

Thank you for downloading one of the eight, five-session small group studies from *Impact*.

*Impact* is a 40-week, video-driven small group study for men. Each session features a video from best-selling author, Rick Burgess, and a small group leader guide. You can purchase all 40 weeks at once, or purchase the 5-week studies independantly. .

If we can help answer any questions about *Impact* or any other of the Iron Hill Men resources, please don't hesitate to email ([customer care@ironhillpress.com](mailto:customer care@ironhillpress.com)) or call (800) 307-9366

A scenic mountain landscape with a green text box. The background features a majestic mountain range with rugged peaks, some snow patches, and a valley filled with dense evergreen trees. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds. A solid green rectangular box is centered horizontally across the middle of the image, containing the word "LOVE" in a stylized, textured font.

# LOVE

A 5-Week, Video-Driven Discipleship  
Curriculum for Men

**RICK BURGESS**

**IMPACT: LOVE A 5-WEEK, VIDEO-DRIVEN DISCIPLESHIP  
CURRICULUM FOR MEN**

Leader Guides

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Videos

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A 5-WEEK, VIDEO-DRIVEN DISCIPLESHIP  
CURRICULUM FOR MEN



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# DISCIPLESHIP IMPACT

## DISCIPLE MEN, CHANGE EVERYTHING.

There is a discipleship problem affecting Christian men today. Too often, men are absent from both the church pews and from the vital work the church is doing in the world. These men are not engaged spiritually in their homes and aren't making a Kingdom impact in their workplace. And it all points back to one major issue:

Many men aren't being disciplined.

But when men ARE being disciplined, powerful things happen as a result. They impact the church, their family, and culture. We have seen the influence godly men can have. The purpose of *The Pursuit* curriculum is to equip and empower men to become the man God has called them to be.

## WHAT IS IMPACT ?

*Impact* is a 40-week, video-driven curriculum designed to help men discover what it means to have a fruitful life and faith. *Impact* takes the eight traits from 2 Peter 1:5-8 and unpacks them through video and small group Bible Study.

Rick Burgess, best-selling author and co-host of the nationally syndicated radio show *The Rick & Bubba Show*, starts off each session with a 10-15 minute video introducing the session's focus. Then, for each small group session, there is a leader guide to help facilitate a meaningful time of discussion and Bible study.

The reason men aren't living a more authentic faith is simple: they have yet to embrace the call to real discipleship. By leading a group through *Impact*, you're a part of the growing tide of leaders who are looking to awaken men to embrace their calling as Christ-followers.



# STARTER GUIDE

In 2 Peter 1:5–8, Peter provides a list of attributes every Christian should pursue. Peter gave an excellent explanation for why striving to obtain these attributes is so important. He said that if Christ-followers "own" these attributes and continue to grow in them, their lives would be effective and fruitful for the Kingdom of God. This fruitfulness should be the goal of every mature Christian.

One of the attributes Peter mentioned is "love." In this 5-week series, Rick Burgess will help you guide men in your group to understand precisely what "love" is and how pursuing it will lead men to lives of impact for the Kingdom of God.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO GET STARTED

FIRST, preview your video. Every *Impact* session starts with a video. You'll need to preview your video ahead of time and be prepared to show it to your group. You can access your videos through your Iron Hill Press account.

THEN, get ready for your small group discussion and Bible study by preparing your lesson. Use this leader guide to help lead a time of discussion based on the video and Bible study based on the passage Rick covered. Pray that God would lead your preparation and your facilitation of the material.

FINALLY, lead your time of small group Bible study using this leader guide. It's that simple.

If you have any questions or feedback, don't hesitate to let us hear from you at [feedback@ironhillpress.com](mailto:feedback@ironhillpress.com).

# EDGE ELEMENTS ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



**RICK BURGESS** is the Co-Host of the nationally syndicated *Rick and Bubba Show*. He has co-authored multiple New York Times Bestselling Books covering topics such as politics, marriage, business, comedy, and what it looks like to be a follower of Christ in secular entertainment. Rick has appeared on the Fox News programs *Hannity's America*, *Your World with Neil Cavuto*, and *Fox and Friends*.

Rick speaks regularly at men's events and marriage conferences across the country, all while teaching youth and men's Bible studies on a weekly basis. Rick is married to the former Sherri Bodine, and they have five children: Brandi, Blake, Brooks, Brody, and Bronner. Rick's wife Sherri is the author of the book "Bronner: A Journey to Understand," a powerful story about what she and Rick learned about God through the earthly death of their youngest son, Bronner. Rick's eulogy for Bronner became the most-viewed video in the world on YouTube the week of the service.

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**ALSO CONTRIBUTING TO *IMPACT*: *Love***

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**Main Passage:** 1 John 4:8-10

**Purpose:** To understand the unique nature of God's love that He has shown toward us in Christ, which is the basis of all love.

**Session Snapshot:** It is hard to imagine a more essential word to the Christian's vocabulary than "love." To grow as a man of God, you must grow in love. But this word has been thrown around so much in our culture that it has lost its meaning. Before we can ever grow in love, we must understand that love originates in God and can only be fully grasped in light of Christ's sacrificial display of love on the cross. When we fully grasp the depth of God's love, it will radically transform us.

