



LIFE GROUPS | LEADERS GUIDE
March 8-15, 2026 | Winter Week 8

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Well leaders, it's week #8. Just one more week to go!

1. YOUR EIGHTH MEETING:

- As this season wraps up in the coming weeks, work with your group to develop some plans to keep building upon the relationships you have been developing over the last 8 weeks. Plan some events to hang out, BBQ's, pool parties with the kids, another serve project, maybe a hike or a picnic in a park ... you name it. Remember that one the main goals of our Life Groups is to develop and grow meaningful relationships. And hanging out in these ways, is us, doing just that.

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

LEADER NOTE: These are the lowest risk questions and are great ways to get everyone in your group talking – from those who love sharing stories, to those who feel a little uncomfortable in this new space. Low risk questions have their way of breaking the ice and getting everyone a little more comfortable sharing. It also gives a chance for everyone to share in an easy, approachable way.

1. What's the most useless talent you have?

LEADER NOTE: These are always fun moments, as you get to see some of the true colors of your members. From quoting from any movie they've seen, to remembering birthday's, to obscure physical things ... enjoy the moments of laughter with this one!

2. What's one thing you're proud of so far in 2026?

LEADER NOTE: As we've been exploring deepening our faith through some important spiritual disciplines, and this week, as we're exploring our misplaced trust – it's always good to reflect upon where we have come from, and observe the growth that we've seen. Your group might answer this question with some personal accomplishments, others may go down a spiritual road, and others might reflect upon some relationship milestones. In any way that your members answer, be grateful for their contributions.

QUICK REVIEW

LEADER NOTE: These following two questions aim to have your group reflect upon Sunday's message. The first question will always be the same, and the second one is provided from our teaching pastor from

the service. One thing that we want to be clear as we approach this section, is that this isn't to be a time to evaluate the message or the one delivering it – but it's to be a time when we talk about what we have learned or how we've been challenged by God's Word.

1. Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

LEADER NOTE: Taking notes and interacting with the message that we hear shared on Sunday mornings is a very helpful practice. As you engage both the listening mind, and the physical act of writing, content is more readily solidified in memory!

2. Pastor Adam quoted another pastor saying, "It's not that we're going to drown, it's that we're safe in our drowning." Does that affect how you might work through the worry and anxiety you feel in your life? How so?

LEADER NOTE: Yes, this quote does hit us a little oddly, as it puts our mortality in front of us – that things of this world can actually cause us harm, and even death. However, if our assurance of salvation is actually grounded in the saving work of Jesus Christ, than even those things – such a drowning – cannot rob us of our encounter with Jesus. In Him, in His grip, and in His care, we are *always* safe. If need be, have your group reflect upon the words of Isaiah 43:1-3,

*Fear not, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name, you are mine.
When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,
and the flame shall not consume you.
I am the Lord your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.*

SCRIPTURE REVIEW

LEADER NOTE: Reading scripture together is one of the most important practices in our Life Groups, so never shirk away from reading the following passage, always making time to interact with the Word of God and its message for us. By now, you know the practice that is working well for your group – keep it up! But don't be afraid to change up the patterns too – just don't skip this!

READ Matthew 6:25-34

1. How does this passage highlight God's presence in our world?
2. What does this passage say about our broken human condition?
3. How does this passage call me to make change in my life?

Another option with these questions, is to even more simply ask, once you've read the passage together, as in a general way, "*What strikes us about this passage?*"

DIGGING DEEPER

LEADERS NOTE: These discussion questions generally start simple and gradually become deeper and more complex. This progression follows natural discussion patterns, but as leaders, you know your group best. Use this guide flexibly; it is not necessary to cover every question. Focus on ensuring everyone is heard and has the opportunity to contribute and ask their questions.

1. READ Matthew 6:25-27. There is a sense of peace we lose when we forget that God is lovingly and sovereignly in control. When you were growing up, what helped you feel safe or secure? What is a typical worry that people your age tend to carry?

