



EST. **NORTHVIEW** 1980
COMMUNITY CHURCH

Community Group Leaders' Guide – April 12/13, 2025

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

This week's text has been widely debated. Here's some additional leaders' notes:

BEFORE WE STUDY THIS WEEK'S PASSAGE

Doctrine of the Clarity of Scripture: The clarity of Scripture means that the Bible is written in such a way that its teachings are able to be understood by all who will read it seeking God's help and being willing to follow it.

- **This means: Scripture is clear in matters essential for salvation**
 - Who God is and what He cares about.
 - Who man is, his own sinful state, and his means of attaining salvation
- **This doesn't mean:**
 - That every single passage of scripture is equally clear.
 - **2 Peter 3:15-16:** *15 Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. 16 He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.*
- **Best practices when we come difficult passages:**
 - Read and think through the passage thoroughly on our own. Then...
 - Consult different translations
 - Consult commentaries
 - Discuss and debate constructively
 - Arrive at our own conclusions and keep an open mind
- **Please don't:**
 - Distort a scripture passage (attempt to make it say things it isn't saying) - 2 Peter 3:16 above
 - Throw up your hands and say that scripture is too difficult to understand
 - 437 verses in 1 Cor - 420/437 are not difficult to come to a consensus on meaning.
 - Cut off friends or family member because of different interpretations

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

Open-Handed vs. Close Handed Doctrine:

- When we talk about theological differences, we distinguish between open-handed and close-handed issues.
- **Close Handed Issues:**
 - Those which are core to the Christian faith.
 - Denying them means you are not a Christian
 - Eg. That Jesus Christ is God (Jehovah Witness & Mormons believe otherwise)
- **Open Handed Issues:**
 - Those which are not core to the Christian faith
 - Debates may cause denominational differences, or differences in how churches are structured
 - Eg. Infant vs. Adult Baptism, Gender Roles
- **How do you know if a doctrine is open-handed or close-handed?** A helpful article:
 - Taylor, Justin. ["Not All Doctrines Are at the Same Level: How to Make Some Distinctions and Determine a Doctrine's Importance."](#) The Gospel Coalition website, 29 Sept. 2015.

How do we know if scriptural teaching is directed at a specific culture, or is "transcultural" (for all time)?

- As we read scripture, we want to identify which pieces are "principles" and which pieces are "application" of principles.
- Principles are transcultural, application of principles aren't necessarily transcultural.
 - Principle: Honor Your Father and Your Mother.
 - 21st Century application - Don't text and snapchat while your parents are trying to talk to you.

Leaders note: as a church, this is a benefit of preaching through books of the Bible verse by verse, chapter by chapter on the weekend. It helps us avoid only picking and choosing the texts we "feel like" teaching. We want to look to and preach the full and whole counsel of God, come to know him deeply, and experience more of his abundant wisdom and life.

Enjoy!

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 April 12/13 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 Corinthians 11:2-16**

Start the conversation with an "Icebreaker."

In this passage, Paul addresses how t men and women should behave in culturally appropriate ways as males & females when they pray and prophecy in the church. 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: Why do you think that emotions get so embroiled when we talk about distinctions between men and women? (How have you seen controversy arise when discussing gender?)

Study Step 1: Read 1 Corinthians 11:2-16

Familiarize yourself with this section of verses.

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

Consider this table to understand what the author is communicating to the original audience.

1 Corinthians 11:2-16	What does it Say?
<p>2 I praise you for remembering me in everything and for holding to the traditions just as I passed them on to you.</p> <p>3 But I want you to realize that the HEAD of every man is Christ, and the HEAD of the woman is man, and the HEAD of Christ is God.</p> <p>4 Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his HEAD.</p> <p>5 But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her HEAD— it is the same as having her head shaved.</p> <p>6 <u>For</u> if a woman does not cover her head, she might as well have her hair cut off; but if it is a disgrace for a woman to have her hair cut off or her head shaved, then she should cover her head.</p>	<p>An Argument related to Head/Authority</p> <p>Paul praises them for holding onto his teaching of the equality of men and women before God in salvation. BUT he needs to correct their practices.</p> <p>Men dishonor their spiritual HEAD if they cover their heads. Women are praying and prophesying in the gathered assembly with their physical head uncovered. This practice dishonors their spiritual HEAD. By either failing to wear a physical head covering or having their hair loosened women were unnecessarily blurring social conventions regarding gender distinctions (how men and women should dress and behave) and negatively impacting male/female relationships.</p> <p>If women are going to be so disrespectful, says Paul, they might as well go all the way and cut off their hair.</p>
<p>7 A man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man.</p> <p>8 For man did not come from woman, but woman from man;</p> <p>9 neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.</p> <p>10 <u>It is for this reason</u> that a woman ought to have authority over her own head, because of the angels.</p> <p>11 Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman.</p> <p>12 For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God.</p>	<p>An Argument related to Creation</p> <p>7-9 A Christian man should not cover his head in the gathered assembly because he is created in the image of God and should bring honor to God. (Roman priests may have pulled togas over their head while performing religious rituals.) Woman was created through man (Gen 2:21-25) as a suitable companion to complete him and together form humanity, and therefore woman should honor man.</p> <p>10 Women should exercise their authority in a respectful and proper way because the angels (God's servants) are watching over creation and protecting the worship of His people.</p> <p>11-12 Although man was created first, men and women are interdependent and must ultimately recognize their mutual dependence upon God.</p>
<p>13 Judge for yourselves: Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered?</p> <p>14 Does not the very nature of things teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a disgrace to him,</p> <p>15 but that if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For long hair is given to her as a covering.</p>	<p>An Argument related to Culture</p> <p>To add a 3rd layer to his argument, Paul appeals to cultural norms. If they are doubtful about his theological argument, he says, they should look around them. In culture, gender distinctives are maintained.</p> <p>Contemporary 1st century art and paintings show men with short hair & women with long hair; these practices distinguish between the genders.</p>

