're to do?

- If Ephesians 4 further describes some of what we ought to be united in, Ephesians 5:1-11 offers some helpful biblical categories for what we ought *not* to attach ourselves to. What types of things are we to have “nothing to do with”?
- “...that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them ” - Look up Galatians 2:20. How does Paul further describe what the Christian life looks like as a result of the Father answering Jesus’ prayer?
- 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.

- The idea of “unity” can be difficult to navigate. Jesus wants his followers to be “perfectly one”, but as we’ve seen above, there are things this *does mean* and also things this *does not mean*.
  - How do we know which things to be unified in and which not? Is there something you’re currently noticing in church or culture we should not attach ourselves to?
  - Is there a situation in your life where God might want you to fight for unity? How would you do that?
- It is clear that when we become believers, we can say we are now *in Jesus* and Jesus is *in us*. This is a glorious truth, perhaps the reason why Jesus says “I have given them the glory that you gave me” (v.22).
  - How has the reality of Christ being in you changed how you live? (Where would you be today if this were not true?)
  - Remember, the answers to Jesus prayer have a “mission” element to them - he wants the world to know who he is! Is there someone who needs hear your first-hand testimony of what God has done to see the glory and love of the Father?
  - You can also use these answers to fuel prayers of thankfulness and encourage one another in your group time.

# 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.
- What would this practically look like to seek and "pray for the peace of our city"? Reflect and pray.
- 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!

- **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](https://northview.org/short-term-trips) to learn more. Application deadline is January 31, 2024. For more info or questions, email [globalmissions@northview.org](mailto: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?