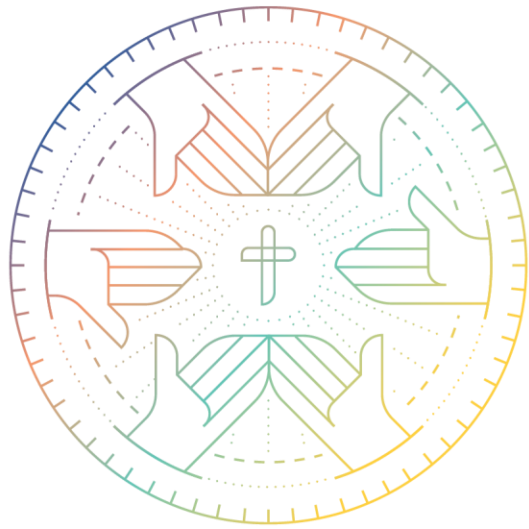


Group Life.

W E A R E B E T T E R T O G E T H E R



MEETING AGENDA

WELCOME (10 MINUTES)

This week we are starting a new series titled *Love: Underused & Over-delivered*. In our first week, we will look at the heart of everything we do. We must be grounded in love because without love; we are nothing.

We have attached an insightful article that goes into the different biblical definitions of love and will be helpful to have a fuller picture of what type of love God is calling us to in 1 Corinthians 13.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/definition-of-love.html>

We also have included a seven-day devotional from the Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible that explore the different aspects of love, including how to love others, remaining in Christ's love, God's agape love for us, and why love is greater than faith and hope.

<https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/11763-the-supremacy-of-love>

Don't forget to take attendance via the attendance reminder email.

ICEBREAKER (10 MINUTES)

What are a few things that you love? (Ex. Hobbies, Sports, Music, Books, Family, Weather, etc.)

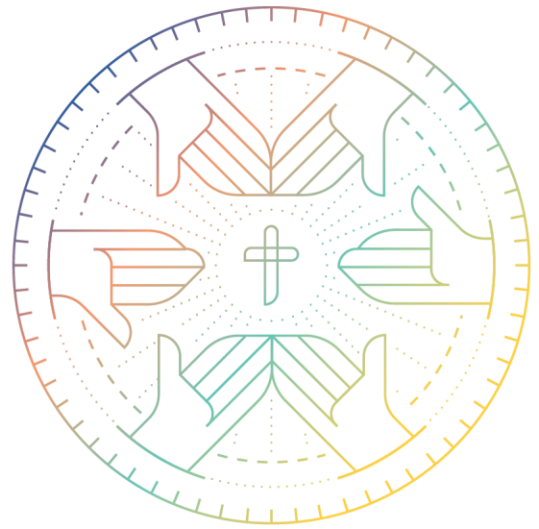
INTRODUCTION (5-10 MINUTES)

Anchor Verse: 1 Corinthians 13:1-3

Paul begins by reminding the Corinthian church of the importance that love must play in their lives. We will learn this week that at the heart of everything we do, we must be grounded in love because without love, we are nothing.

Group Life.

WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER



INTO THE WORD (25 MINUTES)

1. Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-3. What sticks out to you about how Paul describes the importance of love?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. Paul gives several examples of how we can do so much and be skilled in extraordinary ways, but if love isn't at the core of it, then it is worthless. John MacArthur states in his commentary that "Believers should pursue the greatest thing of all – love for each other." As believers, we are called to be known for our love for each other and for our community. David Smith stated, "God wants to transform us so that he can transform others through God's love in us."]

2. Read 1 John 4:17-19 and John 15:9-11. What sticks out to you about how love is described in connection to our relationship with God?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. By loving others, we become like Jesus. We need not fear (1 John 4:18) but enjoy God's love and live it out in serving others, just like Jesus did. Jesus lived among those He served, taught them, prayed for them, served them, and ultimately gave His life for others, leaving a powerful example for our own lives. People do not wake up one day and decide to love (Romans 3:10). God is love, created love, and loved us first. John's summary of verses 17 and 18 also serves as a reminder. We are not to take credit for the love we have and show to others. God loved us, before we were capable of loving Him, and we can only love others because of what He has done in our lives. (bible-ref.com)]

3. We learn three important things about love in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3.

- Love cannot be persuasive if it is passive (Verse 1)
- Love identifies with others' battles. (Verse 2)
- Love isn't permissive but rather life-giving as Jesus is to us (Verse 3)

