

Red Letter Christian

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

Sadly, when people think of Jesus-followers it is a far cry from who Jesus actually is. After all that Jesus has done for us, we cannot be content with the picture and representation that we are sharing. We must change the story and perception of who Jesus is. We believe that if people truly met the real Jesus, they would really fall in love with Him. In Red Letter Christian, we will be looking at the words of Jesus, so that we become like Jesus, so the world will see Jesus.

Red Letter Christian Series Schedule

Week	Sermon Date	Topic
1	10/20/19	Foundation
2	10/27/19	Being
3	11/3/19	Socials
4	11/10/19	Serve
5	11/17/19	Go
6	11/24/19	Forgive

The Point Church Life Group Curriculum

Serve

The Big Idea

The cross is the model for our service.

Flow of Study

Icebreaker: What is a unique talent or ability you have?

Move #1:

1. What stood out to you from the message this weekend about *servicing*?
2. We are often told that in serving others, we are also blessed. Do you think this is true? Why or why not?

Move #2: Jesus is a model for our service. Next, let's look at how Jesus defines service.

Read Matthew 20:20-28 (NIV)

20 Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Jesus with her sons and, kneeling down, asked a favor of him.

21 "What is it you want?" he asked. She said, "Grant that one of these two sons of mine may sit at your right and the other at your left in your kingdom." **22** "You don't know what you are asking," Jesus said to them. "Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?" "We can," they answered. **23** Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink from my cup, but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared by my Father." **24** When the ten heard about this, they were indignant with the two brothers. **25** Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. **26** Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, **27** and whoever wants to be first must be your slave— **28** just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

3. What do you think was the mother's motive behind her question to Jesus in verse 21? How can pursuing worldly "greatness" hinder us from serving like Jesus?

Note: In verse 22, Jesus asks the sons of Zebedee (James and John) if they are able to "drink the cup" he is going to drink, which is likely a reference to his suffering. Both answer that they are willing, and later James became the first of the apostles to be martyred (Acts 12:2).

4. How is a willingness to participate in Christ's suffering an act of service? What would this look like for you?
5. How does the ability to serve give us an opportunity to grow closer in our relationship with God?

6. What gets in the way of serving God and the people in our lives?
7. The desire to be served is widespread in our consumerist culture. How does this desire differ from the values Jesus was promoting in this passage? What role can the church play in reorienting society's view of consumerism?
8. How can we reflect the true heart of Jesus to unbelievers by the way we go about serving them?

Move #3: Spiritual gifts are a powerful way God may use us to serve someone else. Let's look closely at what the Bible says in regards to spiritual gifts.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 (NIV)

There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. **5** There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. **6** There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. **7** Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. **8** To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, **9** to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, **10** to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. **11** All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.

9. What is the purpose of a spiritual gift? What are our gifts to be used for according to verse 7?
10. What is the significance of the word "each" in verse 7? Why would God not give all spiritual gifts to one person?
11. Do you think this is an exclusive list of spiritual gifts? Why or Why not?

Note to Leader: This is one of six different lists of spiritual gifts found in the New Testament. None of these lists are the same. There are overlaps, but overall there are about 22 different gifts noted and no list includes all of them.

12. Do you feel like you are fulfilling your God-given purpose for serving? Explain.

Next Steps: The following are things you could challenge your members to do in order to take what you studied in this curriculum farther.

1. Continue reading the 40-day Red Letter Challenge.
2. If you do not know your spiritual gift(s) take some time to explore this. Ask God to reveal a purpose for your gifts. Ask yourself how God can be glorified through your talents, skills, or abilities.
3. If you are not already, sign up to begin serving at our church.

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 to help supplement your group time or for your personal preparation.

On 1 Corinthians 12:4-11

Paul elucidates spiritual gifts from three different angles: They are bestowed freely by the Spirit's grace (v. 4), are intended to be used in a Christ-like attitude of servanthood (v. 5), and are the result of God's powerful working in a person's life (v. 6). Verse 7 employs yet a fourth term, "manifestations," and stresses that all the Corinthian Christians have at least one such gift, which is to be used for mutual edification (cf. Eph. 4:11–13).

Any study of the spiritual gifts should include not only 1 Corinthians 12–14 but Romans 12:3–8 and Ephesians 4:7–13 as well. None of the various lists of gifts Paul gives in these chapters is identical, suggesting that none of them, individually or together, is intended to be comprehensive. Paul's use of the term *charisma* elsewhere (e.g., for celibacy and marriage in 7:7), like his use of a variety of terms for spiritual gifts in 12:1–6, suggests that the concept is not as fixed or technical an expression as some have made it out to be. The range of functions covered by Paul's various lists of gifts makes it likely that any combination of talents, abilities, and endowments, however suddenly given or leisurely cultivated, may qualify as spiritual gifts, if a believer uses them for God's glory and his work in the world. Certainly Paul's own unique preparation for Christian ministry as a Hellenistic Jew and Roman citizen makes it difficult to believe that he would have viewed all of his spiritual gifts, including preaching and teaching (Acts 13:1), as acquired only after his conversion. But precisely because all of the gifts have non-Christian analogues, a talent or ability becomes a *charisma* only when it is used by a believer for the "common good" (v. 7).

...In general, there is little to commend either the approach that restricts a particular gift to a uniquely supernatural manifestation or the approach that leaves a gift virtually indistinguishable from a natural talent. Carolyn Osiek's words on prophecy prove particularly helpful: It "is the living word that compels to constructive action, that rends our hearts and pushes us to deeper connectedness with life, so that we dare to reach out to others with greater love and faith." She continues, "If today in many of our contexts, it does not take the same form as it did in the Pauline churches, that is only because the prophetic Spirit is sufficiently agile to adapt to changed cultural assumptions and behavior." What is true of prophecy is true of teaching, of helping, of administering, and so on. God may use and cultivate innate abilities or give people brand-new capacities. It is entirely up to him.

...Surely then a crucial question for believers in every time and culture is how they determine what their individual gifts are. Various diagnostic tools have been developed, from the relatively simple to the quite sophisticated, and these can be helpful in confirming suspicions and suggesting new possibilities. But most of the church down through history has not had access to these tools, and God can overrule the natural desires or abilities that these various diagnostic tests disclose. So all Christians remain responsible for praying, searching their hearts, trying out ministries, and seeking loving but truthful feedback from mature believers to guide them in ascertaining their distinctive gifts. (Craig L. Blomberg, *NIV Application Commentary: 1 Corinthians*)