



Leader Guide

Love Does

May 15, 2022

Main Passage: 1 John 3:16-18

Theological Theme

Like metal toward a magnet, the Christian's soul seeks after God. Christians love because God first loved them (1 John 4:19). God's love doesn't only compel Christians to love God but also to love those around them.

Introduction

- ❓ What are some answers people might give if asked, "Where does love come from?" Where would you say love comes from?
- ❓ How do we know if someone truly loves another? How can we tell the difference between divine, sacrificial love and self-serving love?

Biblical love is radically different than the love popular culture holds in high regard. In our culture, love is associated with my need and my feelings. Real, biblical love doesn't have a lot in common with such a self-centered understanding of love. The Bible says love is "not self-seeking" (1 Corinthians 13:5). The Bible says Christians are to love even their enemies (Matthew 5:44).

1. Love is Selfless (1 John 3:16-17)

Christians are enabled to do the good work of loving others only because they have been made alive in Christ. The gospel not only saves people, but it also frees them to do good works for God's glory. One of the most important and fundamental good works Christians do is loving their neighbor, especially those who are of "the household of faith" (Galatians 6:10). It is important to understand what true godly love is like.

2. Love is Truthful (1 John 3:18)

The Bible is emphatic that those who claim to love God but refuse to love their brothers and sisters are liars. In other words, it isn't possible to be a true Christian and hate your neighbor. That's an impossible scenario. John put it this way, "We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, 'I love God,' and yet hates his brother or sister, he is a liar. For the person who does not love his brother or sister whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. And we have this command from him: The one who loves God must also love his brother and sister" (1 John 4:19-21).

Christians love others by being self-sacrificial. They also love others by being truthful. One of the most loving things a Christian can do is humbly and gently tell others the truth.

3. Love is Encouraging (1 John 3:18)

A Christian's love should be characterized by selflessness and truth. Jesus loved His disciples in a tangible, sacrificial way through His death on the cross. He also loved them by telling them God's Word for the good of their souls. Jesus loved them in word and in deed.

Questions to Guide Your Group's Discussion

- ❓ What does this passage say?

- ❓ What did this passage mean to its original audience?

- ❓ What does this passage tell us about God?

- ❓ What does this passage tell us about man?

- ❓ What does this passage demand of me?

- ❓ How does this passage change the way I relate to people? (*How can you use this information this week at work or with friends and neighbors?*)

- ❓ How does this passage prompt me to pray to God?

*Adapted from Seven Arrows by Matt Rogers pastor of The Church at Cherrydale, Greenville, SC