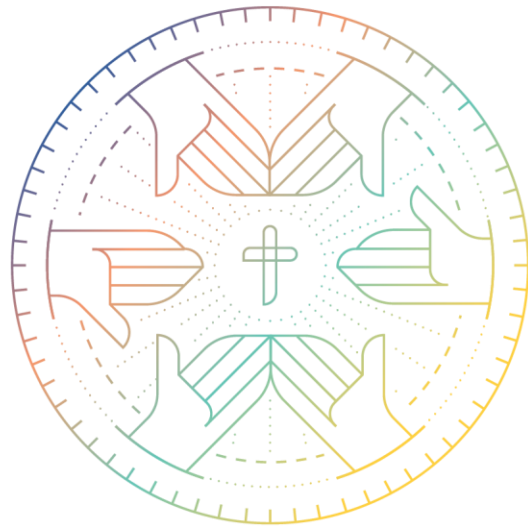


Group Life.

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MEETING AGENDA

WELCOME (10 MINUTES)

This week we are continuing our series *Love: Over-used & Under-lived*. In our sixth week, we will examine how love is not irritable or resentful. We will discuss the importance of not being easily angered and forgiving others.

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

ICEBREAKER (10 MINUTES)

When was the last time you had to be patient with someone?

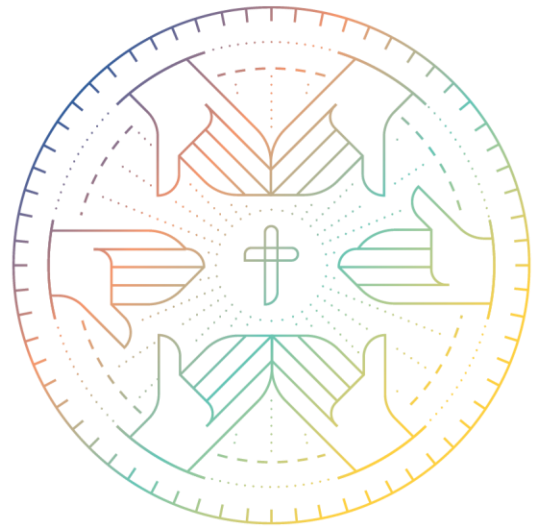
INTRODUCTION (5-10 MINUTES)

Anchor Verse: 1 Corinthians 13:5

Paul continues his instruction to the Corinthian church by telling them not to be irritable or resentful. Love is patient and does not insist on its own way, so forgiveness is naturally another important part of love. The Corinthian church was extremely divided, which Paul addresses in chapters 1-12, and in this chapter he moves to instructing them about why they need to love one another and what that looks like. In verses 1-4 he establishes the importance of love and starts explaining what it looks like, and in verse 5 he focuses on the fact that love is others-focused.

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INTO THE WORD (25 MINUTES)

1. Read Acts 17:16 and Matthew 21:12. Both Paul and Jesus were provoked to anger and did not do anything wrong, as Paul saw false idols being worshipped and Jesus saw God being dishonored. However, their anger was different than being irritable, which is when someone has wounded us. What can we learn from their examples about the difference between being irritable and being righteously angry?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. We should not be easily provoked to anger, which means we should be patient. In fact, the first thing Paul says love is, is patient (1 Corinthians 13:4)! Anger is a God-given emotion, which means that is not inherently sinful. Like Paul and Jesus, we should be angry when we see God being dishonored. This is righteous anger. Being irritable and easily provoked to anger is completely different, however. Irritability is a lack of love when someone has dented, wounded, or punctured us. Not being easily provoked includes being slow to anger and forgiving others (1 Corinthians 13:5).]

