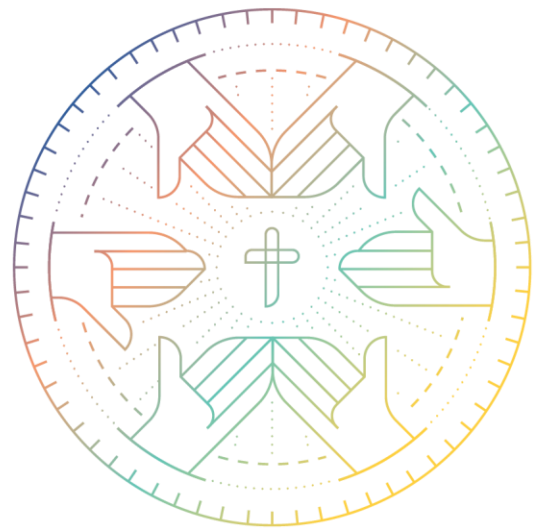


# Group Life.

WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER

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## MEETING AGENDA

### WELCOME (10 MINUTES)

This week we are continuing our series *Love: Over-used & Under-lived*. In our fifth week, we will examine how love does not insist on its own way. We will discuss the importance of turning from self-seeking to loving outward.

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

### ICEBREAKER (10 MINUTES)

**When was the last time you intentionally did something for someone else without expecting anything in return?**

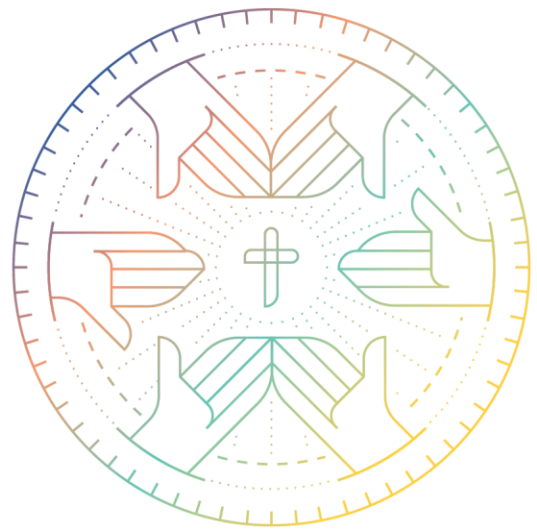
### INTRODUCTION (5-10 MINUTES)

Anchor Verse: 1 Corinthians 13:1-5

Paul continues his instruction to the Corinthian church by examining how love does not insist on its own way. This was a defining issue that marked the Corinthian church. This was evident in the church's divisiveness regarding leadership in chapters 1–3, its attitude toward Paul in chapter 4, its attitude toward legal issues with other Christians in chapter 6, its attitude toward the Lord's Supper in chapter 11, and its attitude toward spiritual gifts in chapter 12. Paul wanted these believers to stop focusing on their own needs and preferences and serve God and one another. Today we will look at the importance of turning from self-seeking to loving outward.

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## INTO THE WORD (25 MINUTES)

1. Read 1 John 2:15-17 and Philippians 2:4. Love is defined in our anchor verse as not insisting on its own way. That can also be translated as a love that is not self-seeking. Self-seeking is defined as chasing after your wants or advancing your goals because someone else is losing. It is a step beyond selfishness in that it is premeditated and devious. Where do you see this played out in our world?

### **H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE**

*[Answers will vary. "The Greek phrase literally means "does not seek the things of itself." Self-focus, which is the antithesis of love, marked the Corinthian church. This was evident in the church's divisiveness regarding leadership (chapters 1–3), its attitude toward Paul (chapter 4), its attitude toward legal issues with other Christians (chapter 6), its attitude toward the Lord's Supper (chapter 11), and its attitude toward spiritual gifts (chapter 12). Paul wanted these believers to stop focusing on their own needs and preferences and serve God and one another...A person who demands his own way, who tramples on others' rights for the sake of upholding his own, or who insists on having his due is not showing love. Love is considerate of others, always. The one who loves is willing to forgo recognition and lay down his rights for the sake of the loved one." (Gotquestions.org)]*

