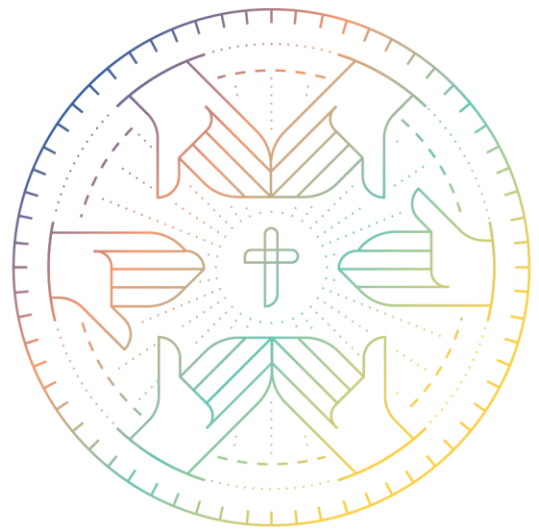


Group Life.

WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER



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

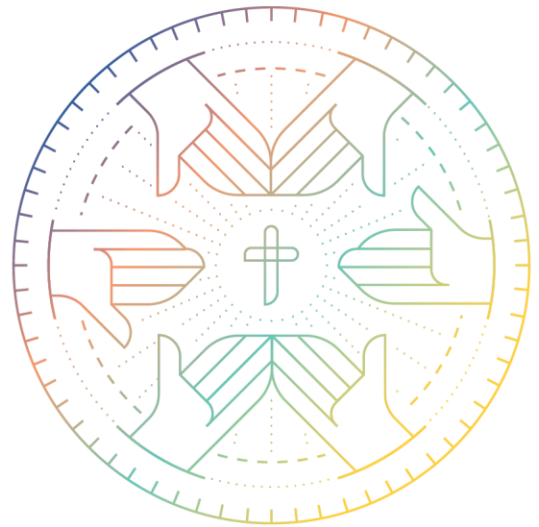
Paul continues his instruction to the Corinthian church by telling them not to be irritable or resentful. Love is patient and does not insist on its own way, so forgiveness is naturally another important part of love. The Corinthian church was extremely divided, which Paul addresses in chapters 1-12, 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.

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?
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?
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?

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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?
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?

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