

GO: RIGHT WHERE YOU ALREADY ARE

Life Group Leaders Guide

Together Church

How to Use This Guide

This guide is built so you can open it Wednesday night and feel ready, even if you haven't had time to do extra study. Each week includes the text, the big idea, background you can actually use in the room, an icebreaker, discussion questions that move from the text to real life, an application push, a coaching note for that week's specific dynamic, and a prayer prompt to close.

You don't have to use every question. Read through the section ahead of time, pick the ones that fit your group best, and don't be afraid to let one good question run long if the group is engaged. A great life group conversation on 4 questions beats a rushed conversation on 10.

General Life Group Coaching

Your Job Isn't to Have All the Answers

You're not re-preaching the sermon. Your job is to create a room where people can process it out loud, wrestle with it honestly, and connect it to their actual lives. If a question comes up you don't know how to answer, it's okay to say so. "I don't know, let's think about that together" builds more trust than a confident answer that isn't quite right.

Silence Is Not a Problem

After you ask a question, count to ten in your head before you say anything else. Most leaders jump in way too fast to fill silence, which trains the group to wait you out instead of thinking. Real reflection takes a few seconds of quiet. Let it sit.

This Series Will Surface Real Stuff

Doubt, burnout, guilt about not doing enough, old wounds around church, these are all live wires in this particular series. That's a good thing, it means the material is landing. You don't have to fix every hard thing that comes up in the room. Sometimes the most pastoral thing you can do is simply acknowledge it ("that sounds really hard, thank you for sharing that") and keep the group moving, following up with that person individually later rather than turning the whole group session into an extended counseling moment.

End on Application, Not Just Information

Every week in this guide ends with a real, specific push toward action. Don't skip it, even if you're low on time. A group that only talks about ideas without ever naming a next step will feel like a book club. A group that regularly names one real, doable next step will feel like discipleship.

Week 1: Go

TEXT

Matthew 28:16-20

BIG IDEA

“Go” isn’t a command to leave. It’s a promise that wherever you already are, you’re in the right place.

Background & Commentary

This is Jesus’ last recorded instruction before returning to heaven, which is why it carries so much weight. In the original Greek, “go” is not actually the main command in the sentence, “make disciples” is. “Go” functions more like “as you are going,” riding alongside the main action rather than standing as a separate command. This matters because it reframes the whole verse: Jesus isn’t sending his disciples somewhere new, he’s telling them that wherever they’re already going is where disciple-making happens.

Worth noting in the text: Matthew tells us some of the eleven disciples worshiped Jesus and doubted him, in the same moment. Jesus doesn’t wait for their doubt to resolve before commissioning them. That’s a meaningful detail for a room that may have people at very different places in their faith.

The command itself is framed by two promises: Jesus’ authority (“all authority has been given to me”) and his presence (“I am with you always”). Those aren’t decorative, they’re the foundation the whole command rests on.

Icebreaker

Think of a time you assumed you’d have to travel or do something big to “do something for God.” What did you picture?

Discussion Questions

1. Read Matthew 28:16-17 together. Why do you think Matthew includes the detail that some disciples doubted, even after seeing the resurrected Jesus? What does that tell us about who Jesus commissions?
2. The word “go” in this passage functions more like “as you’re going” than a command to leave. How does that change the way you hear the rest of the verse?
3. Read Matthew 28:18-20 together. Notice that the command (“go and make disciples”) is framed by two promises: authority and presence. Why might Jesus have structured it that way instead of just giving the command on its own?
4. Where are the places you already go, every single week, without thinking about it? (Work, gym, school pickup, a regular coffee shop, etc.)
5. What would it look like to see one of those places differently this week, not as a stop on your schedule, but as a place you’re sent to?

Application

This week, pick one place you already go regularly and simply pay attention to the people there. You're not being asked to do anything dramatic, just to notice.

LEADER COACHING: *This is Week 1, so your group is just meeting this material for the first time. Resist the urge to move too fast through the background section, the grammar point about “go” as a participle is the hinge the entire series swings on. If people don't grasp that reframe in Week 1, later weeks will feel disconnected. It's worth spending real time here even if it means fewer discussion questions get covered.*

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Jesus, thank you that you don't wait for us to have it all figured out before you send us. Help us see the ordinary places we already go this week as the places you've sent us. Give us eyes to notice the people around us. Amen.

Week 2: Go... to Your Church Family

TEXT

Matthew 28:16-20

BIG IDEA

Before “go” ever sends you to the world, it starts in the room you're already sitting in, and it was never someone else's job to begin with.

Background & Commentary

Jesus commissions all eleven disciples together, not a specially gifted subset of them. These were fishermen, a former tax collector, men who had denied and doubted him just weeks earlier. There's no indication in the text that some were more “qualified” for the mission than others.

A helpful psychological concept for this week: diffusion of responsibility, first studied in a well-known 1968 Columbia University experiment. Researchers found that people were far less likely to help someone in distress when they believed other people were also aware of the situation. The more people who could act, the less any individual person felt personally responsible. It's a natural human tendency, not a moral failure, but it's worth naming directly, because it shows up constantly in church life (“someone else will probably check on them,” “someone else will probably serve”).

Jesus modeled discipleship primarily through proximity, not curriculum. He ate with the disciples, walked with them, corrected them, washed their feet. Discipleship in the Gospels happens mostly around a table, not on a trip.

Icebreaker

Have you ever assumed “someone else has this covered,” only to find out later that nobody actually did? What happened?

