

LIFE GROUP LEADER GUIDE

For the week of October 6, 2019

This guide is designed to give helpful hints in preparing & leading your group in discussion.

LEADER NOTES

ANNOUNCEMENTS

⇒ REAL MAN WEEKEND - OCTOBER 25-27

This is a great opportunity for the guys in your Life Group to get connected. Getting away for an entire weekend together facilitates connections that typically take months to realize. You can sign up online using your credit card, mail in your registration, or drop it off at the church office with your deposit during the week. Just write "Attention: Men's Weekend" on your envelope. Cost ranges from \$155-\$199, depending on which rooms are chosen. There are also two special discounts on standard rooms: a "4 Friends" option and a "Father/Son" option. Chris Brown and Trent Jenkins will be our speakers.

⇒ FINALIZE PLANS FOR YOUR SOCIAL & SERVICE PROJECT

Confirm with your group what project you would like to do. Check our website for some options: northcoastcommunityservice.org. You can also check out the Leader Tools page for social ideas. lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/suggestions-for-socials/

LEADER INFO

MID-QUARTER TRAINING

Make sure you attend the Mid Quarter Training session for Leaders and Hosts (Vista Campus based-groups only). Click the link to RSVP: lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/mid-quarter-training

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| Arise – Oct 24 (details will be emailed) | Parents of Kids, K-6 – Oct 20 | Union 2535 – None Scheduled |
| Empty Nest – Oct 20, Oct 26 & 27 | Parents of Teens – Oct 20, Oct 26 & 27 | Targeted – Oct 20, Oct 26 & 27 |
| General – Oct 27 & Nov 2 | Senior Adults – Oct 28 | Young Families – Nov 2 & 3 |
| Grupos de habla hispana – Oct 20 | Singles – Oct 13 | Young Marrieds – Nov 2 & 3 |
| Military – None scheduled | Special Studies – Oct 20, Oct 26 & 27 | |

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

- Remember you don't have to answer every question!
- Choose questions best suited to your group.
- Listen to the [Audio Guide/Podcast](#) for more discussion suggestions.

PRAYER

- Take prayer requests
- If you haven't divided into male/female groups already, you may want to do so for prayer.

ATTENDANCE

Submit your group's attendance online at northcoastchurch.com/attendance. If you're not sure how to post attendance, you can check out the guide here: lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/how-to-post-attendance

Find all of our leader resources online: lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/leader-tools
You can also follow us on Instagram and Facebook @ncclifegroupleaders

QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time, caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

MY STORY

Discussion Note: If your group is new or you have a lot of new members, here's a "Getting to Know You" question you can use: "If you could travel one place on the planet where would it be and why?" It is recommended that your group chose one of the two questions below. The second question can take a little more time, but it may be helpful depending on where you want to go with your group.

1. Have you ever been on the receiving end of a random act of kindness or a "pay it forward" moment? What was that experience like?

Great question to have everyone answer. It encourages people talk about love, kindness and generosity.

2. This weekend Chris taught that loving people is best lived out through action. One tangible way to better understand love in action is through a concept/tool developed by Gary Chapman called, "Love Languages." The 5 Love Languages are:

- *Acts of Service* (kind or thoughtful deeds done for someone)
- *Words of Affirmation* (words to appreciate or uplift people)
- *Quality Time* (receiving another person's undivided attention)
- *Receiving Gifts* (getting tangible gifts)
- *Physical Touch* (appropriate touch i.e. holding hands, hugging, sitting side-by-side)

Of the list above, are there one to two that seem to fit you the best?

Take the Love Language quiz here: 5lovelanguages.com/quizzes

On the 5 Love Languages website, it has different quizzes and resources for various stations in life (couples, singles, men, military, children, & teens). One way to use this question would be to have everyone take out their phone and take the quiz. It takes 3-5 minutes. This question should be helpful in getting to know your group. If you have married or dating couples in your group, it is a helpful tool to practice healthy communication and understanding of differences.

DIGGING DEEPER

1. Chris mentioned in his message that Jesus is calling us to love differently. This can be hard to understand because our current culture often has a different perspective on the meaning of love. How does 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 challenge the version of love we see in culture today?

Often, we hear 1 Corinthians 13 used in a wedding ceremony. While it does describe love, this passage is not intended to be a passage about marriage or romantic love. It is written to be the kind of love Jesus mentions when he tells us to love our neighbor as our self.

1 Corinthians 13:1-13 – If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ²If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

⁴Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

⁸Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. ¹¹When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. ¹²For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

¹³And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

What could it look like to love your neighbor, co-worker, family member or friend the way the passage above describes?

Feel free to change out the types of person listed in the question above (i.e. spouse, child, parent, in-law, etc.).

Additional Question: *Have each member in the group think of someone that is difficult to get along with (don't have them say that person out loud). Then ask how they can love that person the way the passage describes.*

2. For many of us the idea of loving God can seem confusing or vague. The good news is there are several passages that help clarify how we can do that well. How might the passages below help you grow in your understanding of what it looks like to love God?

Discussion Note: *Chris mentioned 1 John in his message, but we really want to encourage our groups to dive in deeper to the book of 1 John because of how it teaches us to love.*

1 John 2:3-6, 9-11 – ³We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. ⁴Whoever says, “I know him,” but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. ⁵But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: ⁶Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.

⁹Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates a brother or sister is still in the darkness. ¹⁰Anyone who loves their brother and sister lives in the light, and there is nothing in them to make them stumble. ¹¹But anyone who hates a brother or sister is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness. They do not know where they are going, because the darkness has blinded them.

