

# Group Leader Guide

## 1 John – part 8 “How’s Your Love Life?”

### Sermon Recap

Have you ever settled for a cheap knock-off, only to long for the real thing? In this powerful message, Pastor Chris reveals why God's authentic love trumps all counterfeits. Drawing from 1 John 4, he unpacks how divine love isn't a conditional "if" or "maybe," but flows from God's very nature. Through vivid examples—from brand-name loyalty to the emotional weight of "Saving Private Ryan"—Pastor Chris shows how we often exhaust ourselves trying to earn what's freely given. This transformative message offers freedom from fear and performance-based faith, inviting us to rest in God's completed work.

### Ice Breaker

If you were a type of cheese, what kind of cheese would you be and why?

### Discussion Questions

1. What from the sermon stood out to you? How were you challenged, motivated, or convicted from what you heard?
2. Pastor Chris mentions that John says 'God is love' but not 'love is God'. Why is this distinction important, and how does it affect our understanding of both God and love?
  - a. The sermon emphasizes that love is woven into God's very essence - when He creates, rules, disciplines, and judges, He does it all in love. It's not just one trait among many, but fundamental to who He is.
  - b. How does understanding that God's love comes from His nature, not our worthiness, change how you view your relationship with Him?
3. According to 1 John 4:9-10, how did God demonstrate His love for us, and why is this different from how the world often defines love?
  - a. The sermon explains that God's love is shown through sending His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins, not waiting for us to fix ourselves first.
  - b. In what ways do you find yourself trying to earn God's love rather than receiving it as a gift?
4. The sermon discusses how fear often drives our decisions. How does John's statement that 'perfect love drives out fear' (1 John 4:18) address this common human struggle?
  - a. Pastor Chris explains that this refers specifically to the fear of God's punishment and rejection, which is eliminated by understanding and accepting God's complete love through Christ.
  - b. What fears in your life might be reduced or eliminated by more fully embracing God's love?
5. How does the 'Saving Private Ryan' illustration help explain the difference between how we often view our relationship with God versus how He actually relates to us?

- a. The sermon contrasts Captain Miller's 'Earn this' with Jesus' 'It is finished,' showing how we don't need to spend our lives trying to earn what God has freely given.
  - b. Where in your spiritual life do you find yourself trying to 'earn this' instead of resting in what Christ has already done?
6. According to 1 John 4:20-21, why is it impossible to genuinely love God while hating our brothers and sisters?
  - a. The sermon explains that love for God isn't merely a private emotion - it must be demonstrated in how we treat others, making God's invisible love visible through our actions.
  - b. How might your treatment of others need to change to better reflect the love you claim to have for God?

## **Prayer**

- Ask God to help us embrace His perfect love that casts out fear and bring confidence in His promises.
- Pray for strength to love others as a reflection of God's unconditional and sacrificial love.
- Request clarity in relying on the love God has for us rather than relying on our own performance.
- Seek guidance to show concrete love to others, making God's presence visible through our actions.