



**WEEK OF July 9 – July 15 / GROUP TIME GUIDE**

This guide is given to aide in the facilitation of leading your small group. It is only an aide for you to experience Christ together.

## **ABIDE: BIG PICTURE TOGETHER**

**Start with Purpose** – It's always important to hear from God's Word why we are doing what we are doing! **Have someone read aloud**, John 13:34

Discuss these questions in your group: Why do we need one another to fulfill this scripture? How does small group fit into this passage? What's the point of us doing life together?

## **ABIDE: LISTEN TOGETHER**

This time of listening to God together is vitally important as the Body of Christ. Let this time lead you into praying together and allowing Jesus to speak to you as a group.

- If you want, sing a song together either with an iPod or with somebody leading from the group.
- This may be a time to simply gaze upon God individually too for a moment and waiting for Him to bring to mind things that need to be said to each other.
- Spend a few moments listening to God through scripture by allowing the Word to speak to and through your group. Feel free to ask group members to use scriptures to encourage another. Nothing is more powerful than using God's Truth to encourage and edify another. God uses His Word through His Body to build up the Body.

## **CONNECT: LOVE TOGETHER**

Use this time to catch up with everyone and ask if there are any prayer requests or matters needing attention. It can be uncomfortable for people to share about themselves and many will want to hear from others, don't let them ignore their personal needs! This is a time for Jesus to shepherd your group through the group. This is one of the few times during the week where our church can accomplish the "one another" lifestyle. Make sure to try and see if there has been any progress in recent requests, praise is equally as important as prayers

*"...love one another" – 1 John 4:7*

After you've prayed, let them know that our group meets all the time. Continue this week to show love by meeting needs. We all are called to pastor the church.

**CONNECT: TEACH TOGETHER:** *\*The aim of these questions is to facilitate conversation and good discussion, don't move too fast to get through them all. Let the Spirit lead your group through whatever these questions prompt.*

Ask someone in the group (or a few people) to read **1 John 4:7-8** out loud and then answer and discuss the following together:

1. Pastor Vance opened by discussing the differences between three different uses of the word “love” in the Greek text. The one used in 1 John 4:7-8 is that of “agape” love. From this he gave three phrases to help us understand this agape love: Love is a choice, not a feeling – Love is self-sacrificing, not self-serving – Love is undeserved, not earned.
  - a. **What does this type of love look like?**
  - b. **What does it mean that it's a choice, self-sacrificing, and undeserved?**
2. Out of 1 John 4:7-8, Pastor Vance taught three truths concerning God's love. The first being, “**I have experienced God's love for me.**” Practically this meant two distinct things: 1) I am a loved, accepted child of the Father, 2) I am a loved, accepted member of the family.
  - a. **What does it mean that we are loved, accepted children of the Father?**
  - b. **Why is it important that we understand that we are a loved, accepted member of the family?**
3. Secondly, we learned that, “**I have God's love in me.**” Pastor Vance used Romans 5:5 to demonstrate that we have had God's love poured out into our hearts – therefore we have the capacity to love others as he wishes.
  - a. **What does it mean that we have had God's love poured out within our hearts according to Romans 5:5?**
  - b. **How do we access or nurture this love within us?**
4. Finally, Pastor Vance taught that, “**God desires to express his love through me.**” As he shared in the beginning of his sermon, Pastor Vance said, “*My capacity for loving others is found in my personal experience with the love of God.*” John was making the case that our ability to love others is rooted and grounded in our love relationship with the Father.
  - a. **How do we further experience, personally, the love of God?**
  - b. **How does experiencing his love for us, help us love others in return?**
  - c. **Why is it so important that we are marked by love for one another?**

### **SHARE: MOBILIZE TOGETHER**

1. Pray for each other, what needs are in your group that you need to bring before God?
2. Pray for our church, that there would be a cultural of love and care for one another. That we would be marked by expressing God's love towards others.
3. Pray for a lost friend, family member, or coworker who is in your circle of influence.

