



FALL WEEK 2 | September 20-21, 2025



### LEADER NOTES

- ◇ **Life Group Commitment Discussion.** If you didn't go over this last week, make sure you take time to go over the Commitment Form this week or review what you talked about with anyone who missed the first week.
- ◇ **Reach out to those who missed last week**
- ◇ **You don't have to answer every question.** Pick the ones that fits your group best. Remember it's only week 2 and people are still getting to know one another if you lead a newer group.
- ◇ **Note on Prayer.** Check out the Tips on Group Prayer at the end of this Leader's Guide.
- ◇ **Use the audio guide for more insights:** [Leader Tools](#)
- ◇ **Finalizing social and service projects?** Check out:
  - [Service project ideas](#)
  - [Social ideas](#)



### ATTENDANCE & ONLINE GROUPS

- ◇ **Submit attendance:** [Post attendance](#)
- ◇ **Online Groups:** Get [tips and tutorials!](#)



### UPCOMING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### ◇ North Coast Men's Conference - October 24-25

Join us Friday evening, October 24 & Saturday morning, October 25, for the fourth North Coast Men's Conference the Vista Campus! Come ready to recharge and refocus on God's call for us with teaching led by pastors Chris and James Griffin, along with worship, activities, and tourneys! Register at [northcoastchurch.com/mens-conference/](http://northcoastchurch.com/mens-conference/).



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#### ◇ Women's Gathering-October 14

You won't want to miss this incredible evening at the Vista Campus Tuesday, October 14! Receive biblical encouragement, practical leadership tools, and a time of refreshment. Featuring speaker Megan Fate Marshman. Register at [northcoastchurch.com/womens-gathering/](http://northcoastchurch.com/womens-gathering/).



## LEADER DISCUSSION GUIDE

### WARM UP



1. In this weekend's story, friends carried a paralyzed man to Jesus. If you had friends who could carry you anywhere, where would you want them to take you?

- **Additional Thought:** This lighthearted question mirrors the idea of community, friendship, and going out of your way for someone. You may hear answers like beaches, ballgames, or reminding them of Jesus!
- **Additional Scripture:** "A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity." Proverbs 17:17
- **Additional Question:** Who has "carried" you in a hard or important season of life?
- **Conversation Caution:** Some may feel isolated or lack strong friendships. Gently affirm the Life Group as a space for support.

2. If you could choose a fun or creative way to enter every room, what would it be?

- **Additional Thought:** This connects humorously to the paralyzed man's roof entry in the story. It opens the door to laughter and creativity.
- **Additional Question:** What "entrance" from a movie or show sticks with you? For example...for me it's from Mulan when Mushu is asked, "Who are you?" and his response is, "Your worst Nightmare."
- **Conversation Caution:** Keep the tone light, this is designed to warm up, not go deep.
- **Group Dynamic Tip:** Use this as a "speed round" with 10 seconds max per answer. Give everyone 1 min to gather their thoughts then GO!

3. What is something that stood out to you from this weekend's message?

- **Additional Thought:** This question allows personal reflection, especially for those still processing the message.
- **Conversation Caution:** If responses turn toward criticism or confusion, gently guide back to personal reflection and impact.

### KNOW IT



1. This weekend saw Jesus dine at Matthew's house and the stir it caused. In Luke 19:1-10, Jesus dines with another tax collector. Read both passages (Matthew 9:1-13 and Luke 19:1-10). What similarities do you notice in these two stories? What differences?

- **Additional Thought:** Both Matthew and Zacchaeus are tax collectors changed by an encounter with Jesus. Jesus initiates with both and shocks the religious crowd.
- **Additional Scripture:** "I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." Luke 5:32
- **Additional Question:** What do these stories tell you about the kind of people Jesus moves toward?
- **Conversation Caution:** Some may default to reading this as just "Bible history." Keep the focus on Jesus' character and how He surprises us.
- **Group Dynamic Tip:** Split the group—have half read Matthew, half read Luke, then come back together to compare.

2. If you had to describe Jesus' values or what seems important to Him from His interactions in these stories, what would you say?

- **Additional Thought:** Words like compassion, pursuit, inclusion, mercy, and mission will likely come up. Help the group identify *why* those values matter.
- **Additional Scripture:** Matthew 20:28 – "Even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."
- **Additional Question:** What values in Jesus challenge you the most personally?

- **Conversation Caution:** Avoid cliché answers like “love” without unpacking them. Push for clarity and connection to the stories.

3. How do these stories challenge the way we think about who is ‘worthy’ of God’s attention?

- **Additional Thought:** These stories flip expectations. Jesus doesn’t gravitate to the “religious elite” but seeks the overlooked, rejected, and morally messy.
- **Additional Scripture:** “Man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.” 1 Samuel 16:7
- **Additional Question:** Who might we overlook or avoid that Jesus would walk toward?

## SHARE IT



1. In this weekend’s story, the friends expected Jesus to heal the man physically, but He forgave his sins instead. Have you ever asked God for something and received something different than you expected? How did you respond?