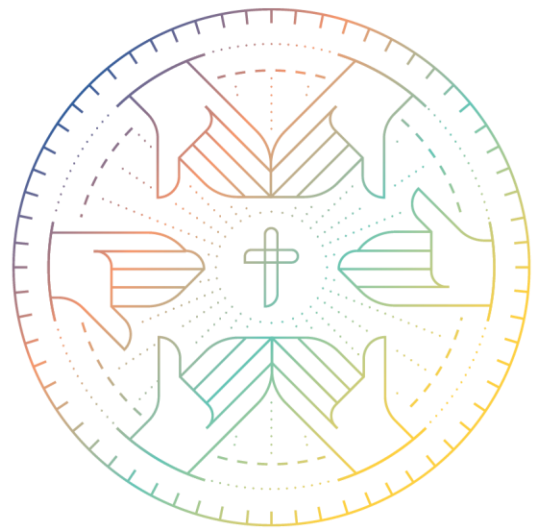
2. Read Proverbs 14:29, Ephesians 4:26, Hebrews 4:15, and James 1:19-20. God gave us the emotion of anger and while this means that it is not inherently sinful, it can quickly lead us to sin. The antidote to slowing down our anger is love. What do these verses tell us about how love helps us reign in our anger so that we don't sin?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. By being slow to anger, we have wisdom (Proverbs 14:29). Love holds back our anger so that we do not fall into sinful expressions of it (Ephesians 4:26). Jesus' example and love towards us gives us comfort that He was tempted too, yet did not fall into sin in His anger (Hebrews 4:15). By demonstrating love and being slow to anger, we are growing in our faith as we let God transform us (James 1:19-20).]

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3. Read Hebrews 10:24-25 and Romans 12:9-10. Love means that we should not be provoking each other to anger, but it does mean we should be provoking each other back to love. According to these verses, this is connected to meeting together with other believers. How does being in community help us love by pushing others toward love?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. We cannot practice love in isolation. Paul wrote to the Corinthian church to teach them how to love another since they were experiencing division. We learn to love others by being in community with them and then by being in community, we can also encourage others to grow in love themselves. As the Church, we are one body (1 Corinthians 12) and are called to live in love. Being in community and practicing love go hand in hand because living out love includes provoking other people to love also.]

APPLICATION (25 MINUTES)

1. Read 1 Corinthians 6:7 and Ephesians 4:31. Paul says that love is not resentful, and this means that it is better to be cheated than to be unloving. Have you ever had a time in your life when you were treated unfairly and still chose to love the other person? Did you recognize God working in that moment because you chose to love?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. God has called us to show love in every situation. By choosing to love in situations where we are cheated or treated unfairly, we are choosing to obey God. We can be encouraged that God is working in that moment even if we do not see it because we are practicing love rather than falling into a sinful response. However, often we can see how God is working to change our heart or the other person's heart as we demonstrate love.]

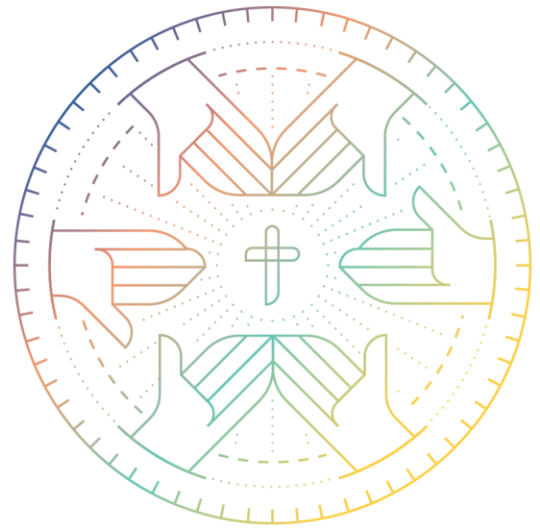
2. Read Matthew 18:21-22 and Colossians 3:8, 13-14. Loving others means not being resentful, or keeping a record of their wrongs. Instead, we are called to forgive others and have a spirit of reconciliation. God has forgiven us, so we need to forgive others. Where in your life do you see that you need to practice forgiveness? What step can you take this week to do that?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. We forgive others because God has forgiven us. We may not be able to "forgive and forget," but we should be encouraged that God does forget our sin (Isaiah 43:25). Loving others does not mean blocking out what they did, but forgiving them, choosing not to be resentful, and not keeping track of their wrongs.]

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Closing Thought:

In life, we will face many times when we are tempted to be easily angered or not forgive others. However, these are not a part of love, which God has clearly called us to practice. When we are faced with these situations, we should be encouraged by Jesus' example and the way God loves us, choosing to show patience and not be irritable, and forgiving others and not keeping track of their wrongs against us. Let love overcome in these situations by trusting in God's love and loving others.

PRAYER (10 MINUTES)

Dear heavenly Father,

Thank you for loving us and forgiving us first so that we can forgive others. When we are tempted to be irritable and resentful, please help us remember that You loved us first and have called us to love others. It is only through your strength and love that we can be slow to anger and choose to not count other's wrongs against them. Help us love others so that they see Your love through us. In Jesus' name we pray, amen