

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 3:10-18

Read as a group – 1 John 3:10-18

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

3 – Main Points of Sunday’s Sermon

- **Cain-Like Hatred**
- **Jesus-Like Love**
- **No 3rd Option**

1) Cain-Like Hatred

- Read and discuss Gen. 4:1-12
- How does John use Cain as an example in his letter?
- **Read Matthew 5:21-22** and discuss why hatred is such a serious sin.
- **Read James 4:1-3** and discuss why we fight and quarrel within the church and within our marriages.
 - ***Leaders Cheat:** Remember that all the “one-anothers” found in scripture apply to your marriage if your wife or husband is saved and attends the same church as you.*
- **Read 1 John 3:13.**
 - In 1 John 3:13, John calls the church “brothers” instead of his preferred and most used title “little children.” Why do you think he does this?

- **Read John 15:17-18** in light of 1 John 3:13 and discuss why Jesus and John connect the idea of brotherly love to the world hating us?

2) Jesus-Like Love

- Name some ways the love of Christ and Hatred of Cain are contrary to each other.
- Discuss the following quote by Francis Schaeffer.
 - Through the centuries men have displayed many different symbols to show that they are Christians. They have worn marks on the collars of their coats, hung chains about their necks, even had special haircuts. Of course, there is nothing wrong with any of this, if one feels it is his calling. But there is a much better sign – a mark that has not been thought up just as a matter of expediency for use of some special occasion or in some specific era. It is a universal mark that is to last through all ages of the church till Jesus comes back. **What is this mark?** At the close of his ministry, Jesus looks forward to his death on the cross, the open tomb and the ascension. Knowing that he is about to leave, Jesus prepares his disciples for what is to come. It is here that he makes clear what will be the **distinguishing mark of the Christian:**
 - **John 12:34-35** A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. 35 By this **all people will know that you are my disciples**, if you have love for one another.”
 - This passage reveals the mark that Jesus gives to label a Christian not just in one era or in one location but at all times and all places until Jesus returns.
- Read the following verses and discuss how Jesus’ love is foundation to our brotherly love.
 - **Ephesians 5:1-2**
 - **Colossians 3:13**
 - **1 Peter 2:20-22**
 - **John 13:13-15**
 - **Philippians 2:1-5**
- Why is our love for one another (those within the Church) such a distinguishing mark of Christianity?

- How is love and truth about Christ connected?
- What does John mean when he says we should be willing to “lay down our lives for the brethren”?
- Read 1 John 3:17 and the following quote than answer the next question.
 - **One Commentator wrote** - John’s shift from Christ’s glorious cross to church soup kitchen is surprising. But what a wonderful surprise! The call to love is within everyone’s reach. He is not calling for martyrs. He is not even asking for Zacchaeus-like generosity. We are not called to give half to the poor, but simply to provide when the opportunity arises (when we see a “brother in need”) and out of our abundance (possessing “the world’s goods”)
- Is it surprising that John goes from the example of the cross to verse 17?
- How is verse 17 challenging & encouraging?
- Why do you think John switches to the singular “brother” instead of using the plural “brethren” like he does elsewhere in this passage?
 - **Leaders Cheat:** the NASB translates the plural and singular better than the ESV.
- **Discuss the following Quote:** Saying we love everybody in general may become an excuse for loving nobody in particular!
- In what ways can we show and “do” love?
- How is loving like Christ challenging when it comes to those that are hard to love?
 - **Read Romans 5:6**

3) No 3rd Option

- Why is this last point so hard to swallow and why is it challenging?
- Why do you think indifference to the needs of others is such a common and dangerous sin, even among Christians?