



Group Leader Guide

“K-I-S-S-I-N-G” - First Comes Love

October 3-4, 2020

Group Creed

We come together as a Group with the goal of Spiritual Formation; encouraging one another to become the same kind of person that Jesus is, so that we can live out every part of our lives inside of His Kingdom.

// Message Summary

Teaching Pastor **Ben Foote** is back for week 2 of our “**First Comes Love**” series, talking about dating. Though the Bible doesn’t talk about dating, specifically, it isn’t hard to see what it’s view is and how it differs from our culture’s view. While our culture is obsessed with “people shopping” and “finding the ‘one’” who will make us happy forever, Jesus shows us how to become the kind of person that carries the burdens of others.

// Biblical Context

2 Corinthians 6:14: Yoked With Unbelievers

Ben mentioned that this verse is usually applied to the marriage of a Christian to a non-Christian. However, this passage is about Christian holiness as a whole and does not once reference marriage. So, though marriage can be seen as an application of this passage, it is not the main point. Paul was writing to the Christian believers in a city called Corinth, which was an infamously sinful and pagan city. Throughout **1** and **2 Corinthians**, Paul calls out how the Christians were not fully separating themselves from the lifestyles of the non-Christians around them (see **1 Corinthians 5, 6, 8, & 10** for examples). However, he is not telling Christians to not associate at all with non-Christians, for that is impossible (**1 Corinthians 5:9-10**). Therefore, in **2 Corinthians 6**, he is hammering home the idea that Christians are called to be holy, that we are now the temple of God, and that we

should separate ourselves from the *behavior* and *false beliefs* of the non-Christians around us.

The word Paul uses for “unequally yoked” in **2 Corinthians 6:14** is “heterozugeo” (hetero=different, zugeo=yoked). This is the only time in the New Testament this word is used. However, in the ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament, the term is used in **Leviticus 19:19** as a translation of the Hebrew word which means “lie down,” a euphemism for mating. **Leviticus 19:19** prohibits mating cows with other types of animals. This has led to questionable translations of the term “heterozugeo” in **1 Corinthians 6:14**, such as “mismatching” in the RSV. However, this relationship between the two verses is probably what caused the verse to be mainly understood as one about marriage.

Arranged Marriages: Dating isn’t mentioned in the Bible because arranged marriages were the cultural custom. Families, in those days, were “extended household entities,” which were determined to gain honor, wealth, and prestige in society. They typically all worked together, from the oldest extended family member to the youngest, to achieve the same goals, including in business, religion, politics, and the social realm. Marriages were a way to unite families for mutual benefit. They would be arranged by one head of household and another, usually the oldest living males of the extended

families. It is definitely a strange way to think about marriage today. However, divorce rates of modern arranged marriages are under 4% while divorce rates of “love” marriages have soared to around 50%. Really makes you think...

// In Preparation

Pray before your group this week that your group members will be honest and truthful in their assessment of their lives this week. There are questions about how they view themselves as “burden carriers” and how they think others view them. All of this is aimed at letting them get a clear picture of where they are at and what they can be doing to become more like Jesus. It isn’t aimed at making them feel like crap for being a terrible “burden carrier” at this moment. We are all here to get better! So, pray for honesty and true self-assessment. It will also be helpful for you, as the leader, to model how to be honest and vulnerable. So, if you feel like you are not a very good burden carrier at the moment, be honest about where your shortcomings are and where you would like to improve. This will not only help you in figuring out how to become more like Jesus, but it will show others that it is safe for them to do so as well! It will also be helpful as the leader to model completing the challenge and sharing about it during the following group. If you never complete the challenges, I doubt your group members will feel the need to either. So lean in, go first, and kick your group into the next gear!

// References

Keener, Craig S. Ph.d. *IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*. InterVarsity Press, 2014.

Page, Danielle. *Why You Should Treat Marriage More Like a Business*. 28 July 2017, www.nbcnews.com/better/pop-culture/why-you-should-treat-marriage-more-business-ncna778551. (Statistics referenced in this article were used. I am not endorsing the article as a whole.)

Wright, N.T., & Bird, Michael F. *The New Testament In Its World*. Zondervan, 2019.



Group Discussion Questions

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// Bible References

1 Peter 2:24; Galatians 6:2; 2 Corinthians 6:14

// Message Screenshots

- Myth 1: Dating is just harmless ‘people shopping.’
- Myth 2: Dating is all about finding ‘The One.’
- Become a burden-carrier and find a burden-carrier.

// Community Questions

1. Did your journaling from last week reveal anything you’d like to share?
2. Does anyone have any good/terrible blind date stories?

// Core Questions

1. The “First Comes Love” nursery rhyme presents an ideal order for romance. However, it isn’t the reality for a lot of us. Based on your past relationships, what would be your version of that poem?
2. How do/did you generally view dating? Searching for someone to spend your life with? Just having fun? Something else?
3. Have you fallen into either of the traps of the dating myths Ben mentioned? If so, how has that affected your life?
4. Have you ever been in a relationship with someone who relied on you to do all the “burden carrying?” How did that make you feel?
5. Have you ever been in a relationship with someone, or seen someone in another relationship, who did a really good job at carrying your or the other person’s burdens? How did that make you feel?
6. Have you ever witnessed a relationship where one person was clearly carrying most of the “load”? What were some of the causes and/or symptoms of that dynamic?
7. What was your parents’ relationship like? Did they help each other carry their burdens, or did one do most of the heavy lifting?
8. Do you tend to be more concerned with your own desires and problems, or would you consider yourself a “burden carrier” for others? Why?
9. How would the closest people in your life describe your willingness to carry the burdens of others?
10. What do you want your eventual/current marriage to be like?



11. How can you start being a burden carrier today so that your marriage will look like that down the road?

// Challenge

As Ben said, this talk was about becoming the kind of person that is a burden carrier for others so that down the road, you can be that in your marriage. So, whether you are dating, married, or single, there is always someone else who could benefit from you helping them carry the load. The challenge this week is simple: find someone you can practice being a burden carrier to. It doesn't have to be some big official thing. They can be a close friend, a spouse, a family member, or a complete stranger. Just practice being a burden carrier this week. What is something that they need? What is something that they are struggling with? Are you able to help? If so, take that extra step and help them. Small steps like this are how we become the kind of person who is defined by this characteristic. Come back next week ready to share how you were a burden carrier this week.