This passage connects God's love to our obedience.

1 John 3:14-18, 23-24 – ¹⁴We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love each other. Anyone who does not love remains in death. ¹⁵Anyone who hates a brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him.

¹⁶This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. ¹⁷If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? ¹⁸Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

²³And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. ²⁴The one who keeps God's commands lives in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.

This passage connects Jesus' sacrificial love for us to our love for others.

1 John 4:7-12 – ⁷Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. ¹⁰This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹²No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. *This passage reminds us that 'God is love' and love comes from God. Through Jesus we experience His love and then we are commanded to love others. 1 John 4:7-21 is an expanded passage and is incredible.*

Additional Passages: [James 2:14-20](#)

After reading the verses above, why do you think loving God is so closely tied to loving people?

God loves all of his children and when we love others, we are expressing our love toward him. For example: think of a person that means a lot to you (a friend, spouse, child, grandchild, parent, grandparent etc.). If someone else treats that person really well, it can be meaningful to you too.

Additional Question: *Think of an example in your own life of how someone has loved you or someone close to you. How was did that act of love also love God?*

3. Over the past two weekends, Chris mentioned Jesus' conversation with the Sadducees (Mark 12:24) where Jesus tells them they do not know the scriptures. How could James 1:21-25 have helped the Sadducees see the importance of God's Word and also help us grow as followers of Jesus today? *God's word helps us to know God's love, character, and nature. When we grow in our understanding of scripture it helps us mature. Sadducees represent people that 'know' things by their emotions, gut, or feelings but are not supported by truth in scripture.*

Mark 12:24 – Jesus replied, “Are you not in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God?”

James 1:21-25 – ²¹Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

²²Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. ²³Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror ²⁴and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. ²⁵But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.

It's about not only hearing the word of God but being doers of the word of God.

Additional Passages: [Hebrews 4:12](#), [Psalm 1:1-3](#), [Psalm 119:9-16](#)

When it comes to knowing and understanding the Scriptures as the James passage describes, what is one method or practice that has been helpful to you?

Note: *The goal of this question is to help our group members share spiritual disciplines and/or practices that are helpful to them in knowing and understanding the scriptures. We can leverage the power of shared learning in the group as we all have unique learning styles and preferences. This may take you as the facilitator going first and sharing something meaningful to you or even encouraging someone you know in the group that practices some of these disciplines. It is important to remember, as Larry often says, “it is not about the watering schedule but the fruit that the water provides.” This means that the disciplines or practices are intended to help us know and understand scripture which ultimately leads us to loving God and loving people. As people share, it can be important to mention that if the discipline or practice is not helpful for you personally, then try a different one.*

Examples: *bible study tools (YouVersion bible app, a church service, life group, daily dose etc.), disciplines (fasting, silence, solitude, sabbath, reflection, service etc.), places (nature, morning, night, lunch, in the car etc.)*

>>*This leads directly into the second question in the taking it home.*

TAKING IT HOME

When it comes to you knowing and understanding the Scriptures, is there one method or practice you might want to try this week?

This is a follow up to "Digging Deeper" question 3. As a leader, it may be helpful to take note of each person's response. You can follow up with them mid-week with a text, prayer or email to encourage and check in. You could also start next week's discussion by asking how it went.

Which point from this weekend's message or Life Group study is most important for you to remember?

PRAYER REQUESTS

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REAL MAN WEEKEND – "The Palomar Experience"- Oct. 25-27

Lookin' for some crazy guy stuff to do? Want to kick back or get refocused on God? Join us for another epic men's weekend that will get you recharged and refreshed as **Chris Brown & Trent Jenkins** lead us into a look at what a real man is and isn't! The weekend will also include plenty of "man" event options like paintball, high ropes course, skeet shooting, archery, zipline, horseback riding, etc. Space is limited so don't delay! Room Options: \$155-\$199 [Register online at northcoastchurch.com/real-man-weekend](http://northcoastchurch.com/real-man-weekend)



COMMUNITY SERVICE IMPACT

Community Service is a ministry of North Coast Church dedicated to being the hands and feet of Jesus and showing God's love in tangible ways through service to the community. There are many options for you to serve. For ideas, check out NorthCoastCommunityService.org

SERMON SERIES: MARK: THE UNTOLD STORY OF JESUS
Message #40: If God Is Love, Does He Get To Define It?
Mark 12:28-34

Pastor Chris Brown
North Coast Church
October 5-6, 2019

If God Is LOVE, Does He Get To Define It?

What love is not:

Mark 12:28-34, Jeremiah 17:9-10, Matthew 15:16-20, James 2:14-26

- Loving God is not about what we:

FEEL

BELIEVE

- Our **FEELINGS** about God that aren't **FOUND** in the **BIBLE** are **FRAUD**.
- Our **BELIEF** in God, if not backed by **OBEDIENCE**, is the same as the **DEMONS**.

What love is:

Mark 12:28-34, John 13:34-35, 14:20-21, 15:1-17, James 1:27, 2:14-26, 1 Corinthians 13:1-13, Deuteronomy 6:1-12

- Love is a **CHOICE** backed by **ACTION**.
- Love is a **RESPONSE**.

Daily Dose: To receive our short daily devotional video, text the keyword "daily" to 51400.
To subscribe by email or for a free audio or video copy of this message, go to northcoastchurch.com