



Group Leader Guide

“Next Comes Love” - First Comes Love

October 10-11, 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

Lead Pastor **Jim Burgen** continues the “**First Comes Love**” series. Through key scriptures about love and relationships, he helps us see what love is, what love isn’t, and how we can do better at loving the people closest to us.

// Word Study

Here are the big words and phrases, along with their originally intended meanings, that define what love is and isn’t according to **1 Corinthians 3:4-8**.

Patient: Greek: “*makrothumeo*” – Literally “long-spirited.” “Spirited” in the sense of energetic or passionate. Basically, this means that love’s energy lasts and doesn’t lose heart.

Kind: Greek: “*chresteuomai*” – To show oneself useful. To be willing to help.

Envy: Greek: “*zeloo*” – Where we get our word “zealous” from and means to be hot or to boil with fervor. It has both a good and bad sense to the word, depending on context. This is the bad sense (for the good sense, see **1 Corinthians 12:31**), which has connotations of envy and covetousness.

Boast: Greek: “*perpereuomai*” – To boast or attempt to gain recognition.

Arrogant: Greek: “*phusioo*” – To blow or puff oneself up, as with a pair of bellows.

Rude: Greek: “*aschēmonéō*” – To behave unseemly or ugly. As a negative qualification for love, it means that love is seeking to contain no evil.

Irritable: Greek: “*paroxunetai*” – To rouse to anger, to provoke, to sharpen the spirit

Resentful: Greek: “*logizetai*” – An accounting term meaning to count up or take account in a ledger. Sometimes the full phrase is translated as “keeps no record of wrongs” or “makes no account of evil.”

Rejoice in wrongdoing: Greek: “*charei adikia*” – “*Charei*” simply means “to rejoice.” “*Adikia*” means “injustice.”

Rejoices in truth: Greek: “*suncharei de tēi alētheiāi*” – “*Suncharei*” is a slightly different word than “*charei*.” It means to rejoice with something, or share in the joy of something. In this case, that something is “*alētheiāi*,” or “the truth.”

Bears: Greek: “*stégō*” – To cover over something. In this case, it means that love protects and forbears. It covers over sins (see **1 Peter 4:8** for a similar sentiment about love).

Believes all things: Greek: “*panta pisteuei*” – Not gullible, but believes in the good of people.

Hopes: Greek: “*elpízō*” – To hope, to trust, to confide in. Doesn’t despair and sees the bright side of things.

Endures: Greek: “*hupomeno*” – “*Hupo*” means “under” and “*meno*” means “to remain” or “to dwell.” Perseverance, fortitude. The word picture accompanying this term is that of a stout-hearted soldier carrying on despite the circumstances.

Never ends: Greek: “*oudepote piptei*” –

Literally, “*pipte*” means “to fall.” In this context, it means that “love survives everything.”

// In Preparation

There is a bonus challenge this week in the challenge section of the discussion questions. It is a somewhat risky group exercise where you evaluate each other on how well you fit the descriptions of love. Jim asked everyone to do this with the person you trust most in the world. It is up to you and your group to decide if you want to do this with the whole group. I would only recommend it if your group has been together for a while and truly loves and trusts everyone else in the group. Basically, for it to work, everyone has to know everyone else has their best interests in mind and is only speaking challenge to them in order to build them up, not tear them down. If you don't feel like your group can handle this, or if there is even a hint that it might not work, I definitely wouldn't do it. But I wanted to present the idea for the groups that are ready for something like that as it could be very meaningful if done respectfully and with lots of love and grace.

// References

Zodhiates, Spiros. *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*. AMG Publishers, 1994.

Robertson, Archibald T. *Word Pictures in the New Testament*. Baker Book House, 1960.



