Life Group Leaders' Guide: Bridge Series — Week 4

Overview
This guide is designed to help your group reflect on the call to reach the people around you with the love and message of Jesus Christ. Pastor Norman walked us through five practical steps for fulfilling the Great Commission in our everyday lives. This is not a call reserved for pastors or professionals. It is a call for every follower of Jesus to reach their world, one relationship at a time.

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)
Open by inviting the group to pause and quiet their hearts before God.

Pray for Jesus to renew their minds and help them remember His promises. Ask Him to reveal any unbelief, fear, disappointment, or comfort that keeps them from joining His work.
Ask God for humility, courage, and faith to "roll the stone away" and step into what He is doing with authentic aloha.

Close by asking Jesus to unite the group and make them faithful bridges of His love, mercy, and Kingdom work.

Worship Song Suggestions (10 minutes)
"God of Revival" – Bethel Music

"Available" – Elevation Worship

"Build Your Kingdom Here" – Rend Collective

"I Speak Jesus" – Charity Gayle / Here Be Lions

Ice Breaker (10 minutes)
Question: Think of one person who showed up for you consistently, even when you were not easy to love or reach. What did their persistence mean to you?

Key Takeaways (5 minutes)
Use these as a framework throughout your discussion.

- The Great Commission is personal. Jesus did not issue a mass announcement. He approached individuals and invited them into a relationship that would change the world.
- Mission begins with prayer. Before you take a single step toward another person, the work starts on your knees.

- Presence matters more than polish. You do not need a degree in theology or a perfect testimony. You need to show up, be real, and listen well.

- Illogical obedience often produces the greatest fruit. The most significant moments in Pastor Norman's ministry looked like mismatches on paper. God is not limited by what makes sense to us.

- Discipleship multiplies. Alakaʻi was reached. He reached his mother. He reached two college athletes. Those two athletes are now reaching their teammates. One relationship, invested faithfully, produces a chain that does not stop.

- The season matters. This is not a time to wait for better circumstances or more confidence. The doors that are open right now may not stay open.

The Five Steps:

1. Supplication — Pray first and pray consistently for those far from God.
2. Immersion — Position yourself among people who do not yet know Jesus.
3. Conversation — Initiate genuine, unhurried conversation.
4. Connection — Move from conversation to real friendship built on listening.
5. Commission — Carry the torch of the Great Commission forward into your specific world.

Discussion Questions

Opening — on Supplication (10–15 Minutes)

1. Pastor Norman said that his mother prayed for him faithfully before he came to the Lord, and that he ran from God only to find himself running toward him. Who has prayed for you in that way? Who are you currently praying for with that kind of persistence?

2. He pointed out that Paul lists supplication as the first priority in reaching others. What does it look like, practically, to make praying for specific people a consistent habit rather than an occasional thought?

3. Pastor Norman described this current season in Hawaii as one where God is turning no's into yes's. Do you sense that in your own relationships or community? What would it look like to align your prayers with what God seems to be doing already?

Going Deeper — on Immersion

4. Pastor Norman said one of the Western church's great failures has been retreating into a religious bubble and becoming unrelatable to the very people Jesus calls us to reach. In what areas of your life are you naturally immersed among people who do not know Jesus? In what areas have you pulled back?

5. Pastor Norman shared that saying yes to Coach June Jones felt completely illogical at first. He saw every reason why he was the wrong person for that relationship. Have you ever felt that way about someone God placed in your path? What happened when you said yes, or what held you back from saying yes?

6. Alakaʻi shared that he always assumed Christians were strange and unapproachable, and that what eventually broke through was Pastor Norman being genuinely himself. What does it mean for you to be a real, relatable presence in the lives of people around you without compromising who you are in Christ?

Going Deeper — on Conversation

7. Jesus noticed Zacchaeus in a tree and called him by name. Pastor Norman noted that God may lead us to unexpected people in unexpected places. Can you think of a moment when God drew your attention to someone you would not have naturally noticed? What did you do with that moment?

8. Pastor Norman encouraged the group not to overthink or overanalyze when God opens a door. What tends to get in your way when you sense an opportunity to start a conversation with someone about faith or life?

Going Deeper — on Connection

9. Pastor Norman said that listening communicates value, and that the simple phrase "tell me your story" opened the door to one of the most significant relationships of his ministry. How comfortable are you with listening more than speaking in your relationships? What makes deep listening difficult?

10. Alakai described the tension of wanting his mother to come to faith but approaching her in a condemning way rather than a loving one. He had to learn to show up for her with grace rather than judgment. Have you experienced that tension with someone you care about? How did you navigate it?

11. Pastor Norman said that Coach June Jones spent years unable to find someone he could trust, and when he finally found that in Pastor Norman, everything stored inside him came out. Who in your life might be carrying that kind of weight, waiting for someone trustworthy to ask them the right question?

