



MACARTHUR GROUP LEADER GUIDE

For the week of October 1, 2023

COMMUNITY GROUP VISION AND MISSION

Community groups exist to lead each other and the community to trust and follow Christ. As a church, we want to delight in God first and make disciples who make disciples. **Disciples** are those who are **following** Jesus, are **being changed** by Jesus, and are **committed to the mission** of Jesus.

RELATIONAL GUIDELINES

It is important that we make everyone feel valued as they share. These guidelines exist to help you facilitate conversation in your group that will help others learn and understand the importance of having intentional conversations.

WE PROVIDE A SAFE PLACE | This is a place where people can be open, real, and honest with their struggles and victories. What is shared in the group stays in the group.

WE LISTEN WELL | Let's value one another during discussions by really listening to what is being shared. Try to avoid thinking about how you are going to respond or what you are going to say next. Allow a pause in conversation after someone shares. Allow silence in the group as necessary. Silence provides an opportunity for members of the group to process the topic or question being considered.

WE CULTIVATE CONVERSATION | Be considerate of others as they share - no side conversations. Be sensitive about the amount of time you share. Be self-aware of how you are personally affecting the environment through your words, actions, and non-verbal communication.

WE OWN OUR INPUT | It's easy to talk about the issues of others, but for our purposes, we want you to put yourself on the table. Try to use "I" statements rather than "them," "the church," "us," "we," etc. Let's own what we say.

WE REFLECT RATHER THAN RESOLVE | We are not here to fix each other. Jesus does that part. Give encouragement: speak truth, and point people to Jesus. Don't try to solve problems. When people are sharing something deeply personal, let them. These times of sharing often lead to great reflection on what God is doing in our hearts, so do not try to rescue someone to make them feel better about themselves by providing immediate condolences. This will often cause them to stop sharing. It is important that we allow Him to work in our conversations and lives.

WE USE THE BIBLE AS OUR GUIDE | We will resolve any disagreements biblically. When conflict or sin issues arise, we want to make sure we are honoring God and each other in the way we treat one another. While opinions may vary and positions may differ, we will look to Scripture as our final authority and submit to it.

SCRIPTURE RECAP (Matthew 5:10)

Take time to read through the Scripture above as a group.

- I. The Nature of Persecution.
 - A. Intimidation to abandon your righteous identity.
 - 1. Your Living Faith.
 - 2. Your Source of Faith.
 - B. Intimidation comes in different forms.
 - 1. External: The rocky ground
 - 2. Internal: The stony ground
- II. The Reward of Persecution.
 - A. Serves as the test of your righteous identity.
 - B. Serves as the catalyst for kingdom expansion.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Let these questions be a framework for you as you lead your group. These questions are meant to open conversation and aid you in taking the conversation deeper by asking follow-up questions that lead to shepherding their heart. Shepherd well, be faithful, and make disciples.

QUESTION | Was there anything you heard from the sermon that caught your attention or challenged you?

QUESTION | How would you define persecution? What are some examples of persecution we see in the Scripture?

QUESTION | In what form is persecution being applied in your life right now? External or Internal? What aspect of your faith is being challenged?

QUESTION | How may God be calling you to engage in kingdom expansion in light of that persecution?

PRAYER REQUESTS

EPHESIANS 6:18: “And Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all of the Lord’s people.”

Each week in our groups, we want to focus on the “Empty Chair.” Take time to pray over the names of people close to you but far from God as well as any items that were shared during your discussion time.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ☐ Men’s Dinner: October 10th
- ☐ Begin to plan your group's October missional engagement. Utilize Halloween if possible!

ATTENDANCE

Please let us know of any roster updates or changes to your meeting day, time, or location for your group. Please email Pastor Travis (tbenge@mbbcirving.org) and Laura Oliver (loliver@mbbcirving.org), and they will make the changes for you.