Group Discussion Questions

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// Bible References

1 Corinthians 13:11; Ephesians 5:33; Genesis 3:16; Galatians 5:22-23; 1 Corinthians 13:4-8

// Message Screenshots

- We are in love with the “idea” of love, but few of us have any idea of what love really is, what it looks like, or how to experience it.
- Pain, shame and guilt were never meant to be carried around for the rest of our lives
- Being an adult = taking responsibility for one’s life and choices.
- Grown-up, mature love = taking and accepting the responsibility of making and owning our relational decisions, right or wrong, and the results and consequences of those choices and decisions.
- Love is first and foremost an obedient choice, not an emotional feeling.
- God commands us to love and you cannot command anyone how they ought to feel.
- Love is a decision to respond in an agreed upon way, not based ON circumstances, but IN SPITE OF circumstances.
- A contract is based on “if”. If you do this, I’ll do that. If not, the deal is off.
- A covenant is based on “even if”. Even if you do or don’t do this, I’ll still do what I said.
- Maleness as God created it has been depraved and corrupted by sin.
- Femaleness as God created it has been depraved and corrupted by sin.
- Without God’s command of love and respect, men and women will always drift towards control and manipulation of one another for their own benefit and survival.
- LOVE in the person is the one doing everything, not the person.
- Fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Galatians 4:22-23)
- Love = Patient, kind; does not envy or boast; not arrogant or rude, does not insist on its own way; not irritable or resentful; does not rejoice at wrong-doing, rejoices with the truth, bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things, never ends. (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)

// Community Questions

1. How were you a burden carrier for someone in the past week?
2. What is your favorite love song?



// Core Questions

The first few questions will reference **1 Corinthians 13:4-8**. Read through that passage before beginning and use the definitions from the Word Study in the Group Guide if you have any questions.

1. Have you ever seen anyone display this type of love? If so, who? (You can't say Jesus!)
2. *"Love is patient and kind..."* How are you at showing patience and kindness to others?
3. *"love does not envy..."* Where, with regard to your relationships, do you envy? How could you show more gratitude for the relationships in your life?
4. *"...or boast; it is not arrogant or rude..."* Where in your relationships do you see yourself making things a competition? (examples: parenting, finances, politics, etc.)
5. *"it is not irritable or resentful..."* What really ticks you off in relationships that you have a hard time forgiving?
6. *"...it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth."* Where are you happy to let sin slide in your relationships?
7. *"Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends."* Would you call yourself an optimistic or pessimistic person when relationships get hard? Why?

The next few questions will reference **Galatians 5:22-23**. Read through that passage before beginning.

1. Who have you witnessed best displayed the fruit of the Spirit? What were their relationships like? (Again, you can't say Jesus!)
2. Where are you strong in the fruit of the Spirit?
3. What area could use some work?
4. How would your relationships benefit if your character displayed the fruit of the Spirit?

// Challenge

The challenge this week is the same that Jim gave us. Find the person that you trust the most in the world and ask them to evaluate you on how you display the characteristics of love from **1 Corinthians 13:4-8** and the fruit of the Spirit from **Galatians 5:22-23**. Write down what you hear and pray that God can continue to work in you to strengthen where you are weak.

Bonus challenge: Do this with your group! I know, it's risky. But if you know and trust each other well enough, it could be really meaningful. Just take a turn in the "hot seat" and let people encourage you where you are strong and challenge you where they see you use some improvement. Again, only do this if you trust each other enough to be respectful. This isn't a time to just criticize people, but build each other up in love (**Ephesians 4:9**).



Student Group Discussion Questions

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// Parent Resource

Share with your student how you try to show love as an action and not just as a feeling. Then, ask them what they think the difference between action love and feeling love is.

// Student Questions

1. What do you think about when you hear the word love?
Fill in the blank: Love is _____.
2. Give us an example of a show or movie that has a feeling only version of love in it?
What is good or bad about the feeling version of love?
3. What was a time when you trusted your feelings and they weren't right?
Examples: I felt like I was going to get an A, but I got a F. I felt like we were just friends, but he liked me.
4. Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (multiple times if needed)
What sticks out to you?
Which of the descriptive words are you good at?
Which of the descriptive words could you work on?
5. Who shows you this kind of action love?
How do they show you?
6. How do you show others love through action?
What is something you can do this week to show someone you love them?
7. What can you do to remember that love is an action not a feeling?
Encourage students to memorize 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 so when they think of love, they think of this passage.

// Pray

Pray that God will help us grow to the point where love is not just a feeling, but an action as well.

// Leader Feedback

Please let us know how these questions went over in your group. Email your answers to calebflowers@flatironschurch.com

- What was good?
- What was bad?
- What was confusing?