



# BODY LANGUAGE

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE



*All Scripture quotations are from the Holy Bible, New International Version, NIV. Copyright © 2011 by Biblica, Inc. All rights reserved.*

# BODY LANGUAGE

## Small Group Study Guide

Welcome	A Note From Pastor Eric	5
Overview	Why Sermon-Based Small Groups?	6–7
	How Does This Study Work?	8
Intro	The One Another's of Scripture	9–10
Week 1	Show Hospitality to One Another	11–14
Week 2	Bear the Burdens of One Another	15–18
Week 3	Pray For One Another	19–222
Week 4	Sing With One Another	23–26
Week 5	Be Humble Toward One Another	27–30
Week 6	Forgive One Another	31–34
Week 7	Stir Up One Another	35–38
Week 8	Be at Peace with One Another	39–42
Resources	8 Week Bible Reading Plan	43–44
	8 Commitments of Small Groups	45
	Growth Points	46–48



Scan this code for weekly questions  
to discuss with your small group.

## A NOTE FROM PASTOR ERIC

We are a fast and efficient society, but let's be honest—we're not great at relationships. We wear ear buds when we travel and exercise. We communicate by email and texting. We work remotely. Our front porch has been moved to the backyard with a privacy fence to separate us from our neighbors. And most of our friends on social media are people we rarely see.

The truth is we are living in the most connected society in history, but when it comes to relationships, many of us are disconnected.

At Northview, we want to experience relationships as God intended. We don't just need others; we're created for one another. This means relationships aren't just a nice add-on to the Christian life; they are essential to our soul.

Like the early church in the book of Acts, we want to be the kind of people who are devoted to *one another* (Acts 2:42–47). We want deep, life-giving relationships as God calls us out of our comfort zones and challenges us to step into the lives of one another.

Deep in our soul, we are created for community. This means no more settling for superficial relationships where everything is always fine.

Sound too good to be true? The goal of this study is to help you take the next step to experience meaningful relationships where God is working for His glory, your growth and the good of others.

Your journey for biblical community starts here and I'm so excited to see what God will do in you and through you this year. Get ready to dive in and experience something new—maybe even life changing. Welcome to the small group ministry at Northview.

Together!

*Eric Carlson*

# WHY SERMON-BASED SMALL GROUPS?

## To Engage God's Word

When we study God's Word as a small group, we can challenge, deepen and strengthen the faith of one another as we press the truth of Scripture into our everyday lives. While there are many books, resources and studies available; ultimately, God's Word is what helps us grow in our faith and become more like Christ.

This is why we want to gather around the Bible and dig deeper into Scripture. We don't want to base our life on man's wisdom or the experience of others. We want to know what God says. This is where we see God's promises are real. His wisdom is beyond this world. And His Word has the power to transform lives. There's no replacement for the Bible: *Scripture first, Scripture most.*

## To Enter the Sermon Differently

Instead of a top-down approach where the study is driven by the sermon or a list of predetermined questions, we want to flip the focus and encourage everyone to be in their Bible before Sunday.

When we are in God's Word before Sunday morning, we come to church anticipating the sermon. This creates an active learning environment and changes the way we listen to the sermon. Rather than introducing the passage for the first time, the sermon will clarify and reinforce the meaning of the text as it moves from observation to interpretation. As we listen to the sermon and take notes, we are less likely to tune out because we know that we will be discussing the same topic with our group later that day or sometime throughout that week and want to grasp what it means.

More than rehashing the main points of the sermon, critiquing the message, nodding our heads in agreement or working through a list of questions 1, 2, 3, etc... a sermon-based study enables everyone to dive into God's Word and explore the passage on our own. Over time this simple practice will raise curiosity, increase ownership and help group members be ready to participate with their small group.

## To Emphasize Application

Let's be honest, it's easy to read the Bible or hear a sermon and forget it by breakfast the next day. But sermon-based studies keep the passage in front of us. Something changes when we go from hearing and reading Scripture to discussing it with a small group. This shifts participation from rows to circles where each person has the opportunity to ask questions, discuss what they are learning and share how these truths apply to their life.

