

Leader's Community Group Leader Guide
For the week of November 8, 2020

This guide is designed to give helpful hints in preparing & leading your group in discussion.

LEADER NOTES

ANNOUNCEMENTS

→ **OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD** - We have shoeboxes that need to be filled for children all over the world so that they may have gifts for Christmas. This would be an easy and great Community Group project to do together! Email marc@stfchurch.com for more information or pick up your shoebox at the BP campus.

→ **COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS** – We have some high needs projects. Email our missions pastor, Marc, for **COVID-SAFE options** to serve: marc@stfchurch.com

⇒ **LAST WEEK OF COMMUNITY GROUPS** - The last week of Community Groups is Nov.29-Dec 5th. Our last week of CG, we will take communion together. Please be thinking of your social as well.

→ **POLITICS?**

Chris and Annie offer practical tips of how to address politics with those who are rejoicing and those who are discouraged. Be sure sure check it out in your most recent email. Didn't get it? Email chris@stfchurch.com

LEADER INFO

→ **MEETING REMINDERS**

- **NEED HELP / SUPPORT?** If you need support for your group, please don't hesitate to reach out to your Community Group Staff – we're here to help! Email chris@stfchurch.com
- It's okay to have some weeks that focus more on discussion, and some that focus more on prayer! If you haven't taken the opportunity to break into **men-only/women-only groups**, try it this week.

→ **ATTENDANCE**

Submit your group's attendance by replying to the email you receive on the day of your meeting.

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. We don't need to be Bible scholars but we still need to have a regular intake of the Bible in our lives, especially if you want to share the gospel with others. Which of the following ways of accessing the Bible have you tried? (Check all that apply to you):

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reading a daily devotional book (like Daily Bread) | <input type="checkbox"/> Scripture memorization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inductive Bible study (Precepts or Bible Study Fellowship) | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Group study questions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reading passages picked at random | <input type="checkbox"/> Listening to the Bible |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reading a One-year Bible | <input type="checkbox"/> Bible study course (i.e. Beth Moore, Right Now Media) |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

What was your experience with those you've tried?

Which one has been the most helpful for you?

How has your attitude about the Bible and how you read/study/listen to it changed over the years?

Additional Question: Is there one of these you haven't tried that you'd like to try?

Some in your group will have tried all these options while others only a few. This question is not designed to make it seem like those who have done more of the options are more mature.

2. The story of your own spiritual journey is one of the most powerful tools you have to tell others about Jesus. If someone were to ask you, "What has God done for you?" or "What difference has being a follower of Jesus made in your life?" what might you say regarding:

This is a great question for getting to know your group members better.

It would be great if you could hear from everyone on this and help them process it. Try to encourage people to be specific on their answers so they are able to give real life examples. This could be a rich time of sharing your stories and recognizing God's work in your lives. The intent of the categories below is just to help people think through their story and God's impact on their life. If you have someone in your group who isn't a Christian, you probably are aware of that by now. This could be a good time for them to hear people talk about how Jesus has impacted them. This might be a challenging question for some people to answer, so be on the lookout for people who struggled to answer it. It may be easier for them to verbally answer the questions rather than writing down their answers.

... how you relate to and view others? *This would include spouse, children, co-workers, friends, etc.*

... how you view what's most important? — *valuing eternal things over temporal things*

... how you view yourself? — *I'm sinful, yet forgiven. I am of great worth to God.*

QUICK REVIEW

Looking back over your sermon notes from this week's sermon, which particular point or passage of Scripture most challenged, confused, or caught your attention?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. When it comes to sharing our faith with others, how we live is just as important as the words we share. 1 Thessalonians 2:1-13 gives us a great picture of what sharing both our words and our life with others looks like. As you read through this passage...

1. Circle / **highlight** any words or phrases describing Paul's attitude or actions.
2. Underline the portions that can be a challenge for you to live out (keep it to four or less).
3. Put an X next to anything that confuses you.

