



EST. **NORTHVIEW** 1980
COMMUNITY CHURCH

Community Group Leaders' Guide – March 8/9, 2025

This guide is designed to help you and your group be **deeply rooted followers of Jesus**.¹

You can take different approaches week to week - plan for your next meeting in advance.

IDEA #1 - BALANCE GATHER + GROW + GO.

The healthiest groups will give attention to all 3 discipleship categories: *Gather*, *Grow*, and *Go*.

You can't cover each of the 3 sections fully in 1 meeting. For balance, select one or two items from the Gather and Go sections in advance, and condense the Grow section (perhaps just do the sermon recap).

You can also choose a different order (e.g., start in "grow", then hit "gather" + "go").

IDEA #2 - EMPHASIZE BIBLE STUDY.

Want a deeper "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*.

IDEA #3 - EMPHASIZE SHARING LIFE.

Want 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 well-prepared shepherd that "cares" and "facilitates".

¹ If you don't know your group very well, we recommend starting with our "First Four" discussion guide before this one.

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.

- "Let's start with prayer."
Thoughtfully acknowledge God's presence in the room. Commit your time to him. Start by calibrating everyone to this reality. Could be one person that opens your time in this way, or several.
- What is one thing you're really grateful for right now? Take turns and share one by one.
- Does anyone have a story of where you've seen God at work? Is there a life situation or answered prayer we can join you in celebrating? (This can be a way to revisit prayers or plans from a previous meeting.)
We'd love to share and celebrate stories from our Community Groups to honour God, encourage one another, and contribute to cultivating a culture of prayer across Northview! (With permission, share them with us!)
- What is one thing you're really burdened with right now? If comfortable, take turns and share one by one.
Idea: be specific. "Is there a practical need or decision you're facing that you'd like the group's help with?"
- What are you praying about right now? How can we join you thanking God or seeking God?
Idea: get one person to share, and then get one person to volunteer to pray for them. Repeat this process until everyone is covered.
- End with prayer, or move to the Grow and/or Go sections in the pages below.

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 + ask for his help to hear what he's saying through the text.
Idea: 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 March 8/9 sermon.** "Is there something the Holy Spirit highlighted for you?"
For each person to share an insight they got or an action step they are taking from the sermon could use up your time. This might be a good use of your time, but if you want to go further into the study of the text below, indicate this upfront.

- **Facilitate a brief study of 1 Cor 9:1-27**

Start the conversation with an "Icebreaker."

In today's passage, Paul shows the Corinthians that he uses his freedom to become a slave of all for the sake of the gospel.

Share from your life to get a feel for this dynamic in the text - while also helping others get to know one another - by using this **Icebreaker question: What is one thing that you could not live without? (E.g. coffee, your favorite show, dishwasher, etc.). Why is that thing so important to you?**

Study Step 1: Read 1 Corinthians 9:1-27

Familiarize yourself with this section of verses.

Study Step 2: Understand Their Story – (With answer key + leaders notes)

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

Synopsis: In this chapter, Paul builds an argument that culminates in this: Christians lay down their rights and willingly become servants to all for the sake of the gospel. Following these observations will help build the foundation for Paul's persuasive argument.

- **Take a look at 9:1-14.** Paul gives a list of the rights he could claim from the Corinthians. Explore what he says about those rights.
 - What are some of these rights?
 - **The right to “eat and drink” (v.4)**
 - **The right to “take along a believing wife” (v.5)**
 - **The right to “refrain from working” and demand pay from those they preach to. (vv.6-7)**
 - What reasons does Paul lay out for the rights he claims to have?
 - **Paul is an apostle, and the Corinthian church owes its existence to his labor (vv.1-2).**
 - **According to the Law of God (v.8)**
 - **Jesus authority (v.14)**

- **Take a look at 9:15-23.** Paul has laid out his rights; let's look at what he has done with those rights.
 - What has Paul done with his rights according to 9:15 and 9:18?
 - **He has used none of them with the Corinthians. (v.15; 18)**
 - What has Paul done with his freedom in Christ? What is Paul's motivation for using His freedom in this way?
 - **“I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them.” (v.19)**
 - **“...I might win more of them.” (v.19)**
 - **“I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.” (v.23)**

