



EST. **NORTHVIEW** 1980
COMMUNITY CHURCH

Community Group Guide – Feb 15/16, 2025

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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- "Let's start with prayer."
 - 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.)
 - What is one thing you're really burdened with right now? If comfortable, take turns and share one by one.
 - What are you praying about right now? How can we join you thanking God or seeking God?
 - 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.
- **Share a takeaway from the Feb 15/16 sermon.** "Is there something the Holy Spirit highlighted for you?"
- **Facilitate a brief study of 1 Corinthians 7:17-40**

Start the conversation with an "Icebreaker."

In today's passage, Paul further explains to the Corinthians what it looks like for them "to not be their own". By looking at examples from society and ethnicity as well as marriage and singleness Paul casts a strong vision for discipleship.

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: Was there ever a circumstance or environment (e.g relationship, job, health) in your life that was challenging for you so much so that you thought to yourself "if God does not change it, I don't know if I can make it as a Christian?"**. (Has your situation changed? How has this impacted/or is impacting your faith?)

Study Step 1: Read 1 Corinthians 7:17-40

Familiarize yourself with this section of verses.

Study Step 2: Understand Their Story

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

- **Take a look at 7:17-24.**
 - Paul continues teaching on faithful living. Remember that the Corinthians thought their might be merit to "not have sexual relations with a woman" (7:1) What is the central opening idea in v.17?
 - Paul delivers examples of how this command plays out in the church. The first example is circumcision. Which observations do you make? (v.18-20)
 - The next example is slavery. What wisdom does Paul provide?
- **Take a look at 7:25-40.**
 - Paul explores the argument by looking at wisdom for single adults. Gather some observations.
 - 7:25-7:29

- 7:29-31 What statements is Paul making about living in our “time”
- 7:32-7:34 Find the contrasts between unmarried and married
- 7:35 What is Paul’s aim for all of these “recommendations” ?
- 7:36-7:40 Some final judgments
- *Reflection question. This passage is quite extensive and complex. To avoid getting lost in the details, let’s reflect on verses 17 and 35. What is Paul’s primary concern in these verses? How does this focus shape the broader conversation?*
- Take these observations into the next step below.

Study 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.

- Paul encourages Christians to be fully devoted and live in the life they have been called to. In light of the larger teaching he argued that Christians are not their own but belong to God (6:10, 7:22). Twice he calls them to consider their standing in the Lord before thinking about identity (“You have been bought with a price” (6:20, 7:23). Look up **Romans 5:1-10** and consider what the gospel accomplished.
 - What did the price purchase?
 - *Reflection: Why would reminding ourselves of the gospel inform our marital, social ethnic status?*
- In 1 Corinthians 7:19 Paul argues that circumcision or uncircumcision does not influence our identity. In 7:21 Paul applies the same thinking to slavery (“don’t be concerned”). From a Jewish perspective this is quite revolutionary. (For a Jew to be uncircumcised or sold out as a slave to Roman pagans, was considered sinful) Look up the following passages:
 - **Skim Galatians 3:1-12.** What good are works of the law (like getting circumcised, or avoiding Roman enslavement?) In other words, what makes a “true” Jew? (Child of Abraham by circumcision or not?) What is Paul’s main point?
 - **Now look at Galatians 3:13-14.** What has Christ accomplished?
 - **Now look at Galatians 3:26-29.** How does faith in Jesus affect our ethnic or social status?
 - *Reflection: Paul illustrates that a change of identity is good news! Because we’re children of God our circumstances are incidental. How does this speak to you? Does this challenge any longings you currently experience?*
- Sometimes our personal circumstances (whether to get married or not) are less a “right or wrong” kind of decision but more so a good vs better. In any case Paul wants us to pursue undivided devotion. Close by reading how this played out in his own life.
 - Read **Philippians 3:7-14 and Philippians 4:10-13** How did Paul live out what he preached?

Step 4: Apply To Our Story

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

- Are there circumstances in your life that hinder you from being fully devoted to Jesus and living the life he called you to? If you feel comfortable, share with your group if this is something you experience.
- *What counsel would you give someone who wants to grow in the area of "contentment?"*
 - *How can we grow in contentment? (Think scenarios like singleness through: How can the church be an encouragement? What potential does a season of singleness with full devotion have?)*
- How should we pray in light of today's discussion?
 - Take some time to pray for the singles and for those who are lonely in the church. Perhaps God is putting someone in your heart whom you want to encourage!
 - Thank God for good examples of men and women who live fully devoted to the Lord even in challenging circumstances.
 - Share if there is anything that this chapter stirred up in you, perhaps you know someone who is frustrated in his circumstances. How can you be there for this person?

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 those far from God that you personally know, by name.
 - 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?
 - 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?

BONUS RESOURCES (a curated list from our team to dive deeper into the topics from these past weeks)

Tim & Kathy Keller - *The Meaning of Marriage*

Jim Newheiser - *Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage*

Gary Thomas - *Sacred Marriage*

Christopher Ash - *Married for God*

Denny Burk - *What is the Meaning of Sex*

Paul Tripp - *Marriage: 6 Gospel Commitments Every Couple Needs to Make*

Sam Allberry - *7 Myths About Singleness*