



The Invisible Man Leader Guide – July 27, 2020

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

ICE BREAKER

What activity do you do that requires *all of your attention*? You have to choose to do it, and only do those through deliberate action? Examples may be jogging, eating vegetables, not eating sugar.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1) John shares in verse 7 where real love comes from, God. Where do most people say it comes from?

- Everyone believes that love is important, but love is usually thought of as a feeling. In reality, love is a choice and an action, see 1 Cor.4-7.
- All group to discuss, and it will help lead into the next question about having an objective, not simply a subjective view of love.

2) In verses 9-10, we are given a clear objective definition of love. Why is this important?

- This, along with 1 Cor. 4-7, allow us to talk about love being a decision followed and filled with deliberate action. This is often what is missing in the discussion about love when it is only a feeling. We fall out of feelings, but we have to decide to act or not act in love. We can't hide passively in the feelings that change.

3) In verse 11 Andrew made a point about the word "ought." How is it that God's love of us creates an "ought to" response for us to others?

- Ask people to talk about how God's love is changing them.
- Talk about the natural push back around the word "ought." What is a substitution that might work as well or better?

4) Verse 12 says rather strongly that when Christians love one another as God loved us, we make the invisible visible. How are we doing? What could we do better? What could your group do better?

- Ask for examples of how people have seen this to be true.
- Ask if the fellowship, the love that Christians can have for one another, actually helped bring them to say yes to Jesus?
- If there are not responses, have some ready to offer on how the group could do this better.

5) Then Andrew took us to Matthew 25:31-46 to imagine loving the "least of these." Actually, we are the "least of these" that Jesus loved! Before you were a Christian, what did you do to feed the hunger only Jesus can satisfy? What about the thirst only he can quench? In what were you imprisoned before Jesus came to you?

- All too often people think of the down and out when this passage is read.
- We must remember that we were hungering for the bread of life, for living water and enslaved to sin. It isn't until we realize that Jesus reach out to us, the least of these -- our spiritual condition couldn't have been more dire -- that we find the compassion to love others.
- This could be a real moment in the group, leave room for it.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

1) Andrew asked us to imagine what would change if we loved one another like God loved us. What did you imagine would change in your family? Your marriage? Our campus and community? Our world? Would you share those with your group?

2) Andrew said we are window the through which the world sees God. He went on to say, do whatever it takes to make sure that window is clean. What do you need to do? Who do you need to forgive? Where might you need to apologize?