LEADER NOTE: The words that Jesus uses here, are easy to read, easy to understand – but difficult for the average human to put into action. These very basic elements that are needed for human existence, food, drink, clothing, all represent the tangible realities of life are ever before us. If we don't eat, we won't make it much past 40 days; if we don't drink, we won't make it more than 3 days; if we're not warm and protected, we wouldn't make it a single night in our climate at this point in the year. And Jesus implies that there's a certain peace that we have in Him, when He commits to make sure that we have everything we need.

But do not get confused here, as we talk here about tangible things, Jesus is speaking on a deeper level, of providing for us, Himself. Salvation and security in Him. That's what is so neat about the connection above to Isaiah's text in chapter 43, that as waters of life rise, while that's a trouble, we'll not be alone. When the fires and storms of life rage, while those things can do serious damage, and cause great harm, they won't be the end of our comfort in Christ.

- **READ 1 Peter 5:6-7.** In your own words, what does it mean to “cast” your anxieties on God? What kinds of worries feel easiest to give to God? What makes certain worries harder to release?

LEADER NOTE: When we truly understand God's loving character and place His kingdom first, many of our worries begin to loosen their grip. Especially the kind that grows out of misplaced trust or trying to divide our loyalty between God and other sources of security.

Your group might talk about moments where they pictured Jesus “*taking the wheel*” of their car in life. They might reflect upon seeing Jesus as King, and themselves as His people. And those are helpful images for us, when they are actually lived out. But what we are really doing in these moments, is releasing ourselves of the burdens of things that matter the most to us, recognizing Christ's sovereignty over our lives. It's us entrusting the situations and circumstances of our lives to Christ's authority. It's us acknowledging that He's able to carry the weight of our burdens, more so than we ever are.

Which all ultimately means, that we're not running after our own solutions, but that we're waiting patiently on the Lord to reveal our paths going forward, that we're leaning on Him through our community of faith, and that we submit ourselves to what it is that He is doing in our lives.

2. READ Matthew 6:28-30. Worry, or anxiety, often reflects our attempts to control what belongs to God. In what areas of your life do you most naturally drift toward worry (finances, health, relationships, future plans, parenting, something else)? Why that area?

LEADER NOTE: As we talked on Sunday, as we identified the problem of life that we all face, we saw that *the moment we make ourselves our own master, anxiety inevitably follows. Self-worry demands control of both today and tomorrow, and that is a throne too heavy and too large for us to sit on.* So, we as humans in the 21st century, here in North America have this tendency to desire control, rather than

relinquish it to any higher authority or power – whether it’s a parent, a spouse, officers of the law, or even God Almighty! So, we worry and stress and get anxious about trying to keep all the balls of life in the air, and try with our own might and power to keep everything working and moving.

For some, their burdens will be finances – as its tough at the end of the month to make sure everything has been covered; for others it’s going to be matters of health, as they’re undergoing tests and changing up medications; for others it’ll be about relationships, maybe about hard ones, or not having certain ones. Leaders, as your members share from their hearts, and express vulnerability, do your best to honor their voices, be grateful for their offerings and honesty in the discussion.

- **READ Ecclesiastes 1:12-14, James 4:13-17.** According to Ecclesiastes, what “burden” (NIV) or “unhappy business” (ESV) weighs on humanity? In James, what posture or response are we called to adopt in light of life’s uncertainty?

LEADER NOTE: Life can feel repetitive and mysterious, yet at the same time fragile and uncertain. And is good for the followers of Jesus to seek levels of His clarity, and to seek and understanding of our existence in view of His guidance.

Ecclesiastes 1 describes the problem we face here on earth as we navigate the life that God has called us to live. The heavy burden of life is frustrating and elusive, as our work often feels like “*striving after wind*,” and that much in this broken world cannot be fixed by human effort. Life is complex, repetitive, and ultimately beyond our control. We can respond in one of two ways here – either be driven into our selves, and worry some more; or, be driven to the work on the cross, and the grace that Jesus provided for us there.

