

## Unshakable Love Small Group Guide

**Warm-up Question:** (Choose one, make up your own, or skip this part all together, depending upon the nature of your group.)

1. What is one of your most treasured possessions?
2. What is one unexpected positive consequence that sheltering at home has brought about in your life?

**Read the following passage:** Matthew 22:34-40.

One of the most challenging aspects of this season is figuring out how we should be living our lives right now. With so much that we did just a few months ago now stripped away, the inadequacy of living merely to have fun, or to be successful, or to build our personal brand is becoming increasingly evident. Is there a way of being in the world that makes sense in every context? This question is similar to the question the Pharisees posed to Jesus: “Which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” The Law of Moses addressed every area of life, but which commandment was the most foundational, the key to all the others? Jesus responded that it was loving God and loving people.

**Questions for Discussion** (Choose several that are relevant for your group):

1. What does it mean to love God? What about loving people? How does loving God and loving people connect with our actions, our emotions, our wills, and our priorities?
2. Is it possible to see all of life through the lens of loving God and loving people? Explain.
3. The Gospels provide us with many striking examples of love in action. Read Mark 10:17-23. Explain why this was likely an uncomfortable conversation. What are some examples of difficult conversations that loving God and loving people might lead us to have? Why might avoiding a conversation be an unloving thing to do? Are there any difficult conversations you need to have? What can we do to help difficult conversations be more effective?
4. Mark 5 records the dramatic deliverance of a demonized man. Read Mark 5:18-20. The healed man “begged” to go with Jesus, but Jesus said no. Is there evidence that Jesus cared for this man? Although the text doesn’t tell us, what are some possible reasons Jesus might have said no to this man’s request to go with him? Generally speaking, do you have trouble saying no to people? How are you affected when you know others are disappointed with you? Explain why “no” can be loving.
5. Read John 11:35. This is the shortest verse in the Bible. When Jesus saw his friend, Mary, and others with her weeping because of Lazarus’s death, he was greatly affected and he also began to weep. How does this connect with the commandment, “Love your neighbor as yourself?” What are some other ways that “loving our

neighbor as ourselves” might be put into practice? How does this command confront the radical individualism that dominates much of the modern western psyche?

6. Jesus forgave his enemies while hanging on the cross (Luke 23:34). Why is forgiveness so important to our relationships? Does forgiving others mean that the ways they have wronged us are no big deal? Read Ephesians 4:32. How does Christ’s forgiveness empower our forgiveness? How should we walk out forgiveness in the difficult cases when the other person is unrepentant or still potentially a threat to our well-being?
7. Read 1 John 4:19. Why is keeping God’s love for us in view so important for living a life of love? Have you embraced God’s love for you? Explain. What tends to cause God’s love to slip out of view in your life?

**Pray**