2. Read 1 Corinthians 10:24 and Acts 20:35. The antidote to self-seeking is love that faces outward. It looks like:
  - Putting everyone's needs before their own
  - Not looking out for number one
  - Focusing on bringing joy to others
  - Looking for ways to help others

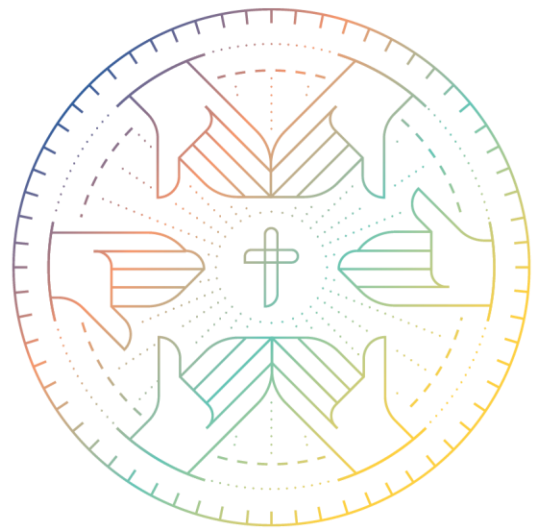
**What sticks out to you, and what makes it challenging to put these into practice in our lives?**

### **H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE**

*[Answers will vary. Grant Richison of verse-by-verse commentary states, "The Corinthians were very conscious of their personal rights, but Paul challenged them not to become self-oriented but others-oriented. We are to become oriented to the good of others... Most Christians are concerned about their own personal success, which is a terrific indictment against Christians today. We think of everything about how it will affect us. It is all about "me first." Self-interest is not our true purpose. The Word of God challenges this attitude; we must not revert to this kind of thinking.]*

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3. Read Hebrews 10:23 and Galatians 2:11-14. There are times when love does insist on its own way, and it takes wisdom to know when those times are. They are:

- When what is being considered is clearly out of step with the truth of the Gospel.
- When the welfare of believers is at stake.

Have you experienced times in your life when one of these situations presented itself?

#### **H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE**

*[Answers will vary. Jon Bloom of Desiring God states it this way, "When the glory of God and the truth of the gospel and the joy of believers are at stake, there are times when love must insist on a particular way...At times, love must insist on its own way; at other times, love must not insist on its own way. How do we know if our insisting or not insisting is being motivated by the incomparably beautiful love of 1 Corinthians 13? The short answer would be this: through knowing our Bible well and humbly seeking honest input from those who know us well. If we're listening, the Holy Spirit will use both to expose our selfishness quite quickly."]*

#### **APPLICATION (25 MINUTES)**

1. Read Ephesians 4:15, Proverbs 3:3, and Romans 12:9. Love insists on truth, faithfulness, and goodness. What would it look like to incorporate these three more deeply into your relationships?

#### **H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE**

*[Answers will vary. For love to flourish, love cannot stand on half-truths built on lies. We must be faithful in showing commitment to those around us, which means showing up consistently in their lives. Finally, we must create a safe and caring environment. Love cannot exist if someone feels unsafe or uncared for.]*

2. Read Luke 10:30-35. In your context, what would it look like for you to love as the Samaritan did in Jesus' story?

#### **H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE**

*[Answers will vary. Our neighbor is thus anyone in our proximity with whom we can share God's love. We are called not only to love those who are similar to us or with whom we are comfortable, but all whom God places in our path. In fact, Jesus said, "I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:44-48). God shows love to all people (John 3:16-18; Romans 1:19-20; 2 Peter 3:9). As His children (John 1:12), we are called to do the same. (Gotquestions.org)]*

**Closing Thought:**

It is essential to be reminded that in life, we will encounter situations where our interests or opinions collide with others. When these situations happen, first go to scripture. So that you can respond with wisdom, understanding, and grace, secondly, go to prayer. Let the Holy Spirit guide you and expose where we are self-seeking. We live in a divided world that needs to be grace-driven and truth-led.

***PRAYER (10 MINUTES)***

*Dear heavenly Father,*

*Let us turn from seeking our good to the good of those around us. May we learn to incorporate truth, faithfulness, and goodness into how we love. May we hold fast to truth and speak it in love. Help us to understand the love You have for us and love others from that knowledge. In Your holy and excellent name, we pray, amen.*