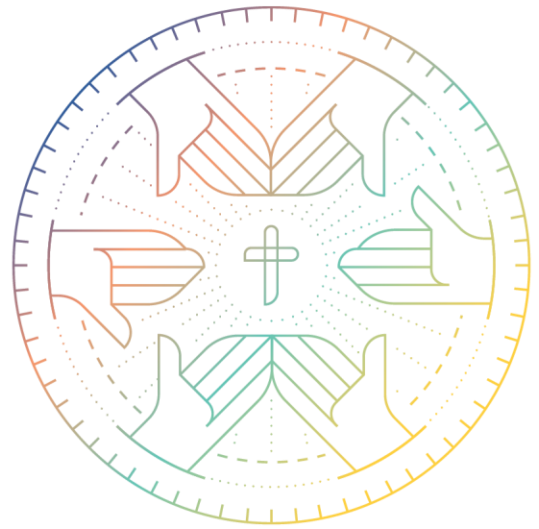
Of these, which one stands out to you and why?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. Jen Wilkin states, "When we begin to follow Christ, we resolve to love God even if it costs us. And it does cost us—it costs us our pride, our comfort, our self-will, our self-sufficiency. At times, it costs us amicable relationships with family, our expectation of safety, and more. But in laying these aside, we learn the worthiness of the object of our love in a deeper way. We find increasing freedom, and as we mature, we resolve to love God no matter what it costs us." We can love others only out of an overflow of understanding and accepting the love that has shown us.]

Group Life.

WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER



APPLICATION (25 MINUTES)

1. Read John 13:34-35 and Galatians 5:14. What would it look like for you based on these two passages you have for you in your daily life?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. In the book of John, we see, "This re-issued commandment is being given in the context of Jesus' washing of the disciples' feet (John 13:2–5). Jesus explained that if the Master acts as a humble servant, so too should those who follow Him (John 13:12–17). Here, Jesus doubles down on that idea by setting His own love as the standard to which all believers should aspire...Jesus sets love as the primary outward sign of a person's Christian faith. He is especially referring to love between those who claim to be His followers. Earlier in the evening, Jesus humbly washed the feet of His disciples (John 13:2–5). He explained that this was an example of service for them to follow (John 13:12–17). Paul, in the book of Galatians, shows, "The brilliance of this command is obvious. It assumes that we love ourselves in the sense that we know how we would like to be treated. It requires us to take the focus off of ourselves and to use that knowledge of what we would like in order to serve each other. Those who have been loved by God are meant to respond by loving others. (biblereference.com)]

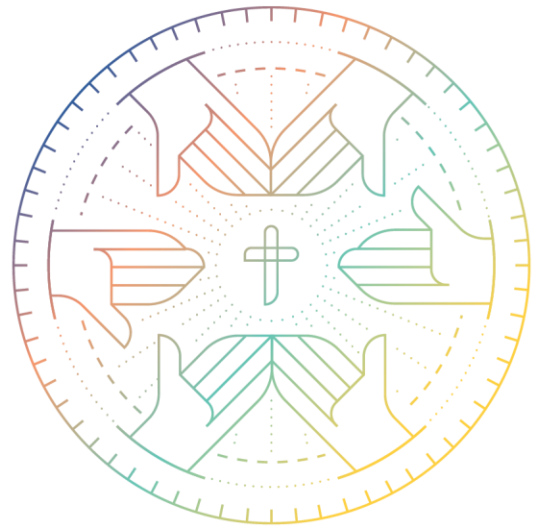
2. Read John 15:13. As you reflect on your life, what area(s) do you need to become more loving in?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. Examples could include inviting God in to love the other drivers you encounter on the road. Or maybe there is a family or work situation in which loving the individual(s) is difficult. Pastor Cal Lord states, "You are not helpless to make a difference in their situation. My suggestion is to go ahead and be a friend to them. Offer your advice, listen to them and let them know you care. Then begin talking to God and ask Him, the Mighty Counselor, the Prince of Peace, to step in and minister to them both. In the end you will have done more for them than you will ever know."]

Group Life.

WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER



3. Read Luke 10:27 and Ephesians 3:14-19. What would it look like for you to live our authentic love this week?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. Laird Crump, the director of Marriage Ministries at Focus on the Family Canada, had this to say, "It is about engaging in an honest process of becoming more like Jesus Christ. If you feel challenged as you read this, it's probably a sign that you embrace authenticity. Authentic Christians don't pretend they are perfect. But when they mess up, they are quick to admit it and get back in step with Christ. They understand the grace of God and are also quick to give His grace to others. An authentic Christian is one who sincerely strives to be the "real deal." To achieve this, perhaps we should regularly adopt and reiterate the Psalmist's prayer: "Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life" (Psalm 139:23-24). As a Christ-follower, I need to ask myself, "Am I the real deal? Am I living a life worthy of imitation?" Society isn't looking for a spiritual theory. Neither are our children. They are longing for a personification of what it means to be an authentic follower of Jesus – someone who can say, "Keep in step with me as I strive to keep in step with Jesus."]

PRAYER (10 MINUTES)

Dear heavenly Father,

Help us to be known by the way that we love one another. May our love for you and for others be at the center of all that we do. As we all experience situations that are difficult to display love, may we be reminded of the love that you have shown us, allowing us to be in a relationship with you. Thank you that have set the example of selfless love. May we be reminded and walk in that love this week. We pray all these things in your excellent name. Amen.