

LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

PRAY TOGETHER

Gracious God, as we gather in Your presence, we are reminded of the diverse and beautiful community You have built here at Northview, a community rich in faith and united in purpose. We ask that Your Holy Spirit guide our conversation, helping us to humbly approach our differences with love and patience, just as Pastor Tommy and the pioneers of this church did so many years ago. May we be attentive to Your voice, seeing every disagreement as an opportunity for deeper dialogue and greater understanding, rather than division. Equip us to take meaningful action, fostering a spirit of unity that honors You and continues the legacy of faithfulness and boldness established in our church's history. Amen.

ICE BREAKER

Reflect on how Northview Church's journey from a small group in a Carmel Elementary School to a multi-campus church resonates with your personal experiences of faith communities. How do these stories of prayer, commitment, sacrifice, transformation, and community affect your feelings towards your role in our church today?

SERMON OVERVIEW

In this week's message in Romans, Pastor CJ challenges us to examine how we handle differences within our faith community. Not all differences need to become divisions. We're called to navigate the complexities of 'disputable matters' with love, humility, and grace. The text emphasizes that our unity in Christ should transcend our individual preferences or convictions on non-essential issues. This lesson is particularly relevant in our polarized world, where we're often quick to judge or dismiss those who think differently. As we reflect on this, we're encouraged to draw near to those with whom we disagree, lean low in humility, and lift each other up in love. This approach not only strengthens our church community but also reflects Christ's love to a watching world.

READ SCRIPTURE

ROMANS 14:1-12

CONNECT RELATIONALLY

- 1) Share a time when you had to navigate a crucial difference of opinion with someone close to you (family, friend, coworker). How did you handle it, and what did you learn from the experience?
- 2) In what ways might our personal convictions sometimes become stumbling blocks for others in the church, and how can we navigate this tension?
- 3) Consider, reflect, and share a time when you have judged someone else's faith based on a non-essential issue?

GROW
SPIRITUALLY

4) What specific issues was Paul addressing within the church community in this passage? How does understanding this historical context help us better interpret the passage?

5) According to the sermon and Romans 14:1-12, how should we differentiate between 'die for' 'defend' or 'discuss' beliefs and disputable matters? What criteria can you use to discern these in your community? Can you give examples of each from your own understanding?

6) Paul distinguishes between "weak" and "strong" faith in this passage, but Pastor CJ clarified that these aren't value judgments. What do these terms actually mean according to the passage and message? How does this differ from how we might typically use these words?

LIVE
GENEROUSLY

7) What are some practical ways we can consider our proximity, posture, and practice to 'draw near' and 'lean low' when facing disagreements with fellow believers so we can 'lift up in love'?

8) Pastor CJ stated that "the church that despises the weak among them misses the mark" and "the church that judges the strong also misses the mark." How might these same patterns show up in churches today? What can we do to make a difference in this area?

9) The sermon described how differences in the church can create "a rich, deep community of believers coming together in mosaic fashion, complementing, adding value and providing balance." How can your Life Group better embrace this "mosaic" approach? What practical steps can you take to build unity while respecting differences in non-essential matters?

TAKE
ACTION

Based on our conversation today, and how the Holy Spirit is moving within me, I am feeling convicted to take the following action (keep it simple):

Please ask each member to share their step if they have one. It is ok if you are still discerning and need time to process, pray and ponder.

PRAY
TOGETHER

Please take a few moments to ask each member to share a joy or praise and an area of concern. Ask someone to pray over these requests, and please distribute these to all group members so you may continue to intercede for one another between your meetings.

ENGAGE
TOGETHER

This month, we are celebrating Northview's 45th Anniversary and reflecting on the rich legacy of faith and spiritual heritage that we are blessed to be a part of. Consider sharing your experience and story through our App.