



Small Group Discussion Guide

The Spark

Love Uncensored, Week 1

Dave · Weekend of October 24 and 25, 2026

Scriptures

[Song of Songs 1:1–11](#) · [Deuteronomy 17:17](#) · [Proverbs 31:30](#) · [1 Corinthians 7:7](#) · [Matthew 1:6](#) · [2 Corinthians 5:17](#)

The Message

Most church relationship series assume you're married with a minivan, and this weekend started by admitting it. About half of Eastside is single, so Dave wanted those people to hear first that singleness is a gift Paul wrote about and Jesus lived, and that a church that believes it has to act like family. Then we opened the Song of Songs at the very beginning of a romance. She thinks he's a great kisser, but what she keeps coming back to is his character, and when she gets embarrassed about her sunburn, the passage tells her that her worth was never about her skin. So the first word was substance over spark, and the second was to save sex for marriage, because God made that fire and knows where it does some good.

Then look at who wrote all this. Solomon had a thousand women and a family history nobody would want read aloud, and God still put a book about love in his hands. "There is nothing you have done in a bedroom, or a back seat, or a browser history, that Jesus didn't already see when He climbed up on that cross," and He paid for every bit of it.

Before You Start

Your group probably has every relationship status in it: single and content, single and aching, dating, engaged, married, divorced, widowed, and somebody carrying a relationship they have never talked about. The message spoke to all of them on purpose, and your job is to keep the conversation open to all of them. That is why most of these questions lean on the first big idea, substance over spark. Character, friendship, and where your worth comes from are things a 24-year-old on dating apps and a couple married thirty years can both answer honestly.

Nobody owes the group their sexual history.

Question 4 and GD1 touch sex and shame. Keep the conversation on God's design and on boundaries from here forward, and never invite anyone to describe what they have done. If your group is mixed and you can tell that question will shut people down, split the men and women for it or skip it. If someone does share something heavy, like abuse, an affair, or a struggle with porn they can't break, thank them, don't try to resolve it in front of everyone, and call them that week. Your campus pastor and Re:Generation are the next step, and you don't have to carry it alone.

Watch the quiet people during the prayer close. It is built so people can respond to grace without saying a word, and the person who says nothing all night may be the one who needs that minute most.

You will not get through all seven questions, and you are not supposed to. Choose the ones that fit your group, take them in whatever order works, and stay where the conversation is alive.

Icebreaker

Early in their marriage, Dave told Rachel she was always beautiful, but better looking without her coke-bottle glasses. She told him he was better looking when she wasn't wearing them too. What is the worst thing you have ever said with total confidence, knowing it was a mistake the second it left your mouth?

Discussion Questions

Four here and three more in Go Deeper. Pick what fits your group.

- 1 The young woman in the Song admits he is a great kisser and that he smells good, but what she praises is his name, which in Hebrew means his reputation and character. “Not your Tesla chariot in the driveway. Not the six-figure vineyard. Your name.” Think of someone, a spouse, a friend, or a mentor, whose character made them more attractive the longer you knew them. *What was it about them? (attractiveness doesn’t have to be physical)*

Song of Songs 1:2–3

Every relationship status can answer this one, so it is a good place to start. Let people tell the story, and press for the specific traits that made the difference.

- 2 She stands in a palace full of pale women with a farmer’s tan and asks them not to stare. The message went straight at the pressure women carry about appearance: “Your worth was settled before you got out of bed this morning.” *Where does pressure about how you look, what you have, or how you measure up hit you hardest? What would it look like to walk in with your head up this week?*

Song of Songs 1:5–6 Proverbs 31:30

The stage spoke to women directly, so let the women in your group lead here. Men feel a version of this too, usually about status, income, or their body, so don’t let them sit it out.

- 3 When he calls her “my darling,” the Hebrew is closer to “my friend.” Before he is her lover, he is her friend, and she refuses to wander among other men’s flocks looking available because she has chosen one man. Friendship and faithfulness hold the romance up. *If you’re married, what did the two of you used to do as friends that has quietly stopped? If you’re dating or hoping to, how would building a friendship first change the way you date? If you’re single and not looking, who is family to you right now?*

Song of Songs 1:7–9

Couples may want to answer the married version to each other on the drive home instead of to the group. Let them.

- 4 His compliments move from her cheeks to her neck and then stop, because they aren't married yet. Saving sex for marriage can sound like advice from the 1800s, but the reason given was that God loves us too much to watch us get burned by how powerful sex is. After the 1988 fires, Yellowstone found that lodgepole pine cones only release their seeds in the heat of a fire, so the same fire that destroys a forest in one place helps it grow in another. *Why do so many people hear this teaching as God being against sex? What boundaries help keep the fire where it builds something, in dating, in marriage, and on your phone?*

Song of Songs 1:10–11

Keep this on God's design and on boundaries going forward. Nobody shares history tonight. If it will go better as separate men's and women's conversations, split up for ten minutes.

Go Deeper

Three more for groups that move quickly or want to push further. The first is for the people who love digging into the text.

- GD1** The man who wrote the Song of one love ended up with a thousand women, and 1 Kings says they turned his heart away from God. His own story started in a mess too. David took Bathsheba from her husband Uriah and had him killed, and Solomon was born after David married her. In the Greek, Matthew doesn't name her in Jesus' genealogy. He calls her the wife of Uriah. *Why would God keep that detail in the family tree of Jesus, and what does it tell you about what He does with relationship messes?*

1 Kings 11:1–4 2 Samuel 12:15–24 Matthew 1:6

From the stage, Solomon was described as the product of the affair. Second Samuel 12 says the child conceived in the affair died, and Solomon was born later in the marriage. If someone raises that, they're right, and the point still stands: Jesus' line runs straight through David's sin. The NLT adds Bathsheba's name to Matthew 1:6 for clarity, while translations like the NIV and ESV keep "Uriah's wife."

- GD2** Paul calls singleness a gift that frees a person up for ministry, and Jesus lived his whole life single. Be honest as a group. *Are the single people in your circle treated as family, or as people waiting for their life to start? Thanksgiving is about a month away. Who do you know, in this group or around it, who doesn't have a table to sit at, and what are you going to do about it?*

1 Corinthians 7:7 1 Corinthians 7:32–35

If your group is all married couples, this question is still for you. Get specific names and a specific invitation on the table before you move on.

GD3 Dave gave married men an assignment: sit down with your wife this week, ask “Is there anything about my character that’s unattractive to you?” and then stop talking. No defending yourself, no “what about you.” Everyone can do a version of this. If you’re married, ask your spouse. If you’re single, ask a close friend, a roommate, or a sibling who will tell you the truth. Say out loud who you will ask and what day. The next time you meet, the first ten minutes are for reporting back what you heard.

Write the names and days down. Text each person the day before your next meeting so nobody quietly lets it slide.

Close Your Group in Prayer

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17 out loud: “Anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!” Then give the group a full minute of silence. Tell them that anyone carrying shame about a relationship, a season, or a screen can hand it to God in that minute without saying a word to anyone.

End the silence by praying out loud that each person would receive the forgiveness Jesus already paid for and leave knowing their past does not define them. Then pray by name for everyone who committed to the GD3 conversation, and for the single people in your group to know they have a family here. If someone lingers afterward, stay with them.

smallgroups@eastside.com