Going Deeper — on the Bigger Picture

12. Pastor Norman closed with the idea that reaching one person, consistently over time, could transform entire populations. That math starts with a single relationship. Who is your one right now?

13. Don Piper's account of being sent back from heaven with a single message for the church was striking: the church has strayed from her mission, and it will be too late to reach people once this life is over. How does that reality shape the urgency you feel, or do not feel, about reaching the people in your world?

Practical Applications

Choose one or more of the following to put into practice before your group meets again.

1. Write down the name of one person you will commit to praying for by name every day this week. Be specific about what you are asking God to do in their life.

2. Identify one context in your regular life- a workplace, a neighborhood, a gym, a school, a team- where you are naturally around people who do not know Jesus. Make one intentional move this week to deepen a relationship in that space.

3. The next time you are with someone outside the faith, resist the urge to talk and instead ask them a version of "tell me your story." Then listen without an agenda.

4. If there is someone in your life you have been approaching with judgment rather than love, take one concrete step this week to show up for them differently. That might be a text, a meal, a phone call, or simply being present without an agenda.
5. If you have been holding back from a relationship or opportunity because it felt illogical or you felt unqualified, bring that specific situation before God this week and ask him whether he is the one calling you to it.

6. Share with one person in your group the name of your "one," and ask them to hold you accountable to praying for that person and pursuing that relationship over the coming weeks.

Closing Prayer Focus (5 minutes)

Close your group time by praying for the specific people each member named as their "one." Ask God to soften hearts, open doors, and give each person in the group the courage and consistency to show up for the people he has placed in their lives. Ask him to make your church a place with enough room for the harvest that is coming.

Additional Discussion Questions to Choose From

Pastor Norman describes prayer as the essential first step in reaching others, saying the more we pray, the more God moves. In what areas of your life have you seen prayer directly open doors for spiritual conversations, and where might you need to pray more intentionally for someone who seems far from God?

Pastor Norman shares that his mother prayed for him faithfully even as he ran the other way, and he later realized he was running toward Jesus without knowing it. Who in your life are you praying for who seems to be running away, and how does this story encourage you to keep interceding?

Pastor Norman challenges the tendency of Christians to live in a 'religious bubble,' speaking a language others cannot understand. In what practical ways can you immerse yourself more genuinely in the lives of people who do not yet know Jesus without compromising your own faith?

Alakaʻi described how Pastor Norman's genuine, unfiltered personality made him approachable, saying he always thought Christians were weirdos and that authenticity is what ultimately reached him. How might your own authenticity or lack thereof be either drawing people toward or pushing people away from the gospel?

Pastor Norman repeatedly emphasizes not overthinking or overanalyzing the opportunities and relationships God places before us. What fear or insecurity is currently preventing you from saying yes to a person or people group you sense God is calling you toward?

The story of the hospital administrator Camille Omo, who prayed over a man who had been dead for over an hour despite how illogical it seemed, raises the question of how often we talk ourselves out of bold, Spirit-led action. What bold step of faith have you been rationalizing away, and what would it look like to pursue it anyway?

Pastor Norman reflects that his deepest mission with Coach June Jones wasn’t football-related, but restoring his marriage and family, and June's final text confirmed that this mattered most. How does this challenge you to measure the success of your relationships and ministry by depth of life change rather than visible or public outcomes?

The sermon presents the idea that everyone needs someone and that someone needs the power of you specifically. How does this reframe the way you think about your own qualifications or readiness to reach the particular people God has placed in your life?

Alakaʻi shared that his approach to reaching players at Kamehameha and UH started with just one or two people and something as simple as playing spike ball, eventually growing into discipleship that multiplied across entire teams. How does this challenge the way you think about the scale at which meaningful spiritual impact begins?

Leader Notes

- This message touches personal themes: mission, evangelism, revival, obedience, insecurity, fear of rejection, prayer, friendship, calling, and God using ordinary people. Create a safe space where people can be honest about places where they feel unqualified, hesitant, or unsure how to reach people in their world.

- A helpful direction for discussion: move from “I’m not the right person” to “God can use me”; from seeing evangelism as pressure or performance to seeing it as prayerful friendship; from waiting for perfect confidence to taking one obedient step; and from focusing only on church gatherings to recognizing the people God has already placed around us.

- The goal is not to make people feel guilty for not sharing their faith more. The goal is to help them see that Jesus invites ordinary disciples into His mission and gives them His presence, authority, and love as they go. The Great Commission is not just for pastors, extroverts, or “spiritual experts.” It is for every follower of Jesus.

- Keep returning to the central truth: Jesus came to seek and save the lost, and He sends us into our world with His heart. God is already at work preparing people, opening doors, softening hearts, and turning “no’s” into “yes’s.” Our role is to pray, listen, love, and obey.

- Be careful not to let the discussion become a pressure-filled conversation about “winning people” as a project. People are not projects. Encourage the group to see evangelism through the lens of genuine love, friendship, listening, and compassion. The sermon emphasized that connection often begins with a simple conversation, a meal, a question, or a willingness to hear someone’s story.