<p>16 If anyone wants to be contentious about this, we have no other practice—nor do the churches of God.</p>	<p>Final words: Contentious people are advocating for these practices - our churches should not.</p>
---	---

What does it Mean?	Alternative Interpretations
<p>An Argument related to Head/Authority</p> <p>ESV translates Greek as “wife” not “woman, therefore these instructions are specifically to married women.</p> <p>The Greek word “kephale” (head), means literally a physical head, and metaphorically (<i>when used in the context of people</i>) “authority over”.</p> <p>Since, the spiritual head (having authority over)...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • of men is Christ, • of a wife is her husband, <p>men must pray and prophecy in a way that honors Christ, and wives must pray and prophecy in a way that honors their husband.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • of Christ is God, <p>Trinitarian theology teaches that Jesus Christ is equal to God the Father in essence, but submitted to the Father’s authority while on earth. Eternal submission of the Son to the Father is debated.</p>	<p>An Argument related to Head/Authority</p> <p>The Greek word “kephale” (head) means literally a physical head, and metaphorically “source”.</p> <p>Therefore, since...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christ is the source of every man (they are new creations in him) • Man is the source of woman (in creation) • God is the source of Christ (on earth) <p>men must pray and prophecy in a way that honors Christ, and women must pray and prophecy in a way that doesn’t break down the gender distinctives between men and women, or negatively affect male/female relationships.</p>
<p>An Argument related to Creation</p> <p>7-9 Since man was created first, he should bring honor to God. Since woman was created to complement man, a wife should bring honor to her husband.</p> <p>10 - ESV “That is why a wife should have a <u>symbol of authority</u> on her head”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original context - women were uncovering their heads (symbol of desire to transcend sexuality), or wearing hair loose (symbolic of being unmarried, adulterer or pagan prophetic frenzy) and this dishonored their husbands. • Q - What are cultural “symbols of authority” now by which wives honor their husbands? <p>11-12 A husband’s spiritual “authority over” his wife is tempered by interdependence and the authority of God.</p>	<p>An Argument related to Creation</p> <p>7-9 Since man was created first, he should bring honor to God. Since woman was created to complement man, and complete him, women should not pretend they are sexless (like the angels) or male.</p> <p>10 - Women have ‘authority over their own heads’ but should exercise their authority in a respectful or proper way that doesn’t dissolve rightful male/female relationships or gender differentiations.</p>

The basic emphasis of this passage (that men and women should behave in culturally appropriate ways as males & females when they pray and prophecy in the church) whether they are single or married is widely agreed upon.

Based on the understanding that “kephale” means “have authority over” not “source” when it is used metaphorically, **Complementarians** affirm that men have spiritual authority in the family, and this passage instructs wives to dress and act in a way that honors their husbands as they serve the church.

Egalitarians who understand “kephale” to be translated as “source” when it is used metaphorically, claim that this passage does not affirm authority structures between husbands and wives, but does still teach that women should dress and act like women and men should dress and act like men.

- **Leaders note: Every church has to make a pragmatic decision based on how they interpret texts regarding men and women - including the other ones outside of 1 Corinthians 11 related to church leadership. Northview has made the decision to organize and serve from a Complementarian position. Not everyone will agree - but, as Paul encourages in this week’s text - we need not be "contentious."**
- *Reflection question. If you had to finish the sentence “a godly man is...” or “a godly woman is...”, what would you say?*
- 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.

- Understanding “headship” from a biblical perspective is critical.
 - Look up **Colossians 1:15-18, 2:19**
 - How do these texts shape our perspective about how Jesus’ headship works?
 - Look up **Ephesians 1:22, 4:15, 5:22-33.**
 - What do we learn further about Jesus from these texts?
 - What do we learn about “headship” marriage from these texts?
 - What’s the connection between love and headship?
 - Look up **Luke 22:25-27.**
 - What does Jesus tell us about how “authority” in the Kingdom of God works?
- *Reflection question. How are the biblical ideas about authority different from the power language of our modern culture? (I.e. is there a difference between having “authority” vs being “authoritarian?”)*
- Take these observations and reflections with you to the next step.

Step 4: Apply To Our Story

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

- What does it look like in our churches for married men and women to pray and prophesy in a way that honours their spouse?
 - **For example: Wearing wedding rings / not praying or ministering one on one with the opposite gender / speaking in respectful ways about our spouses and working out differences of opinion or ideas in private or with trusted friends.**

- What does it look like in our churches for married and single people to pray and prophesy in a way that doesn't break down gender distinctives or negatively impact male/female relationships?
 - **For example: would we consider wearing clothing / hairstyles that aren't culturally confusing? Not participating in a way that distracts people from God - flirting / wearing suggestive clothing etc?**
 - **Honoring, praying for, submitting to church leadership, and addressing questions or difference of opinion appropriately, with the right people (not in public, not in gossip sessions)**

- How do you, personally, respond to people who interpret scripture differently than you do?
 - Consider the options below and a) explain why, then b) pray for one another that we'd be gracious and honouring in our worship and relationships with fellow Christians.
 - a) try to ignore differences or not get into debate,
 - b) offer to "expand fence lines" in order to make everyone feel that their idea is accepted,
 - c) engage in and enjoy the debate,
 - d) hold tightly to your conviction and become angry or frustrated with those who have different ideas or
 - e) other?

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?