Rather than hearing a sermon and moving on, sermon-based studies build in the necessary time for life change to occur as the Holy Spirit encourages, convicts and helps us apply God's Word. Over the course of one week, sermon-based studies are designed to engage the same topic three times as we move from *observation* on our own to *interpretation* during the sermon and *application* as a group.

Sitting in the same topic for a week and engaging with a passage in three different ways not only increases familiarity, but it also encourages people to think deeply about the message and meaning. Scripture is meant to be obeyed, not just listened to, read, studied or discussed. When we take time to reflect on what God says and ask, "What does this look like in my life?" it becomes the starting point for change to occur as we become *doers of the word, not hearers only*.

## To Strengthen Group Discussion

While the insights of a new believer versus a mature believer might vary, both are necessary in group discussion. As new believers often bring a unique perspective, their questions and takeaways can be refreshing to the rest of the group. Likewise, mature believers can provide deeper insights that enable new believers to grasp how the passage relates to the Bible as a whole.

Sermon-based studies provide the opportunity for everyone to interact with the same message. The sermon brings cohesion to small groups as it builds upon important themes from week to week. As the sermon lays out what the passage means, this prevents the group from slipping into "This is what the passage means to me..." which can be wrong, contradictory or worse, heresy.

# HOW DOES THIS STUDY WORK?

Whether you've studied the Bible for years or are newer in your faith, this study is designed to help you read, understand and apply God's Word. The format of this study guide is intended to be simple and accessible. This study examines each passage from three angles:

## **PERSONAL STUDY: What does this passage say?**

The first part of this study is to read the weekly passage for yourself. Our desire is for you to study the verses on your own before hearing the sermon on Sunday. Read carefully and look for details. Use this study guide to write down your thoughts and answer the weekly questions. As you observe the passage, this provides familiarity and leads to curiosity as you emerge with questions about the text. Your personal study isn't intended to take a long time. This study guide is a tool to change how you come to church and listen to the sermon.

## **SUNDAY SERMON: What does this passage mean?**

The second part of this study is based on the sermon. Now that you have spent time observing the passage by yourself, the sermon is intended to teach the meaning of the text and call you to respond. Rather than introducing the passage for the first time, the sermon will clarify the author's intent and move your personal study from observation to interpretation. As the sermon answers your questions this will make the passage more accessible and applicable. Working through the same passage in different ways, as readers and listeners, allows you to engage God's Word in deeper levels. If you miss the sermon, we encourage you to listen to it or watch it online prior to attending your small group. Use the sermon notes page in this study guide to write down questions and notes to share with your group.

## **SMALL GROUP: How does this passage impact us?**

The final part of this study will bring together your personal study and the sermon as you discuss and apply Scripture with your group. During this discussion, your group will summarize the main points of the passage, answer questions and identify ways to respond to and apply the text. The goal of small group isn't to rehash the sermon but to work together to press the truth of God's Word into our lives. We don't want to be hearers of the Word only, we want to be doers of the Word and have Scripture shape how we live.



# THE ONE ANOTHER'S OF SCRIPTURE

Did you know the phrase "one another" is mentioned almost 60 times in the New Testament? Whenever this phrase appears, the biblical author is trying to describe what community should look like among believers. According to the Bible, the assumption is Christians will live in community and share their lives together.

Community is more than red punch and cookies. It's more than what happens after the service when people stand around in conversation. And it's more than watching the Colts game with your small group. In some churches, the word *community* has been hijacked to describe anything Christians do as long as they are with other Christians.

But this isn't what the Bible is talking about when it lays out a vision for deep, life-giving relationships. Biblical community is based on active participation in a common interest. It's a commitment to others. This is the glue that held the early church together as they devoted themselves to one another and practiced mutual ministry.

Some of the deepest joys in life flow from biblical community, yet too many are settling for less and missing out. It's time we change this.

With nearly eight billion people on this planet, we believe God has placed you here for a reason. This is not an accident or coincidence. God has brought specific people across your path for a purpose. Aren't you a little bit curious to know why God has placed you here and surrounded you with these specific people?

