

Growth Group Leader Guide

This “growth group leader guide” is meant to be just that, a guide. Please feel free as the leader of your group to add questions or comments, as you feel necessary to fit your group’s dynamics.

Also, don’t feel pressured to cover every question.

1 John 2:3-14

Read as a group - 1 John 2:3-14

- What insight, principle, or observation from this weekend’s message did you find to be most helpful, eye-opening or troubling? Explain.

3 – Main Points of Sunday’s Sermon

- The Greatest Commandment
- The Second Greatest Commandment
- The Application of These Commandments

1) The Greatest Commandment

- If a stranger approached you on the street corner and asked, “What must I do to be saved?” how would you respond?
- If that same stranger inquired, “Tell me how you know *for sure* that you are right with God and headed for heaven,” how would you respond?
 - **John MacArthur writes:** The first chapter of 1 John presents a doctrinal test of genuine salvation. Here in Chapter 2, John cites a moral test of genuine fellowship: obedience to God’s commands. While subjective assurance of salvation comes through the internal witness of the Holy Spirit (see 1 John 5:10), the test of obedience constitutes objective assurance that one is genuinely saved. John’s argument is that obedience is the external visible proof of salvation. The false teachers’ failure to obey God’s commands objectively demonstrated that they were not saved. Those who are truly enlightened and know God will be obedient to His Word. **Another aspect of moral test is obedience to the command of love**, because love is the fulfillment of the law and is also Christ’s new command (Matt. 22:34-40; John 15:12, 17). True enlightenment is to love. God’s light is the light of love, so to walk in light is to walk in love.

- What is obedience, and why is it essential in the Christian life?
- Read the following verses and discuss the connection between loving God and keeping his commandments.
 - Gospel of John 14:15
 - Gospel of John 14:21
 - Gospel of John 14:23
 - Gospel of John 15:10
 - Matthew 22:36-38

2) The Second Greatest Commandment

- **Read Matthew 22:39-40**
- Why do you think Jesus added the second greatest commandment when he was only asked for the greatest commandment?
 - *Leader's Cheat: Remember that Jesus was talking to Pharisees that claimed to love God, but had disdain for the people of God.*
- **Read 1 John 7-11**
- How is loving one another a “new commandment” through Jesus Christ?
- We are to walk as Jesus walked (2:6). How specifically is Christ our example in the areas of obedience and love?
 - **Warren Wiersbe** - Christian love is not a shallow sentiment, a passing emotion that we perhaps experience in a church service. Christian love is a practical thing; it applies in the everyday affairs of life. Just consider the “one another” statements in the New Testament and you will see how practical it is to love one another. Here are just a few (there are over twenty such statements).
 - Prefer one another (Rom. 12:10)
 - Be of the same mind one to another (Rom. 12:16)
 - Receive one another (Rom. 15:7)
 - Admonish one another (Rom. 15:14)
 - Edify (Build up) one another (1 Thess. 5:11)
 - Bear one another’s burdens (Gal. 6:2)
 - Confess your faults to one another (James 5:16)
 - Use Hospitality one to another (1 Peter 4:9)
 - In short, to love other Christians means to treat them the way God treats them – and the way God treats us. Christian love that does not show itself in actions and in attitude is spurious.

- As a group come up with a definition of true Christian love. What are some of the practical ways the New Testament tells us to love one another?
 - **Warren Wiersbe** - "It is easy to talk about Christian love, but much more difficult to practice it. For one thing, such love is not mere talk (1 John 2:9). For a Christian to say (or Sing!) that he loves the brethren while he actually hates another believer is for him to lie. In other words (and this is a sobering truth), it is impossible to be in fellowship with the Father and out of fellowship with another Christian at the same time."
- Do you agree with Warren Wiersbe's quote? Explain.
- How does loving a fellow Christian help prevent him or her from stumbling?
- How can Christians develop more Christian love?

3) The Application of These Commandments

- **Read 1 John 12-14**
- Based on John's descriptions, what is the difference between "Little Children," "Young Men" and "Fathers."
- How does our motivation for obedience change as we mature?
- How does diversity in the Church glorify God?
 - *Leader's Cheat: Diversity in age, maturity in Christ, culture, wealth, upbringings, giftings... and so on.*
- The apostle John was older when he wrote this epistle. His mature faith and godly example comes through strongly. It is always a blessing to spend time with an older saint – someone who has known the Lord and walked with Him for a long time. Discuss the importance of intergenerational ministries within the church, and how your group can be intentional at pursuing intergenerational fellowship.
- The great Reformer Martin Luther once commented on the power of Scripture by declaring: "The Bible is alive, it speaks to me; it has feet, it runs after me; it has hands, it lays hold of me." What in this study is running after you and laying hold of your heart? What do you need to do with what you've learned here?