

Better Together

Life Group Leaders Guide

Objective

This guide contains the information and questions you will need to lead a life group study during our current sermon series. Our aim is to spark Spirit-led, Bible-centered conversations that anyone can participate in regardless of how biblically literate they may or may not be. **The win** that we want you to experience is when your group members **connect** more closely with each other and with God so that they are encouraged to move forward in living out their faith.

Directions

The *Purpose* and *Move* sections are for the leader to read to the group to provide clarity. **Do not feel pressured to cover all the questions.** Decide which ones may work best for your group. You will see brief notes interspersed between groups of questions to help give the group context for their answers. The *Notes and Commentary* section (when included) is optional reading for the leader to get background information and better understanding of the passages before leading the discussion.

Series Overview

While Jesus does save us individually, he saves us into a people. It is only when we understand who we are together as the people of God, that we truly understand the access to God we have, the hope we have, and just how strong WE 3 are together. In Christ, WE are BETTER TOGETHER.

Better Together Series Schedule

Week	Sermon Date	Topic of sermon and life group
1	9/16	Better Experience
2	9/23	Better Hope
3	9/30	Better Life

The Point Church Life Group Curriculum

Better Life

Purpose of Study

God's purpose for Christian community is for us to encourage one another.

Flow of Study

Icebreaker: Who did you receive an encouraging word or message from this week, and how did it affect you?

Move #1: Let's begin by unpacking any thoughts that you took away from this weekend's sermon.

1. Did anything stand out to you from the message this weekend? Any insights or questions?
2. Did you feel convicted to act on something from the message?

Move #2: Read through the passage in Philippians and notice how Paul, the famed apostle, finds strength and encouragement from this group of believers.

Philippians 1:3-11 (NIV)

3 I thank my God every time I remember you. **4** In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy **5** because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, **6** being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

7 It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart and, whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. **8** God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.

9 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, **10** so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, **11** filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

1. What stands out to you from this passage?

2. Paul thanks God for this church's partnership in the gospel. Is there anyone in your life who (past or present) has poured into you in a significant way? How so?
3. Why is it important to have Christian partners who can pour into you spiritually and who you can also pour back into?
4. Read verses 5-8 again. If people were to look at your life, how would they see you as a partner in advancing the gospel of Jesus?
5. Paul speaks in very affectionate terms of these fellow believers. What does it take to really let each other into our hearts?
6. Read verses 9-11 again. How can we help each other grow in our knowledge and discernment? Why is this important?
7. How has your life produced more "fruit" (verse 11) as a result of relationships within the church or this Life Group?

Move #3: Read Philippians 4:14-20.

Philippians 4:14-20 (NIV)

14 Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. 15 Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; 16 for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid more than once when I was in need. 17 Not that I desire your gifts; what I desire is that more be credited to your account. 18 I have received full payment and have more than enough. I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. 19 And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

20 To our God and Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

8. How did the church in Philippi specifically help Paul in his missionary work of church planting? What does this say about the church at Philippi?
9. Has there ever been a time in your life where you needed support from friends or family? If so, did you receive it, and how did that make you feel?
10. What are some specific ways that we as a Life Group be "better together" by supporting one another?

NOTE: Paul assures the church that, as they have encouraged him by helping meet his needs, God will in turn supply everything they need (verse 19).

11. How have you seen God work in your own life as you have encouraged others?
12. How can the emotional support, financial generosity, and acts of encouragement we do for each other point us and others toward Jesus?

Next Steps:

- Write a thank you card, send a text, or make a phone call this week to someone who has poured into you or has been a major source of encouragement in your life.
- Look for people who you can support, encourage, or mentor.
- Pray that God would develop within you a heart for true community.

Prayer: End your study with a time of praying with and for each other. Take requests, but be sure to pray also about what you've discussed today.

Notes and Commentary

(The following are pieces of commentary, facts, and links based on the passages of this study in order. Use them optionally to help supplement your personal preparation.)

The Apostle and his Friends is the New English Bible's caption to sum up the message of Philippians. This impression of intimacy and cordiality is re-echoed by all commentators, and forms the most noticeable characteristic which distinguishes Philippians in the Pauline literature. The word 'joy' in its verbal and noun forms is found sixteen times in the four chapters of the letter....

The value of this fact lies surely in its clear indication that Paul was enabled to rejoice in the most trying circumstances of his captivity. The example of a man whose life is filled with joy, and his exhortations to 'rejoice in the Lord', do not proceed from some ivory tower of peace and security. On the contrary, the writer is Paul the prisoner, who is awaiting news which may spell his death; and one can, with a little sympathetic imagination, share the tension behind such verses as 1:20, 22–23; 2:17; 3:10–11.

(Ralph P. Martin, Tyndale Commentary, *Philippians*)