



EST. **NORTHVIEW** 1980
COMMUNITY CHURCH

Community Group Leaders' Guide – March 22/23, 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 22/23 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 10:23-11:1**
Start the conversation with an "Icebreaker."

In today's passage, Paul emphasizes the importance of putting the good of others before our own.

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 the kindest thing anyone has ever done for you, and what made it so impactful? (For example, someone gifted you a costly present, served you at great personal cost, etc.)**

Study Step 1: Read 1 Corinthians 10:23-11:1

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 section, Paul brings to a close his cautions about Christian freedoms. He gives a final exhortation to the Corinthians regarding the greater goal of the Christian life, which is beyond enjoying our own freedoms in Christ. This goal is to seek the good of others to the glory of God, even at personal cost. The questions below will help lay a foundation for understanding Paul's argument and applying it to ourselves.

- **Take a look at 10:23-24.** Paul references the Corinthian catchphrase for the freedom they claim in Christ, "all things are lawful."

- What are the qualifiers that Paul adds to this statement regarding the extravagance of Christian freedom?
 - **“Not all things are helpful.” (v.23)**
 - **“Not all things build up.” (v.23)**
 - **Finally, in verse 24, Paul says that seeking the good of a neighbor supersedes seeking your own good, or in other words, your own Christian freedoms. (See v.24).**

- **Take a look at 10:25-28.** Paul gives a practical example of the reality of our Christian freedom and another example of when to lay that freedom down for the sake of a brother or sister in Christ.
 - What does Paul give permission for every believer to feel the freedom to do, and why?
 - **First, buy and eat whatever meat is available at the market, without a guilty conscience. (See v.25)**
 - **Why? “For “the earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof.”” (v.26)**
 - **Second, eat whatever an unbeliever gives you without a guilty conscience. (See v.27) Why? See v.26.**
 - What is the exception to the Christian’s freedom to eat anything without a guilty conscience?
 - **If eating something that has been sacrificed causes a brother or sister in Christ to be troubled or gain a guilty conscience. (See v.28 and the first half of v.29)**

- **Take a look at 10:29-11:1.** Paul raises some potential objections that the Corinthians might have to this idea of sacrificing freedom for another’s conscience. Paul then gives his reasons for why his request is legitimate.
 - What objections does Paul raise against giving up freedoms for another?
 - **“For why should my liberty be determined by someone else’s conscience?” (Second half of v.29)**
 - **“If I partake with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of that for which I give thanks?” (v.30)**
 - How does Paul back his claim that Christians should lay down their freedoms for others?
 - **Christians “do all to the glory of God” (v.31)—not to establish my freedom.**
 - **The IMPLICATIONS of doing all to God’s glory means:**
 - **“Try to please all men in everything” (v.33)—not claiming my rights.**
 - **“Seek the advantages of many” (v.33)—not my benefit or fulfillment.**
 - **“Seek that many may be saved” (v.33)—not being preoccupied with my personal salvation.**
 - **“Be imitators of Christ” (11:1)—“not boosting my reputation. That is Christian freedom: being free from ourselves to glorify God by being like Christ.”²**

- *Reflection idea. Take a moment to ask the Holy Spirit to highlight something from the text. After a time of silence, share what verse the Holy Spirit highlighted to you.*

- Take these observations into the next step below.

² David Prior, *The Message of 1 Corinthians: Life in the Local Church*, The Bible Speaks Today (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1985), 177.

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.

- One of the key applications Paul gives is "Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor." (v.24). **Take a look at Gal 5:13-15.** Consider how Paul's words encourage us to put others before ourselves.
 - In the book of Galatians, Paul argues powerfully for Christians to embrace their freedom in Christ from any form of legalism (Seeking justification through observance of the law). Therefore, in v.13 Paul says, "For you were called (by Jesus) to freedom, brothers." However, what is and isn't their freedom for?
 - **Freedom in Christ is not "an opportunity for the flesh." (v.13)**
 - **Freedom in Christ rather allows us to "through love serve one another." (v.13)**
 - What command fulfills the whole law of God?
 - **"You shall love your neighbour as yourself." (v.14)**
 - What danger does the church face when we use our freedom as an opportunity for the flesh?
 - **We fall into what Paul warns us about, "But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another." (v.15)**
 - *Reflection Question: True freedom is not freedom from God's law, but the freedom through Jesus to fulfill the law by loving your neighbor as yourself. The true mark of Christian maturity is how well you love others like Jesus. How does this biblical view of freedom differ from the world's definition?*
- Paul gives a vision of what every human being was created to live for when he says, "Do all to the glory of God." (v.31). What does it mean to live that out? **Take a look at John 15:8-13.**
 - What does Jesus say gives his father glory? After Jesus says what gives his father glory, what command does he follow up with?
 - **Disciples glorify God by bearing fruit that comes from abiding. Abiding is fulfilling Jesus' commands, which Jesus summarizes down to this, "love one another as I have loved you." (v.12)**
- Another key application that Paul leaves us with is this, "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ." (11:1). **Take a look at Ephesians 5:1-2.**
 - What does Paul call Christians to do?
 - **"Be imitators of God..." (v.1)**
 - **"...walk in love..." (v.1)**
 - What motivation does Paul give for why we should imitate God and why we should walk in love?
 - **We should imitate God because we are His "Beloved children." (v.1). (For deeper reflection you can ask, do any of you have little imitators of you, be it a son, daughter, niece, nephew, student, etc? Why do they imitate you?)**
 - **We should walk in love because, "Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." (v.2)**

- *Reflection Question: What are some of the biggest barriers to putting others needs before our own needs?*

Step 4: Apply To Our Story

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

- We asked you to take a moment and ask the Holy Spirit to highlight a verse that you can take and apply to your life. What verse stood out to you from this passage? What is the Holy Spirit leading you to do about it?
- Paul emphasizes a self-sacrificial love, one that seeks the good of another before your own. What is one practical way you can practice living this out for the rest of this week or the week to come?
- How should we pray in light of today's discussion?
 - Pray that the Holy Spirit would take what He has highlighted in this passage and empower you to apply it.
 - Thank Jesus that He sought our good even at a great personal cost to His own freedoms as the Son of God. By His self-sacrificial love, we have eternal life.
 - Ask God to fill you with the knowledge of His great love for you, so that, out of the overflow of His love, you can love others as He loves you.

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?