- Some people may carry fear from past rejection, awkward attempts at sharing faith, family tension, or feelings of inadequacy. Lead with grace. Remind the group that God often uses our weakness, our story, and even unlikely relationships to reveal His love.

- Encourage personal reflection: “Who has God placed in my world?” “Who is one person I can begin praying for?” “Where have I overthought or disqualified myself?” “What fear or insecurity keeps me from saying yes?” “Who needs me to listen to their story?” “What people group, workplace, school, team, neighborhood, or family circle might God be sending me to?”

- Encourage gentle next steps: choose one person to pray for daily, start a conversation, invite someone to coffee or a meal, ask someone to share their story, pray with someone in the moment, invite someone to church or small group, or simply show up consistently with love.

- Leave people with hope and courage: God is moving, the harvest is real, and He has placed a torch in our hands. We do not need to be impressive; we need to be available. God can use one prayer, one conversation, one friendship, and one act of obedience to change a life.

5-Day Devotional: Winning Our World

Day 1: The Mission Begins With Prayer

Reading: 1 Timothy 2:1–4

Devotional:
Everything that matters begins with God. Pastor Norman reminded us that prayer is not a warm-up act before the real work of reaching people begins. Prayer is the work. Paul urges us to make supplications, intercessions, and thanksgiving for all people because God desires all people to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth.

Think of the people in your life who have not yet said yes to Jesus. They are not accidents on your path. They are assignments on your heart. Before you craft the right words or plan the perfect conversation, go to God first. He who forms the human heart also opens it.

Reflection:
Write down the name of one person far from God. Commit to praying specifically for that person every day this week. Ask God to soften their heart and to show you how to be a bridge in their life.

Day 2: Going Where the People Are

Reading: Matthew 9:10–13

Devotional:
Jesus did not wait for broken people to find their way to a religious building. He reclined at the table with tax collectors and sinners, and people criticized him for it. His response was simple and devastating to self-righteousness: those who are well have no need of a physician.

The church in the West has sometimes retreated into a comfortable bubble, speaking a language no one else understands, surrounding itself only with people who already believe. But Jesus' mission was always outward. Immersion among people who do not yet know God is not a compromise of your faith. It is an expression of it.

Reflection: Identify one environment in your regular life where you are the only believer or one of very few. Make a deliberate effort this week to be present, attentive, and genuinely kind to someone in that space, with no agenda beyond friendship.

Day 3: Starting the Conversation

Reading: Luke 19:1–10

Devotional:
Zacchaeus was not seeking Jesus in any conventional way. He climbed a tree just to catch a glimpse of someone he had heard about. And yet Jesus stopped, looked up, and called him by name. He did not shout a sermon from the road. He asked to come to his house. He initiated a conversation that changed everything.

Pastor Norman reminded us that God may lead us to unexpected people in unexpected places, and the key is not to overthink the nudge. When you sense a prompting to start a conversation, to ask a question, to say the name of someone on your heart, do not talk yourself out of it.

Reflection:
Practice the phrase Pastor Norman used: "Tell me your story." Use it this week with someone you do not know well. Resist the urge to fill the silence. Simply listen, and pay attention to what God reveals through what they share.

Day 4: The Power of Genuine Friendship

Reading: James 1:19; Proverbs 18:24

Devotional: Jesus was called a friend of sinners, and his critics meant it as an insult. He wore it as a mission statement. True friendship requires something that does not come naturally to most of us: the discipline of listening more than we speak. James makes it plain that we are to be quick to hear and slow to speak.

Alakaʻi shared that what drew him toward faith was not a polished presentation but the genuineness of someone who showed up consistently, made him laugh, and refused to give up on him. The world does not need more religious performances. It needs more people who will sit down, lean in, and actually listen.

Reflection:
Reach out to someone you have been meaning to reconnect with. Invite them to coffee or a meal with no agenda other than to hear how they are doing. Ask open questions and resist the urge to redirect the conversation toward spiritual topics. Simply be a friend first.

Day 5: Carrying the Torch Forward

Reading: Matthew 28:18-20

Devotional:
Jesus did not leave his disciples with a suggestion. He left them with a commission backed by all authority in heaven and on earth, and sealed with a promise: I am with you always, to the end of the age. Pastor Norman described the Great Commission not as an impossible mission but as a possible one, carried out one relationship at a time.

Each one reaching one. The torch has been passed to you. Not because you are the most qualified, the most educated, or the most spiritually polished, but because you are here, you are willing, and the Spirit of God lives in you. Do not wait until you feel ready. The season is now.

Reflection:
Write out your own version of the Great Commission as it applies to your specific life. Name the people, group, neighborhood, workplace, or family member God has placed on your heart. Pray over what you wrote, then share it with one trusted person who can hold you accountable.