

# Life In Common

small group guide



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The Life In Common series is about practicing simple rhythms of the faith together. These gatherings are meant to be small, relational, and rooted in Scripture. Our hope is that every person would find 4–8 others to walk with through testimony, communion, prayer, meeting needs, and other simple practices of following Jesus.

## Why This Matters

Most Christians think of Sunday morning as the main time they are “fed” spiritually. But if our only meal with God is on Sunday, we’ll go hungry the rest of the week. God’s Word is daily bread.

That’s why in Life in Common we’re not just teaching on Sunday. We’re practicing together during the week. Each of us is challenged to gather with 4–8 other people, to open our Bibles, to share life, and to take part in the simple practices of the faith — things like testimony, communion, and meeting each other’s needs.

## What We’re After

**Shared Scripture** → We’ll open the same passages each week, not just to consume a sermon, but to contribute insight from our own time with God.

**Shared Practices** → We’ll take what we learn on Sunday and actually do it together in living rooms, around kitchen tables, at coffee shops, and in backyards.

**Shared Life** → Church is not just a big gathering. It’s family. Smaller groups of 4–8 create space where everyone can be known, heard, and loved.

## The Biblical Picture

Paul told Timothy to “rightly handle the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15). That’s not just a pastor’s job. That’s for all of us. When we gather in these smaller groups, we’re committing to not just listening, but responding.

Think of Acts 2:42–47 — the believers devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, to fellowship, to breaking bread, and to prayer. And what was the result? They shared life, they met needs, and the Lord added to their number daily.

## Setting Up the Group

When you gather your 4–8 people, remember — not everyone needs to be in the same place spiritually. In fact, it's healthier if they're not.

**Mix of Faith Journeys:** Some may be brand new to faith. Others may have walked with Jesus for decades. That's not a weakness — that's strength. Those who are seasoned can encourage. Those who are new can bring fresh passion and honest questions.

**Common Threads:** You might connect because of a season of life (young parents, college students, retirees), or because of a shared interest (hiking, coffee, board games). Or you might just have Jesus in common — and that's enough.

**Diversity is Healthy:** Don't overlook the beauty of being intergenerational and intercultural. God's family is bigger than people who look, think, or live just like you. Groups that stretch across age, culture, and background reflect the Kingdom.

## What to Expect Each Week

**1** Read & Reflect — Each person shares from Scripture you've been reading and what God has been showing you.

**2** Practice Together — Put into practice what has been taught in the previous Sunday's message.

**3** Encourage & Challenge — Call out what God is doing in one another's lives. Carry each other's burdens.

**4** Pray & Respond — End by asking, "Lord, how do You want us to respond this week?"

## How This Works

Here's the rhythm: the message is preached on Sunday, and then we take it with us into the week. The goal is not only to hear the Word but to live it out together. Each group will use the Sunday message as a launching point — talking through the teaching, asking how it applies personally, and then putting it into practice. This way, we don't just gather information. We practice transformation.

**Sunday** → Message preached with biblical truth and practical application.

**Follow-Up Email** → After each message, everyone who is signed up will receive an email with practical insights and steps to guide group conversation.

**Week** → Groups meet to discuss, reflect, and implement those practices together.

This pattern allows the Word of God to move from the pulpit to everyday life — shaping our homes, our friendships, and our community.

## What About Kids?

We believe discipleship is for the whole family. Children don't need another program as much as they need to see the church live like family. As groups form, each one will figure out the best way to involve kids.

But here's the principle: **value them, include them, let them see faith in action.** Our kids need parents who are discipled, and they need aunts and uncles in the faith who will model Jesus in the normal rhythms of life.

## When Biblical Questions Come Up

It's normal — and even healthy — for tough questions to arise in group conversations. Sometimes, someone will raise a biblical issue, and the answer won't be immediately clear. That's okay.

Here's how to handle it:

**Be Honest:** Don't feel pressure to have an instant answer. It's better to say, "I don't know, but let's find out together," than to give a shaky answer.

**Search Together:** Open the Bible, check cross-references, and see what God's Word already says.

**Follow Up:** If you can't resolve it in the moment, write it down. Bring it back next week after prayer, study, or checking with a pastor.

**Invite Pastoral Guidance:** If the question is significant or confusing, don't hesitate to reach out to a pastor for clarity.

## Set a Place and Time

Healthy rhythms don't happen by accident. That's why each group should set a consistent place and time that works for everyone.

**When:** Choose one time each week — plan for about 1–2 hours together. That gives space for Scripture, conversation, prayer, and unhurried connection.

**Where:** Meet in a place conducive to conversation. A living room, dining table, coffee shop corner, or backyard. Pick a spot where people feel comfortable sharing honestly.

**Consistency:** The power is in the rhythm. Put it on the calendar. Show up. Week after week, you'll find that God shows up too.

## Hospitality

Hospitality sets the tone. Some groups will gather around a meal, others around coffee or simple snacks. The important thing is not impressing people — it's making space where people feel welcome and cared for.

**Keep it Simple:** Don't feel pressure to prepare an elaborate meal or entertain. The goal is conversation, not performance.

**Share the Load:** Divide responsibilities. One person might host, others can bring snacks or drinks. Everyone contributes, everyone belongs.

**Out in the Community:** If you choose to meet in a coffee shop or restaurant, be great customers. Buy something. Tip well. May the management be thankful you're there and look forward to your return.

**Spirit of Welcome:** Whether it's your living room or a public space, pray that people will sense the presence of Jesus and the warmth of His people the moment they walk in.

## Everyone Plays a Part

This is not about one person preparing all the content. We'll teach on Sundays, but then we all put it into practice. The most powerful growth happens when everyone takes responsibility for one another's discipleship.

- Share your testimony.
- Pray out loud.
- Invite a neighbor to join.
- Look for ways to meet a need.

You don't have to be a pastor to do this — you just have to keep showing up, be vulnerable, and be willing to grow together.

**Go be the *church*.**