1 Thessalonians 2:1-13 New International Version (NIV)

You know, brothers and sisters, that our visit to you was not without results. ² We had previously suffered and been treated outrageously in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in the face of strong opposition. ³ For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you. ⁴ On the contrary, we speak as those approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please people but God, who tests our hearts. ⁵ You know we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed—God is our witness. ⁶ We were not looking for praise from people, not from you or anyone else, even though as apostles of Christ we could have asserted our authority. ⁷ Instead, we were like young children among you. Just as a nursing mother cares for her children, ⁸ so we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well. ⁹ Surely you remember, brothers and sisters, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you. ¹⁰ You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed. ¹¹ For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, ¹² encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory. ¹³ And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is indeed at work in you who believe.

Take some time to explore the words and phrases people highlighted in the passage.

Additional Questions: *What stood out to you about what Paul shared? What surprised you?*

What would it look like for you to share both the Gospel and your life with the people you rub shoulders with the most?

Additional Questions:

What do you think Paul meant when he talked about sharing the Gospel?

What do you think he meant when he talked about sharing his life?

What are a couple of the character qualities Paul talks about that you'd like to see in your life?

2. One effective means of sharing the Gospel with others is the "Roman Road." Whether you are a new Christian, a long-time Christian, or still trying to understand Christianity, these verses can help us understand our need for salvation and how a relationship with Christ begins. As you read each verse, jot down what essential truth each passage communicates about our relationship with Christ.

The following is a great resource if any of your members want more explanation: <https://www.gotquestions.org/Romans-road-salvation.html>

- Romans 1:19-20
- Romans 3:23
- Romans 6:23
- Romans 5:8
- Romans 10:9-11

- **Romans 1:19-20**
since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. [20] For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. [NIV]
- **Romans 3:23**
for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, [NIV]
- **Romans 6:23**
For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. [NIV]
- **Romans 5:8**
But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.[NIV]
- **Romans 10:9-11**
That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. [10] For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. [11] As the Scripture says, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame." [NIV]

3. This weekend we learned we don't need to be eloquent or have all the answers to share our faith, but how we share "our answer" has a lot to do with the kind of influence we have on others. The Bible gives us some guidelines for the way we are to go about sharing and talking with others. What can we learn about how to talk and interact with others from the following passages?

2 Timothy 2:23-26 New International Version (NIV) — *Foolish and stupid arguments only result in quarrels.*

²³ Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels. ²⁴ And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. ²⁵ Opponents must be gently instructed, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, ²⁶ and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.

Additional Question: *What's the last foolish and stupid argument you had with someone? What was it about? What was the end result?*

We're called to not be quarrelsome and be kind to everyone.

Additional Questions:

What does kindness look like in the face of discussing issues that can produce controversy and arguments?

What do I need to do to be able to choose kindness when I get in conversations that turn to hot topics?

What does this passage say about who is responsible for someone coming to Christ? What is our role in this process?

Titus 3:1-2 New International Version (NIV) - Great reminder of how to treat one another

Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good, ²to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and always to be gentle toward everyone.

The famous love chapter found in 1 Corinthians 13 easily applies to many of our conversations with others about hot topics in general and specifically when we talk with others about our Christian faith. Read verses 4-5 and replace the word “love” with “how I talk is.” How accurate does this describe the way you talk when it comes to areas of disagreement or talking about your faith in Jesus?

1 Corinthians 13:4-5 New International Version (NIV)

⁴Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs

Additional Passage: [Matthew 9:35-38](#)

One way to keep a loving attitude is to learn to view people the way Jesus did. In this passage we see His compassion for people who are like sheep without a shepherd.

Additional Question: *What would it take for you to consistently see people as sheep without a shepherd?*

TAKING IT HOME

1. As a result of this week's teaching regarding where you start in terms of witnessing to people, do you sense God calling you to...

...focus more on being the work of God before you do the work of God?

...change the way you care about those in your life?

...be a bit more open about going to church and your commitment to Christ?

...begin to invite some friends to church to come and see?

...ask your friends some questions about their spiritual background?

2. Are there any adjustments you want to consider making to help you keep God's Word at the center of your life?

Possible ideas:

- Spending a little more time reading or listening to the Bible, praying or memorizing Scripture
- More focus on or time thinking through the sermon or Community Group Study Questions
- Process what you're reading, learning, being challenged with or questioning with a friend or your group
- Other _____

"Live a life that demands an explanation."

PRAYER REQUESTS

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