



EST. **NORTHVIEW** 1980
COMMUNITY CHURCH

Community Group Leaders' Guide – May 4/5, 2024

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

Leaders note: Feel free to take different approaches week to week.

Take 10-15 minutes and map out an approach for your next meeting in advance.

Here's a few examples:

APPROACH #1 - BALANCE GATHER + GROW + GO.

Our hope is that by the end of each semester, you've given attention to all 3 discipleship categories: *Gather*, *Grow*, and *Go*. But you won't be able to do the entirety of each of the 3 sections in 1 meeting. If you want a balanced approach in this meeting, select one or two items from the Gather and Go section in advance, and condense the Grow section (perhaps skip the sermon recap, and prioritize a few things from each step). You can also choose a different order (for example, maybe it works better to start with "grow" and end with "gather" + "go").

APPROACH #2 - EMPHASIZE BIBLE STUDY.

If you want this meeting to have a higher "study" feel, skip the "gather" section, and work through the "grow" section". Then, at minimum, take one thing from the "go" section: *prayer for the lost*.

APPROACH #3 - EMPHASIZE SHARING LIFE.

If you want this meeting to have a higher "relational" feel, work your way through the "gather" section, and leave the "grow" section for this week. But try, at minimum, to take *prayer for the lost* from the "go" section.

You don't have to spend hours preparing like a scholar that "teaches".

You can spend your week a) walking with God to lead out of the overflow of that relationship, and b) taking 15 minutes familiarizing yourself with this guide to be a shepherd that "cares" and "facilitates".

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.

- Pray. Thoughtfully acknowledge God's presence in the room. Commit your time together to him.
Start here. This is an important way to start an organized discussion and calibrate everyone to this reality.
- 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?

This can be a way to revisit application plans or prayers from a previous group meeting.

**We'd love to share and celebrate stories from our Community Groups to honour God and encourage one another!
(Please get permission to pass them on to us as regularly as possible.)**

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.
Leaders note: you could ask another person to do this. A sample prayer: "Father, thank you for this time we have. We acknowledge that you are here with us and we ask for your help to hear what you're saying through your word by your Spirit. We commit our time to you for your glory and our good. Amen."
- **Share a takeaway from the weekend sermon.** Is there something the Holy Spirit highlighted for you?
Leaders note: Be sensitive to time by indicating upfront if you plan to move through the other sections of the guide below. It might be helpful to say something like: "we want to start by hearing one thing God highlighted for you in the message, and then in a few minutes we'll move into a short study of the Scripture passage the speaker used."
- **Facilitate a guided reflection on Scripture.** The primary text on our "Multiplication Weekend" was **Matthew 9:35-10:42.** (A longer one than usual!)

Start with an "Icebreaker"

In this passage, Matthew records Jesus teaching the disciples about their mission and is honest about the persecution and pitfalls they will face. We'll discuss this further 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: What instructions were difficult when you were younger that you've appreciated more now that you are older? (Possible examples: Saving money? Generosity? Brushing your teeth? Showering? Going to bed on time?)

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.

- In 9:37 what issue does Jesus see?
 - **Jesus says there are not enough workers for the harvest.**
 - What is his solution in 9:38?
 - **Jesus asks his followers to PRAY that God would send workers!**

- What warnings does Jesus give his disciples in...
 - 10:16?
 - **Jesus says they are being sent among wolves**
 - 10:22?
 - **They will be hated by all**
 - 10:25?
 - **They will be maligned - called false names, like Jesus**
 - 10:37-39?
 - **Anyone who loves Mom, Dad, Son, or Daughter more than Jesus is unworthy of him (v.37).**
 - **Anyone who does not take up their cross and follow Jesus is not worthy of him (v.38).**
 - **Anyone who tries to find their life will lose it (v.39).**

- What encouragements does Jesus give his disciples in...
 - 10:19-20?
 - **Jesus says they will have the Spirit who will give them the words to say.**
 - 10:22?
 - **Those who endure will be saved.**
 - 10:39?
 - **Those who lose their life for Jesus' sake will find it.**

Step 3: Connect To God's Story

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

We've selected a few connections that are here to a) expand on the content of the passage and/or b) clarify the content of the passage.

