



## Rock Bridge Small Group Discussion Guide I Believe in God But – Part 1 LEADER GUIDE

### SMALL GROUP LEADERS: - Remember the C's of Small group health:

CONTENT - biblical, intentional, and conversational

CONSISTENCY - regular meetings and interactions with one another

CARE - sharing life's ups and downs with grace, love and encouragement

CELEBRATION - celebrating God's grace to us and having fun together

COMMISSION - participating in what God is doing now during our lifetime on earth

CHARACTER - as a leader – growing in my example for my group

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### **Ice Breaker: (pick one)**

\*What is the most romantic thing you have experienced or witnessed?

\*What is your favorite love song? Romance movie/novel? Why?

### **Into the Word:**

#### **Read I John 4:7-12**

#### Teaching Note:

The word "propitiation" is an important word for Christ-followers to understand and appreciate. Below is a definition from John Murray (The Atonement, 1962):

The doctrine of propitiation is precisely this: that God loved the objects of His wrath (the world) so much that He gave His own Son to the end that He by His blood should make provision for the removal of His wrath. It was Christ's to deal with the wrath so that the loved would no longer be the objects of wrath, and love would achieve its aim of making the children of wrath the children of God's good pleasure.

- a) Contrast this definition of love from the one(s) we find in culture, society, and movies.
- b) How do you struggle to appreciate the way God loves you vs. the way you want God to love you?
- c) How does God love teach us and instruct us to love others (see v. 11)?
- d) How do you struggle to love others this way?

### **Apply the Word:**

- a) What makes you feel "unworthy" of God's love? Conversely, how are you tempted to minimize God's holiness to help yourself feel more worthy of His love?

Group Leaders: Encourage radical transparency by going first and modeling this. Many Rock Bridgers tend to live comfortably with sin because they fail to grasp the true reality of God's holiness. However, many Rock Bridgers are plagued with guilt, shame, regret and the associated unworthiness of their sinfulness too. Shepherd your group to the true nature of God's Cross-shaped love.

b) Imagine waking up tomorrow and the first thought you focused on was HOW God loves us in Christ. What might make you struggle to believe that? If you accepted that fact as true of you, visualize the rest of your day ... what might be different? Use the examples below if necessary ...

- How would you deal with adversity?
- How would you view other people?
- What would your attitude be like?
- How would you view yourself?

**Prayer Time:**

a) Read Ephesians 3:14-21 as a prayer over your group and then encourage people to pray in response to the Word of God.

b) Pray for people by name who are on your "Red Cards" and any others who do not know HOW God loves them. Ask God to use you and Rock Bridge to show and share this love.

**Also would you pray with us as a church for:**

- For God to give us boldness to live for Him and to tell others about Jesus.
- For God to help us be devoted to Him and throw off distractions.