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## GETTING STARTED

*Kick off your time together by introducing a new theme.*

FIRST, explain to your group that they will be beginning a video series that breaks down the individual characteristics of 2 Peter 1:5-8. If this is your first video series in *Impact*, read the following set-up statement:

- **In 2 Peter, Peter encourages his readers to pursue lives that honor God. In the introduction, Peter reveals his letter's heart in just a few powerful verses. Peter says that because of God's grace, we have been saved from the death our sins rightfully earned and given a new life and purpose. As a result, we are to pursue spiritual maturity. Peter says we should strive to grow in our faith, "supplementing" our faith with "virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love." Why did Peter encourage this? Because if we grow in this way, we will be men whose lives are truly fruitful, real assets to the advancement of God's Kingdom. That should be the goal of every man! In *Impact*, we'll look at these characteristics individually and learn how to see them increase in our lives.**

(If it's not your first series in *Impact*, consider summarizing the previous paragraph, reminding men that you're looking at the characteristics from Peter's second letter.)

THEN, if this is your first session as a group, consider introducing yourself, if necessary, and having the men in your group introduce themselves. You may even ask men what they hope to get out of their time in this study. If you want to pass around a contact sheet or do any other first-session "housekeeping tasks," this is the time.

FINALLY, if there are no questions or other input, transition into the *Digging In* section of your leader's guide.

## DIGGING IN

*Jump into the session by watching this week's video.*



FIRST, if this isn't your first session, transition straight into the video. If it is your first study in *Impact*, explain to the group how your time together will work. Explain that you will watch a video that is usually about 12-15 minutes long, followed by a short discussion of the video. Then, you'll spend a few minutes in Bible study, followed by a closing activity.

Consider encouraging men to take notes as they watch the video. Remember, a participant guide is available if you want to distribute it to your group.

THEN, play the video. (You can access the video by logging into your Iron Hill Press account.)

When the video ends, lead men in a short discussion based on what Rick covered. Feel free to come up with your own questions, or consider asking some similar to those below:

- **When the word "love" is used in English, do you think people typically refer to an *agape* type of love, or do they mean something else?**
- **In what ways does our common usage of the word "love" fall short of the kind of love that God shows to us?**
- **How do the character and actions of God toward us help us to have a better grasp of His *agape* love?**
- **How do you understand the basic difference between *agape* love and *philia* (brotherly) love? Do you think one is better than the other?**
- **When non-Christians think about "the love of God," do they grasp the nature of His *agape* love? How would their view of Him change if they understood it?**
- **Rick suggested that many today struggle with the idea of "unconditional" love. Why do you think this is?**
- **Do you think you had the power within you to display real *agape* love before becoming a Christian? What about after becoming a Christian?**
- **How would the reputation of Christians and the church change if we were known as a people who displayed *agape* love to the world around us?**

FINALLY, transition into the *Opening the Word* portion of your time together by saying something like the following:

- **The idea of *agape* love is truly remarkable, and the only reason we have a concept for it is that God *is* love. Today we will spend a few minutes considering the implications of this truth and what it means for us as men of God.**

## **OPENING THE WORD**

*Spend time going deeper into a specific concept Rick introduced in the video.*

FIRST, explain that you will look more deeply at 1 John 4:8-10. As Rick discussed in the video, those of us who are in Christ can know God's perfect, supreme love because He has demonstrated it to us. Once we grasp that love, it should reshape our lives.

We must make sure your people have a good understanding of the context of the passage you'll be studying. Provide the context for the passage using the following bullet points:

- **Author:** 1 John was written by John the Apostle. John was one of Jesus' disciples and was referred to as "the beloved disciple." John was probably only a teenager when he spent three years with Jesus. In addition to 1 John, he authored 2 John, 3 John, the Gospel of John, and Revelation.
- **Timeframe:** 1 John was probably written sometime after the Temple was destroyed in 70 AD, but probably no later than 90 AD.
- **Purpose:** John was writing to a population (1<sup>st</sup> Century Christ-followers) who had seen their ranks diminished at the onset of Roman persecution. John was calling his audience to a doctrinally sound and application-oriented faith. He reminded his readers of the teachings of Christ and urged them to put them into practice.

THEN, read or have a volunteer read 1 John 4:8-10. When the volunteer has finished, direct their attention back to verse 8. Lead the group in a brief discussion. Ask something like:

- **What do you think it means that "God is love"?**
  - Answers will vary. In one sense, we should recognize that love is one of the most fundamental pieces of God's character; His love drives everything He does. In a different sense, we should also recognize that all love is rooted in God; the expressions of love we see in the world around us have God as their spring or source.
- **How do we see God's love on display in creation and the world around us?**
  - Answers will vary. We see God's perfect love between Father, Son, and Spirit in the Trinity. We see God's providential love over all creation in creating a "good" world and in His tender care for the sparrows and flowers. We see God's common grace love that allows all, even those rebelling against God, to enjoy some aspects of his created order. And we see the specific love of God displayed to the whole world in His sending Jesus to the cross.
- **If God is love, and someone does not know God—does that mean that person is incapable of showing love?**
  - Answers will vary. This is a tricky question. Certainly, only those who know God's *agape* love have experienced the truest depths of God's love and can show that kind of love in return. However, this does not mean that non-believers are capable of NO love whatsoever. They are, however, limited in their capacity to know and display this deepest form of love.