Discussion Questions

1. Read Matthew 28:16 together. Why do you think Jesus commissioned all eleven disciples together, rather than singling out the most gifted or prepared among them?
2. Diffusion of responsibility is the idea that the more people who could help with something, the less likely any one person feels responsible to actually do it. Where have you noticed this pattern in your own life, at church, at work, or elsewhere?
3. What's the difference between assuming "someone else will handle it" as a practical reality (some things genuinely are handled) versus using it as a quiet way to opt out?
4. Jesus built his disciples mostly through shared meals and everyday proximity, not a formal program. Who has discipled you this way, just by being present in your life over time? Have you ever been that person for someone else?
5. Is there a person or need in this room, or in our church, that you've been quietly assuming someone else would take care of?

Application

This week, name one specific way you can stop waiting for "someone else" and step in yourself, whether that's serving on a team, checking on someone, or simply showing up more consistently to this group.

LEADER COACHING: *This week can quietly turn into a guilt session if you're not careful, "we should all be doing more" can land as pressure instead of invitation. Keep steering back to identity, not performance: this isn't about earning anything, it's about recognizing that Jesus already handed the whole mission to ordinary people, no exceptions, which includes everyone in your group right now. Watch for someone using this discussion to spiral into self-criticism, and gently redirect toward grace.*

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Jesus, thank you that you never called us to do this alone or waited for the "right" people to step up. Show us where we've been quietly waiting for someone else, and give us the courage to be the one who shows up. Amen.

Week 3: Go... to Your Everyday

TEXT

Matthew 28:16-20, applied

BIG IDEA

You don't have to add a mission trip to your life. You already have a mission field, it's called your normal week.

Background & Commentary

This week moves from the church family (Week 2) outward into daily, ordinary life: work, neighborhoods, friendships, routine interactions. The theological point stays the same as Week 1's

reframe, “as you go”, but now applied very specifically to the places people spend most of their actual time.

A significant barrier for most people isn't theological, it's emotional: fear of saying the wrong thing, fear of an awkward conversation, fear of damaging a relationship. This week reframes the goal. Nobody is asked to “close the deal” on someone else's faith in a single conversation. The ask is much smaller and much more sustainable: be present, be honest, and let conversations unfold naturally over time rather than forcing a single high-stakes moment.

Icebreaker

Think of someone who influenced your faith just by being a consistent, honest presence in your life, not through a single big conversation, but over time. What did that look like?

Discussion Questions

1. What comes to mind when you think about “bringing up faith” with someone who doesn't share it? Where does that hesitation come from for you personally?
2. This week's message makes the point that you're not responsible for closing the deal on someone's faith, just for being present and honest. How does that change the pressure you might feel around this?
3. Who are the people already in your regular rhythm, coworkers, neighbors, teammates, gym regulars, that you might not have thought of as part of your mission field?
4. What's one small, low-pressure way you could be more present or more honest with one of those people this week?
5. Has anyone in the group had a faith conversation go better than expected? What made it feel natural instead of forced?

Application

This week, pick one person from your everyday routine and simply be intentional about one honest, present conversation with them, no agenda to “close” anything, just showing up as yourself.

LEADER COACHING: *This is a great week to share your own story if you have one, a time a conversation about faith felt natural rather than forced, or even a time it felt awkward and you learned from it. Modeling that vulnerability as the leader gives your group permission to admit their own hesitation instead of performing confidence they don't feel.*

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Jesus, thank you that we're not responsible for changing anyone's heart, only you can do that. Help us be present and honest with the people already in our lives this week, and take away the fear that keeps us quiet. Amen.

Week 4: Go... to Your City and the Nations

TEXT

Matthew 28:16-20; Acts 1:8

BIG IDEA

Same posture, different zip code. Local and global mission aren't separate categories, they're the same "as you go" lived out wider.

Background & Commentary

This final week widens the lens from personal, everyday mission (Week 3) out to citywide and global mission. The key supporting text, Acts 1:8, has Jesus telling his disciples they'll be his witnesses "in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth," a deliberate move from near to far, not an either/or.

A common barrier here is the idea that mission-minded people are a certain "type", naturally outgoing, adventurous, unafraid of the unfamiliar. The text doesn't support that. The same eleven ordinary, sometimes doubting disciples from Week 1 are the ones sent to the ends of the earth. "Sending" language also matters here: praying for missionaries, funding trips, and caring for missionary families are all legitimate expressions of "going," not lesser substitutes for it.

Icebreaker

Have you ever assumed you weren't "the type" for something, missions, a certain ministry, a certain risk, only to find out later that wasn't really true?

Discussion Questions

1. Read Acts 1:8 together. Why do you think Jesus lists Jerusalem (near), Judea and Samaria (a bit further), and the ends of the earth (furthest) instead of just saying "go everywhere"?
2. What comes to mind when you hear the word "missionary"? Where do you think that picture comes from?
3. How does seeing local and global mission as the same posture, just a different radius, change how you think about opportunities closer to home?
4. Sending (praying, giving, supporting) is as real a form of "going" as physically traveling. Which of those feels most accessible to you right now, and why?
5. As a group, what would it look like to meaningfully support a local mission initiative or the upcoming Jamaica trip, whether or not any of you go in person?

Application

This week, take one concrete step toward either our local initiative or the Jamaica trip, even if that step is simply learning more or committing to pray for the team regularly.

LEADER COACHING: *This is the series finale, so it's a great week to zoom out with your group. Ask what stuck with them most across all four weeks, and give people room to name where they've actually taken a step, not just what they've thought about. Celebrate any real movement, however small, publicly serving, a hard conversation, filling the Blessing Box. Small, named wins build momentum better than one big call to action at the very end.*

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Jesus, thank you that this mission was never meant to end with us, it was always meant to go all the way to the ends of the earth. Show us our part in that, whether it's next door or across the ocean, and give us willing hearts to say yes. Amen.