As you enter the one another's of Scripture, your group is a natural place to cultivate biblical community and practice mutual ministry. Lean into these relationships. Have the courage to step out of your comfort zone and be ready to participate in the lives of your group. Get ready to take your small group to the next level as you pursue deep, life-giving relationships rooted in Christ.

Through this study, our goal is that you will find a renewed passion for what it looks like to be the church and how to relate to others. Let's reclaim what it means to experience biblical community in its richest and purest form.

## Commands not Suggestions

Before we dive into the one another's, it's important to know these verses aren't suggestions or recommendations. These are *commands*. This how we're called to interact and relate to others in the church.

At Northview, we want the one another's of Scripture to shape our relationships and define the way that we are a *family, body* and *team*. Imagine what would happen if everyone was committed to a common goal and actively participated in the life of one another.

## The One Another's of Scripture

love	don't lie
encourage	accept
greet	confess to
be humble	instruct
forgive	offer hospitality
have the mind of Christ	don't provoke
live in peace	be sympathetic
bear in love	be devoted
have compassion	be patient
agree with	be gentle
be like minded	admonish
don't pay back wrong	spur on to love
have equal concern	be kind
spur on to good deeds	don't grumble
live in harmony	do good
pray for	honor
don't slander	serve
don't judge	sing songs
don't deprive	build up

It's time to reclaim what it means to be the church and live in biblical community. This involves a level of authenticity that the world has no idea how to attain. Once you experience deep, life-giving relationships and grow in mutual ministry, there's no going back to shallow relationships where everything is always fine.



PERSONAL STUDY: Read the following verses and write down your observations.

<sup>8</sup> Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. <sup>9</sup> Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. <sup>10</sup> Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. <sup>11</sup> If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen. **1 Peter 4:8–11**

What key words or ideas stand out in this passage?

.....  
.....  
.....

What encourages, challenges or convicts you from this passage?

.....  
.....  
.....

What is one truth or takeaway that you can apply from this passage?

.....  
.....  
.....







PERSONAL STUDY: Read the following verses and write down your observations.

<sup>1</sup> Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. <sup>2</sup> Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. <sup>3</sup> If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves. <sup>4</sup> Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves alone, without comparing themselves to someone else, <sup>5</sup> for each one should carry their own load. **Galatians 6:1–5**

What key words or ideas stand out in this passage?

.....  
.....  
.....

What encourages, challenges or convicts you from this passage?

.....  
.....  
.....

What is one truth or takeaway that you can apply from this passage?

.....  
.....  
.....









PERSONAL STUDY: Read the following verses and write down your observations.

<sup>13</sup> Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise. <sup>14</sup> Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. <sup>15</sup> And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. <sup>16</sup> Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. **James 5:13–16**

What key words or ideas stand out in this passage?

.....  
.....  
.....

What encourages, challenges or convicts you from this passage?

.....  
.....  
.....

What is one truth or takeaway that you can apply from this passage?

.....  
.....  
.....







PERSONAL STUDY: Read the following verses and write down your observations.

<sup>15</sup> Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise,  
<sup>16</sup> making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.  
<sup>17</sup> Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is.  
<sup>18</sup> Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit,  
<sup>19</sup> speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord,  
<sup>20</sup> always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. **Ephesians 5:15–20**

What key words or ideas stand out in this passage?

.....  
.....  
.....

What encourages, challenges or convicts you from this passage?

.....  
.....  
.....

What is one truth or takeaway that you can apply from this passage?

.....  
.....  
.....









PERSONAL STUDY: Read the following verses and write down your observations.

<sup>5</sup> In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because,

“God opposes the proud  
but shows favor to the humble.”

<sup>6</sup> Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. <sup>7</sup> Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

**1 Peter 5:5–7**

What key words or ideas stand out in this passage?

.....  
.....  
.....

What encourages, challenges or convicts you from this passage?

.....  
.....  
.....

What is one truth or takeaway that you can apply from this passage?

.....  
.....  
.....







**PERSONAL STUDY:** Read the following verses and write down your observations.

<sup>29</sup> Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. <sup>30</sup> And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup> Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. <sup>32</sup> Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

**Ephesians 4:29–32**

What key words or ideas stand out in this passage?

.....  
.....  
.....