James 4 responds to that reality by calling us to humility, reminding us that we do not know what tomorrow holds. Instead of presuming control we are to say, “*If the Lord wills*,” and live in daily dependence on God. Together, these passages move us from frustrated self-reliance to faithful trust and present obedience.

3. READ Matthew 6:31-33. What practical habits (prayer, scripture, generosity, community, etc.) help keep you to “*seek first God’s kingdom and His righteousness*”? What habits have you heard of that you are interested in trying? How might fasting help you to seek His kingdom over your own?

LEADER NOTE: Jesus invites us to place God’s kingdom and His righteousness at the center of our lives. As our priorities shift toward Him, human and earthly anxiety begin to loosen their grip. A life oriented around God’s reign brings a deeper freedom than one driven by fear about tomorrow.

We mentioned it this way on Sunday morning, regarding Jesus command for us to “*seek first the kingdom of God...*”

This priority that Jesus commands, isn’t just to be another priority in our long list of important things. Seeking the Lord first is not something that we must add to our list, but it is something that must govern and manage everything that is already there. Seeking first the Kingdom of God, isn’t just another activity, it’s the foundation that our lives must be built upon.

- **READ Colossians 3:12-17.** What insights does this passage provide in answering the question: what does it mean to “*seek first God’s kingdom and His righteousness*”?

LEADER NOTE: Paul's letter to the Colossians is a letter of encouragement and a letter of a call to faithful living all the while recognizing and submitting to the supremacy and all-sufficiency of Christ. Therefore, in these particular verses, we are left challenged to seek the Lord first in our lives in a variety of ways. Here's a summary –

- Verse 12 points to us embracing a Christ-like character.
- Verse 13 invites us to practice forgiveness.
- Verse 14 invites us to find our place in our community, that while we belong to Jesus first, He has placed us with others. And we need to find a way to make that all work.
- Verse 15 invites us to consider how the Lord's peace, is greater than our unrest.
- Verse 16 invites us to consider the spiritual disciplines that draw us nearer to the Lord.
- Verse 17 has us consider Christ as the foundation of everything that we do.

TAKING IT HOME

READ Matthew 6:34. The thrust of this passage has us consider just how our trust in the Lord needs to outweigh our worry about tomorrow. Why is that easier said than done? What elements of life are holding to yourself, that you need to submit to the Lord? How do you feel challenged (or encouraged) to live in today's needs?

LEADER NOTE: If life was fully predictable and certain, then we wouldn't ever face a worry or concern, and we'd really, be living in either reality of the untainted garden of Eden, or in Paradise in the presence of the Lord. But we aren't in either place, and find ourselves in the fallen and depraved world, where nothing is predictable, and nothing is certain.

So, as we people need sustenance in order to survive, and as we need clothing on our backs to stay warm – we chase after fulfilling those needs. And while we do that, we know that it's not just those things we chase after. We long for financial stability, for physical well-being, for safety of our families, for a meaningful career and advancement within it, for recognition and appreciation for our contributions to life – but none of those things have our fingerprints going into them. They are all aspects of this life that the Lord will guide each and every one of us into.

Why then is all this a challenge? Letting go and submitting to the control of Another, in a human way feels risky. We desire our ducks to be in a row, and we desire to be the ones to make that happen. However, who else should we put our confidence in? Ourselves who struggle daily, or the One who authored everything about life as we know it?

PERSONAL REFLECTION

LEADER NOTE: This following question is completely optional and is intended for the participants' personal reflection. But do feel free to explore using the question within your groups meeting.

READ Psalm 55. It's almost like David has been wrestling with the same matters of life that we do today. What in his words do you identify with? Why is that? As you consider all those elements of this life that cause all kinds of worry and anxiety, pay attention to the moments in the Psalm where David cries out to God, and then close this moment, in prayer, with the words of vs.22-23?