- **Take a look at 9:24-27** In light of what Paul has been saying, he ends with how to respond in light of reaching others for the gospel.
 - What is the motivation Paul encourages believers to run the race for?
 - **We run to obtain a prize, an imperishable wreath. (vv.24-25)**
 - How do we prepare ourselves to run the race to the end?
 - **Exercise self-control. (v.25)**
 - **Discipline the body and keep it under control. (v.27)**

- *Reflection question. How does Paul's zeal for sharing the gospel encourage or challenge you today?*

- Take these observations into the next step below.

Study Step 3: Connect To God's Story – (With answer key + leaders notes)

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.

- Paul outlines all the rights that his freedom in Christ could offer him, yet he takes advantage of none of it. Instead, Paul chooses to make himself a servant to all for the sake of winning people to the gospel. Take some time to consider how Jesus was the first to humbly lay down His rights and freedom, taking on the role of a servant for the sake of the gospel. Look up **Philippians 2:3-11** and consider the personal cost Jesus made to save us.
 - Read vv. 3-4. First, how does Paul ask us to treat one another?
 - **"Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves." (v.3)**
 - **"Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others." (v.4)**
 - How does Jesus model the humility Paul wants us to have?
 - **"...though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped" (v.6)**
 - **"...but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men." (v.7)**
 - **"And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross." (v.8)**
 - What did Jesus accomplish by laying his rights down to serve us for the sake of the gospel?
 - **"God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name..." (v.9)**
 - **"so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth..." (v.10)**
 - **"and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (v.11)**
 - *Reflection: How would reflecting on Jesus' humility, servanthood, and the ultimate cost he paid on our behalf help us to desire to share the good news with others?*
- Paul's driving motivation for life was filtered through one thing: how to win people for Jesus so that they can share with him the blessings of Jesus. "Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!" (1 Cor. 9:16). Where did Paul's passion come from? Look up **Acts 26:12-18**. Read about Paul's retelling of the moment Jesus found him and saved him from his sinful life.
 - For context, Paul was en route to further persecute the church when Jesus revealed himself to Paul. How did Jesus reveal himself to Paul as he was heading to bring more chaos to Jesus' people?
 - **"I saw on the way a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, that shone around me and those who journeyed with me." (v.13)**
 - What was Paul appointed to become and for what purpose?
 - **Appointed him as a "servant." (v.16)**

- **To be Jesus' witness. (v.16)**
 - **"To open their (the lost) eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me." (v.18)**
- *Reflection: Read Romans 5:6-8 in light of Paul's conversion. How might this shed light on how Paul thought about his own conversion and what Jesus did for him? How might Paul's conversion be fuel for his passion for winning people to the gospel?*

Step 4: Apply To Our Story

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

- Sharing the gospel with others often comes at some personal cost, whether that is emotional, physical, financial, social, etc. Reflecting on Paul's example and then Jesus' example of servanthood—which meant humbling themselves and putting others' needs above their own—how might Jesus be challenging you to lay something down for the sake of sharing the gospel with others?
- Paul's passion for evangelism was motivated by the radical grace Jesus showed to Paul while he was His enemy. How did Jesus find you and save you through His grace? Jesus pursued you at all costs. What cost feels too great for you to pay to do the same for others who are lost? What might be a small step of faith to express your Christian faith to a non-believer?
- How should we pray in light of today's discussion?
 - Take some time to pray that Jesus would work in us a willingness to become servants to all for the sake of the gospel.
 - Thank Jesus that He pursued you at all costs and by every means to track you down and win your heart.
 - Share your fears about sharing your faith, and ask Jesus to help you overcome the feeling of costliness through the power of the Holy Spirit.

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 those far from God that you personally know, by name.
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, and our "Loving The Lost" group prayer guide is attached to our weekly group leader email.)
- 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?