



## **LIFEGroup Relational Guidelines**

**TIME:** Please be sensitive about the amount of time you share. Group time is limited.

*I will seek to avoid conversation dominating.*

**LISTENING:** We seek to cultivate a group culture in which everyone can be real and open about their struggles and celebrations. If we feel like we must normally “wear a mask,” this is an environment in which we are encouraged to “take it off.”

*I commit to being an understanding listener. I will not hold side conversations while you are sharing. Before responding; I will first seek to listen to you all the way through. If your struggles are emotional, financial, legal, medical, relational, spiritual, sexual, or any other, I endeavor not to be surprised. I endeavor not to offer advice without your permission.*

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** What is said in the group stays in the group.

*I promise to hold your words in confidence. They stay with me.*

**“I” STATEMENTS:** 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 “you”, “them”, “they”, etc.

**SELF-AWARENESS:** Be aware of how you are personally affecting the environment through your words, actions, and non-verbal communication.

**SILENCE:** Can play an important role in group discussion as it allows for people to process the topic or question being considered. Don’t always jump right in - give people a moment.

**CONFLICT:** We will resolve conflict biblically. When conflict or sin issues between group members arise, we make sure to honor God and each other in the ways that resolve issues. The following are a few key Scriptures in this regard:

- If someone sins against you - *Matthew 18:15-20*
- Restoring someone in sin - *Galatians 6:1-5*
- Forgive a sinner - *Colossians 3:12-13*
- Reconciling differences - *Matthew 5:23-24, Matthew 7:1-5*

## Great. Big. GOD. Leaving the Blank Blank

# TALK IT OVER

### Key Scripture

<sup>16</sup> "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. <sup>18</sup> Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. <sup>19</sup> And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. <sup>20</sup> For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. <sup>21</sup> But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God." John 3:16-21 (ESV)

"...scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. <sup>4</sup> They will say, "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation. <sup>9</sup> The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance." 2 Peter 3:3-4; 9

<sup>7</sup> Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup> Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. <sup>9</sup> In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. <sup>10</sup> In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. <sup>11</sup> Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. <sup>12</sup> No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us." 1 John 4:7-12 (ESV)

"Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!" Romans 11:33 (ESV)

Search for the "Renewal Church Denver" app or "St. John's Denver" app in your app store.

More of God's truth all week long at [renewaldenver.tv](http://renewaldenver.tv) and [sjdenver.tv](http://sjdenver.tv)

### Start Talking: Find a conversation starter for your group. (15 Min)

- Share a high moment and a low moment from your week!

### Head: Start Thinking. Ask a question to get your group thinking. (10 Min)

- Read Isaiah 55:6-9. Do you find verses 8-9 comforting or unsettling?
- Read 1 John 4:7-12. Some people portray God as harsh. What evidence do we have of His love?
- Read John 3:16-21. Is God's action of sending Jesus one of love or judgement? Why do we often stop at verse 17? Does a loving God send people to hell?

### Heart: Start Sharing. Choose a question to create openness. (10 Min)

- "How can a loving God let so much pain into the world?" Were you ever able to help yourself or someone else answer this question?
- What does it look like for you to live a life of having trust in God's love even when things are going wrong in your life? What people in scripture serve as examples of faithfulness in times of trouble?
- Is saying "I take it on faith" an excuse for lack of knowledge or an act of faith in God? When does the "Fear of the Lord" mean learning answers and when does it mean leaving a question in God's hands?

### Hands: Start Doing. Commit to a step and live it out this week. (10 Min)

- What's an area of biblical or apologetic (concerning the defense of the faith) knowledge that you're weak on and can learn more about this week? What's a question/doubt/fear you need to place in God's hands this week?
- How will your life tell others around you that you believe God is good even when you're not sure what's going on?

### Start Praying: Here's some prayer language you can use. (15 Min)

- Lord, your ways are unsearchable and your wisdom is above my understanding! You teach us that Love is not just a feeling, but embodied in Jesus. Forgive our doubts and teach us to trust. Nourish us in your word and open the floodgates of Heaven to us in prayer. Amen.

### Trios: Split into same-gender groups of three. (15 Min)

1. What was a memorable passage from your Life Journal (or other Bible reading plan) reading this past week?
2. What's something you'd like someone else to check in with you about this week?
3. What good can we do around here (are there any community needs God is calling us to meet)?
4. Pray for one another.

# Group Prayer Ideas

## Pray for Each Other

- Everyone share their prayer requests before entering into the time of prayer;
- As you open a time of spontaneous prayer, ask people to pray for each other's requests / not their own;
- *Option: Have one person record the group's prayers in a prayer journal. Periodically review the journal to see just how much God answers prayer!*
- *Option: Conclude with the Lord's Prayer or Apostle's Creed.*
- *Option: Do a "Prayer Exchange," assigning people to pray for one another this week, & text as you do.*

## Responsive Psalm Prayer

- Choose a psalm (ex: 13, 116, 136, 139, etc.);
- Have the leader and the people pray through the Psalm by trading verses responsively, OR go around the circle and have each person take the next verse.

## Missional Prayer

- Have everyone go around and pray specifically for a non-Christian friend, neighbor, co-worker, etc.
- *Option: Have everyone use the "MissionHub" app to set a prayer reminder for that person OR write the name on a 3x5 index card, take it with them and put it somewhere that they'll see it.*

## Category Prayer

- The leader guides the group by inviting spontaneous prayer around a "category" at a time, allowing a couple of minutes per category;

### Ex: Relational Circles

Our Families  
Our Church  
Our Neighbors  
Our Co-Workers  
Our City  
Our Country  
Our World

### Ex: A.C.T.S.

Adoration  
Confession  
Thanksgiving  
Supplication

### Ex: Lord's Prayer

Petition 1: Holy Be Your Name  
Petition 2: Your Kingdom Come  
Petition 3: Your Will Be Done  
Petition 4: Give us Today our Daily Bread  
Petition 5: Forgive us our Trespasses  
Petition 6: Lead us Not into Temptation  
Petition 7: Deliver us from Evil

### Ex: Healing

Physical  
Emotional  
Spiritual

## Simultaneous Prayer

- Set a timer (ex: 3 min) and ask everyone to pray simultaneously (out loud) until the timer runs out.

## Timed Prayer

- Set a timer (ex: 20 min) and then go around the circle taking turns praying until the timer runs out.

## Trios Questions

1. Choose a "Connect with God" Question:
    - a. How did you see God at work in your life this week?
    - b. What has God been teaching you in His word this week? Is there anything you need to repent of?
    - c. What was a memorable passage from your Life Journal (or other Bible reading plan) reading this past week?
  2. What's something you'd like someone else to check in with you about this week?
  3. Choose a "Love Your Neighbor" or "Serve Our City" Question:
    - a. What kind of conversations are you having with non-Christians?
    - b. How's your weekly 3-2-1 challenge going? (3 Conversations with New People, Learn 2 Names, Make 1 Meaningful Connection)
    - c. What good can we do around here (are there any community needs God is calling us to meet)?
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