What encourages, challenges or convicts you from this passage?

.....  
.....  
.....

What is one truth or takeaway that you can apply from this passage?

.....  
.....  
.....









PERSONAL STUDY: Read the following verses and write down your observations.

<sup>19</sup> Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, <sup>20</sup> by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, <sup>21</sup> and since we have a great priest over the house of God, <sup>22</sup> let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. <sup>23</sup> Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. <sup>24</sup> And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup> not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. **Hebrews 10:19–25**

What key words or ideas stand out in this passage?

.....  
.....  
.....

What encourages, challenges or convicts you from this passage?

.....  
.....  
.....

What is one truth or takeaway that you can apply from this passage?

.....  
.....







**PERSONAL STUDY:** Read the following verses and write down your observations.

<sup>10</sup> Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. <sup>11</sup> Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. <sup>12</sup> Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. <sup>13</sup> Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

<sup>14</sup> Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. <sup>15</sup> Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. <sup>16</sup> Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

<sup>17</sup> Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. <sup>18</sup> If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. <sup>19</sup> Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.

What key words or ideas stand out in this passage?

.....  
.....

What encourages, challenges or convicts you from this passage?

.....  
.....

What is one truth or takeaway that you can apply from this passage?

.....  
.....







# 8 WEEK BIBLE READING PLAN

## 5 Minutes a Day

If you're not used to reading the Bible daily, you can start by reading one chapter a day. Over the next two months you will read through six books from the New Testament as you dive into six letters the Apostle Paul wrote to believers of the early church.

## 5 Ways to Dig Deeper

Below are 5 ways to dig deeper into Scripture. These simple practices are designed to help you slow down and grasp the meaning of the text. Try a method that works best for you.

1. Underline or highlight key words or phrases in the passage.
2. Read the passage and then summarize it in your own words.
3. Ask questions of the text: *who, what, why, when, where* and *how*?
4. Capture the big idea. What does this passage teach me about God? What does this passage teach me about myself?
5. Respond to the text. How would my life be different if I apply one truth from this passage to my everyday life?

### WEEK 1 Ephesians 1-6

- Monday chapter 1
- Tuesday chapter 2
- Wednesday chapter 3
- Thursday chapter 4
- Friday chapter 5
- Saturday chapter 6

### WEEK 2 Philippians 1-4

- Monday chapter 1
- Tuesday chapter 2
- Wednesday chapter 3
- Thursday chapter 4
- Friday (catch up)

**WEEK 3      Colossians 1-4**

- Monday      chapter 1
- Tuesday      chapter 2
- Wednesday      chapter 3
- Thursday      chapter 4
- Friday      (catch up)

**WEEK 4      1 Thessalonians 1-5**

- Monday      chapter 1
- Tuesday      chapter 2
- Wednesday      chapter 3
- Thursday      chapter 4
- Friday      chapter 5

**WEEK 5      2 Thessalonians 1-3**

- Monday      chapter 1
- Tuesday      chapter 2
- Wednesday      chapter 3
- Thursday      (catch up)
- Friday      (catch up)

**WEEK 6      Romans 1-5**

- Monday      chapter 1
- Tuesday      chapter 2
- Wednesday      chapter 3
- Thursday      chapter 4
- Friday      chapter 5

**WEEK 7      Romans 6-10**

- Monday      chapter 6
- Tuesday      chapter 7
- Wednesday      chapter 8
- Thursday      chapter 9
- Friday      chapter 10

**WEEK 8      Romans 11-16**

- Monday      chapter 11
- Tuesday      chapter 12
- Wednesday      chapter 13
- Thursday      chapter 14
- Friday      chapter 15
- Saturday      chapter 16

# EIGHT COMMITMENTS OF SMALL GROUP

## 1. SPIRITUAL GROWTH

I will pursue spiritual growth and encourage my group as they grow in their walk with Christ.

## 2. CULTIVATE RELATIONSHIPS

I will be present and make it a priority to know and stay connected with the people in my group.

## 3. ACCEPT OWNERSHIP

I will look for big and small ways to contribute and care for needs that come up in my group

## 4. BE AUTHENTIC

I will trust, be transparent and strive to be open while maintaining respect and confidentiality in my group.