Before transitioning to the next question, say something like:

- **Sometimes we throw out the word "love" far too casually, but it is not casual when speaking of God's love. To know God is to know this true *agape* love, and those who don't know God will lack this type of love in their lives. If we know God and are in a relationship with Him, we have experience with and access to the greatest form of love imaginable, and this love should change the way we live.**

NEXT, direct your group's attention back to 1 John 4. Have a volunteer read verse 9. Then, ask:

- **John speaks of God's love being manifested among us. Why did God make His love manifest and reveal it to us?**
  - Answers will vary. God wanted us to know His love. He was not content to hold love for us in His heart, but He desired to express that love and begin the hard work of redeeming and reconciling us to Himself.
- **What efforts did God go through to make his love known to us? What did it cost Him?**
  - *Answer:* Jesus had to descend from His heavenly throne to endure pain and hatred on earth, culminating in the greatest agony possible of being abandoned at Calvary and dying a gruesome

death. He endured scorn, hatred, and even tasted death. Despite being completely innocent and having no requirement to do so, He paid the ultimate price—for our sake.

- **What was God’s ultimate goal in sending His Son into the world? What does it mean to “live” in this way?**
  - *Answer:* God did this "so that we might live through Him." He aimed to rescue wicked and rebellious sinners from eternal death and make us alive with Him. He wants to restore us to true life—not merely physically alive but spiritually alive. We are meant to be connected to the source of life and love itself: God. This is the full or "abundant" life Jesus Himself would mention in John 10:10.

THEN, have a volunteer read verse 10. Explain that we see God's heart so clearly in this verse. We see He desired to reveal His love to us and was willing to pay a heavy price to carry it out. What He did is even more extraordinary when we consider the truth of verse 10 about our posture toward God at this time. After having a volunteer read verse 10, then ask:

- **Why do you think John distinguishes that it is not we who love God, but He who loved us?**
  - Answers will vary. This highlights the depths of God's love even further. Jesus did not endure the cross for a people who loved Him and showed Him affection; He did it for those who rebelled against Him as His enemies. John wants us to understand that this *agape* love is unique, remarkable, and compares to nothing else we have experienced.
- **What does it mean that Jesus is the propitiation for our sins?**
  - *Answer:* This word is also translated as "atoning sacrifice" in some translations, such as the NIV. It carries with it more than the idea that our sins have been covered or removed ("expiation"), though this is part of it. Propitiation also means that God’s relationship toward the sinner changes because His wrath has been appeased. We are forgiven and have a new and favorable relationship with God—we can know Him personally and enjoy His fellowship.
- **If God wanted the world to know His love, how does that shape our mission as Christ-followers while we remain here on earth?**
  - Answers will vary. If God intentionally made His love manifest to the world and sent His Son to pay for the world's sins, we should be driven to share and show this love to the world as well.

FINALLY, have a volunteer read verse. Then, say something like:

- **In verse 9, we see the goal of God's radical display of love: He wants us to *live* through Him. To be alive in this way means to experience the fullness of God’s *agape* love and connect to Him as the source of love in a way that prompts us to love radically. Our love is not merely meant to be an occasional act of kindness or a moment of selflessness but a true love rooted in something deeper. We love not because we muster the strength alone but because He first loved us.**

Ask if there are any questions and if there are none, transition into *Accepting the Challenge*.

## ACCEPTING THE CHALLENGE

*Focus your group’s attention on one key takeaway from your time together.*

FIRST, explain that you want to challenge the group to focus on one main takeaway from this session. Say something like:

- **Whenever we face a concept like the one we have been studying today, it forces us to respond in evaluation.**

THEN, ask volunteers to share what THEY think the main application is of the passage you've just studied. Allow men to share their responses and discuss them as a group. If you choose, supplement their responses with the following takeaways:

- 1) After listening to Rick and studying John's message, some of us must ask ourselves, "Do I truly know this love from God? Do I understand what He has done for me in Christ, and have I responded by surrendering my life to Him?"
- 2) For others, maybe we have understood the depth of God's love before, but we realize that love is not flowing out from us in return. We must ask, "Am I withholding love to certain people even though God did not withhold an ounce of love from me? How can I begin showing love as someone who has experienced God's *agape* love?"
- 3) Some of us may see the fruit of loving actions in our life, but we need to consider if we're withholding God's love in our *words* with others. We must ask, "Are there people in my life who need to hear this good news of God's *agape* love? Do I need to share it with someone, in particular, this week?"

Allow the group to consider where they find themselves on this spectrum of evaluation. If it feels appropriate, allow some discussion about the kind of evaluation they find themselves considering.

FINALLY, encourage men to process these questions in the week to come. Challenge them to listen to what God is telling them and respond accordingly. If there are no more questions or input, close your time together in prayer.