- **Additional Thought:** Like the paralyzed man’s friends, we often ask for physical relief, but God may address a deeper spiritual need.
- **Additional Scripture:** “Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think...” Ephesians 3:20
- **Additional Question:** Looking back, can you now see how God’s “different answer” was actually better?
- **Conversation Caution:** Be careful not to minimize painful seasons. Hold space for disappointment and trust-building.

2. People were shocked that Jesus welcomed tax collectors and sinners. Have you ever been welcomed into a space you felt like you didn’t belong? How did that change the way you see yourself or others?

- **Additional Thought:** This is a deeply human experience. When someone takes us in, especially when we feel disqualified it shifts our identity.
- **Additional Scripture:** “Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.” Romans 15:7
- **Additional Question:** What did that moment teach you about grace?
- **Conversation Caution:** This could bring up painful memories of exclusion. Make sure everyone feels safe to share or stay silent.

## LIVE IT



1. Jeff challenged us to think about who we’re bringing to Jesus. When you think about inviting someone to experience Him, what fears or hesitations come up for you? What would help you overcome those hesitations?

- **Additional Thought:** Many believers feel fear around rejection, awkwardness, or not knowing what to say. This question gives language to that and offers freedom to grow.
- **Additional Scripture:** “For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.” 2 Timothy 1:7
- **Additional Question:** Who has helped you grow in courage with your faith?
- **Group Dynamic Tip:** Ask each person to write a name they want to pray for and commit to encouraging each other throughout the week.

2. Jesus shows compassion in the stories we read. Compassion can be described as “empathy in action.” What do you think true compassion requires, and how might it look in our own lives?

- **Additional Thought:** True compassion goes beyond emotion it compels action, inconvenience, and empathy. It costs us something.
- **Additional Scripture:** “Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility...” Colossians 3:12
- **Additional Question:** What’s one small act of compassion you can take this week?
- **Conversation Caution:** Don’t let compassion be confused with people-pleasing or burnout. True compassion is Spirit-led and sustainable.
- **Group Dynamic Tip:** End with a challenge: each person commits to one act of compassion this week and reports back next time.

## TIPS ON GROUP PRAYER

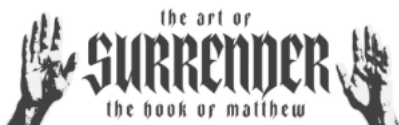
Prayer is an important part of being in a Life Group. Over the years, we’ve found that group prayer goes better when we follow three simple guidelines.

**WE PRAY FOR ONE TOPIC AT A TIME** - Anyone in the group is free to introduce a prayer request, either before prayer begins or during prayer time. Once a topic is introduced, the group focuses on that request alone. Once it’s covered, the group moves on to the next topic.

**PRAY MORE THAN ONCE** - Because the group is focusing on one topic at a time, each person is encouraged to pray several times during the prayer time for those topics they feel most led to pray about. No one is required to pray.

**WE KEEP OUR PRAYERS SHORT AND SIMPLE** - Group prayer goes better when members keep their prayers short and to the point. When someone prays for a long time, it’s hard for the other members to stay focused, and long prayers tend to intimidate those who are just learning to pray out loud in a group. No one is required to pray out loud.

- **Prayer Transition and Optional Question:** The #1 fear most people have is speaking in public. Group prayer would fall into this category. If you have new people in your group, going over “Tips on Group Prayer” is crucial. In most cases, it’s also a good reminder for returning group members. More than once, we’ve had people tell us they quit a Life Group or didn’t join a group because they had to pray out loud.
- **Additional Question** (An important one for new groups): Prayer is an amazing avenue God has given us to communicate with Him and He with us, but we also come to it with many different thoughts and feelings. Which of the following statements is most true for you?
  - Prefer to pray silently instead of out loud
  - Find my mind wandering when praying
  - Like to write out prayers
  - Look forward to time in prayer
  - Don’t really know how to pray
  - Other



Pastor Jeff Whye  
September 20-21, 2025  
Message #22 / Matthew 9:1-13  
[northcoastchurch.com/sermons](http://northcoastchurch.com/sermons)

## Faith That Brings Friends

### The Story

Matthew 9:1-13

They had a strong **BELIEF** in Jesus that kept them **MOVING** toward Him.

Belief + Movement = **CARE**

## **MAIN POINT 1. Our Faith Should Move Us to Action—Individually and in Community**

Hebrews 11:1, 11:6, James 2:14, Romans 10:9, Matthew 6 and Luke 11, 2 Chronicles 7:14, Matthew 18:20

Following Jesus **MUST** involve a **COMMUNITY** of faith.

## **MAIN POINT 2. Jesus Gives Us What We Need Most—Forgiveness Before Healing**

Isaiah 41:10, Matthew 28:8

Jesus **DOESN'T** always give you what you **WANT**, but He will always give you what you **NEED**!

The miracle that we all **NEED** is not **EXTERNAL**, it's **INTERNAL**: forgiveness and life in Christ.

## **MAIN POINT 3. Jesus Calls and Welcomes Sinners into Community**

Isaiah 61:1

The church is not a **COUNTRY CLUB**, it's a **HOSPITAL**.