- In 9:37-38 Jesus says, "The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest." Later, he expands on this mission. Read Matt 28:19-20.
 - Who does Jesus say he is sending his disciples out to? (How big are the fields that are ripe for harvest?)
 - **"All Nations" (v.19).**
 - **Leaders note: The harvest field is not limited to geographical location, culture, or race, but all nations.**
 - What is the "work" / "labour" he is giving to his disciples?
 - **"Make disciples," which includes baptizing and teaching others to do what Jesus taught." (vv. 18-20)**

- In our passage, Jesus warns his disciples about coming persecution, and we observe some of the comfort he offers in times of persecution. Look up Romans 8:35-39 and see how Paul understands the comfort we have in Jesus for hard times.
 - Paul asks the following question, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" (8:35) What examples does he give of things that could threaten our connection to his love?

- **Tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, sword?"**
- How does Paul answer the question of 8:35 in 8:37-39? (How can we be confident that nothing will ever come between us and the love of Christ?)
 - **We have been made conquerors through Jesus, who loved us. We can be conquerors because Christ has conquered (8:37).**
 - **We can be confident that death, life, angels, rulers, present circumstances, future circumstances, powers, heights, depth, or anything in creation (8:38-39).**
- In our passage, Jesus talks about his disciples "picking up their cross" (10:38-39). This language is repeated later in Matthew 16:24-27 and adds some additional insight into what he means. Compare the two texts. What additional details do we learn from Matt 16:24-27?
 - **In addition, Jesus adds the comment about "whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves" (16:24, NIV)**
 - **Jesus also adds that trying to save your life looks like trying to gain the whole world (16:26).**

Step 4: Apply To Our Story

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

- In our passage, Jesus gives some pretty solemn warnings to his disciples, ranging from warnings about what others will do to them to warnings about pitfalls they themselves can fall into. Let's take some time to reflect on this.
 - Like the disciples, we may need to hear these warnings so we don't get caught unprepared. What warning resonates most deeply with you from Jesus' teaching? (Eg. Warning of persecution, loving others more than Jesus, not picking up your cross, or finally, trying to find life from the world and not in Jesus)
- In the midst of the warnings, Jesus also teaches his disciples about the mission he is including them in. He uses the image of a plentiful harvest to illustrate the need for workers to go out and harvest. We read that the harvest includes people from all nations and involves making disciples. Jesus, as we have seen, is honest about the difficulties mixed in with our mission. Jesus also offers encouragement, as well as people like Paul, whom we looked at.
 - What encouragement will you hold onto this week from the discussion and why? (e.g. The disciples won't be left alone but will have the Holy Spirit, those who endure will be saved, and we are conquerors in Christ and can never be separated from his love)

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.
Leaders note: This is something that we're putting deliberately at the top here. Every time. ("5x5x5 cards" are available at each campus on the weekend.)
- Is there something that seems especially relevant for us to do personally based on our discussion?
Leaders note: This is something that may overlap with the "Apply To Our Story" step in the "GROW" section above, but here it is meant to help narrow down a specific thing that people actually plan to commit to doing.
- Is there something we as a group should plan to do together based on our discussion?
Leaders note: Depending on the applications you've discussed in the "GROW" section, there could be opportunities to serve others as a group. Or, perhaps to gather for worship, prayer, and/or equipping together.
- 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?

Leaders note: Our Local Outreach team has an opportunity with the "Bradner May Day" Breakfast on May 25.

Details here: <http://www.bradnermayday.com/>

Signup to serve here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0B4BA9AC2CA3F8C34-48919424-2024#/>