## 5. EMBRACE ACCOUNTABILITY

I will invite my group to speak into my life while extending grace to my group.

## 6. CELEBRATE GROWTH

I will encourage and celebrate when God is working in the lives of my group.

## 7. SERVE TOGETHER

I will serve my group and look for ways to share the hope of the gospel with others outside my group.

## 8. MULTIPLY MINISTRY

I will be open to new members and as we grow, we will work to multiply so more people can experience what we have experienced.

# ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTIONS FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

**WEEKLY GAUGE:** What can I highlight from this week?

1. This week was great. My high was...
2. This week was bad. My low was...
3. This week was the same. I am stuck in a rut...

**VICTORY AND FAILURE:** What can I share from this month?

1. What is one win from this past month?
2. What is one failure from this past month?
3. How are you being recharged?
4. What has been most draining?

**MORAL GUARDRAILS:** How can my small group keep me accountable?

1. Am I aware of any unconfessed sin in my life?
2. Do I have anyone I need to forgive or ask for forgiveness?
3. Have I been jealous, lying or complaining?
4. Have I been with a man or woman in an inappropriate way?
5. Have I exposed myself to any explicit materials this week?
6. Have I looked for opportunities to point others to Christ?
7. How have I demonstrated love and respect to my spouse?
8. How have I sought to have spiritual input with my family?
9. What is one relationship I want to focus on?
10. How can my small group encourage me or hold me accountable?

# CHARACTER QUALITIES FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

WHAT CHARACTER QUALITY DO YOU WANT TO GROW IN THIS SEMESTER?

AS A SMALL GROUP, HOW CAN WE HELP YOU TAKE THIS NEXT STEP?

**Boldness** – not afraid to share your faith with gentleness and conviction

**Compassion** – empathy for someone and courage to act on their behalf

**Contentment** – at peace rather than worry, fear, anxiety, envy or jealousy

**Even-Tempered** – not reacting with sinful anger or a quick temper

**Faith** – unswerving confidence in God and His promise of good regardless of present circumstances

**Forgiveness** – releasing someone from a wrong that has been done and not dwelling on it

**Honesty** – truthful and above reproach in all things

**Initiative** – inviting people into your life and taking an interest in others through hospitality and service

**Joy** – supernatural delight in the Lord that overflows into a sincere love for others

**Kindness** – putting the needs and well-being of others first

**Patience** – a spirit of mercy, humility and trusting that God is in control

**Peace** – fulfillment and confidence that comes from being rightly related to God and others

**Purity** – thinking and acting in godly ways while fleeing from sexual immorality

**Self-Controlled** – bringing thoughts, emotions and actions under the control of the Holy Spirit

**Truth in Love** – willing to speak what's right while not being harsh

**Wholesome Speech** – build others up with words that edify; not vulgar, gossip, slander, lying or sarcasm

# SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

WHAT SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE DO YOU WANT TO GROW IN THIS SEMESTER?

AS A SMALL GROUP, HOW CAN WE HELP YOU TAKE THIS NEXT STEP?

**Accountability** – to be honest with yourself, honest with others and honest before God

**Bible study** – desire for God's Word; regular time of reading, studying, meditating and applying Scripture

**Worship** – engage with God and others by participating in weekend worship services

**Fasting** – take a break from food, media or activity to use this time to meet with the Lord through prayer, focus and dependence on Him

**Giving** – cheerfully and generously giving to the Lord and others through your time, talents and treasure

**Solitude** – spending some time alone and reflecting on how God is working in your life and discerning the next steps that God has for you

**Prayer** - a regular time of praise, confession and intercession for others

**Rest** – setting aside time to slow down and stop the busyness of life as a reminder that our final rest is in heaven

**Scripture memory** – hiding God's Word in your heart and reflecting on Scripture

**Serving** – looking for big and small ways to care for the needs of others

**Evangelism** – sharing your life and faith with someone who does not know God or has questions about faith

**Journaling** – writing down you the details of your day and recording how you see God working in your life

**Celebration** – thanking God for His goodness, faithfulness, and provision in your life





