

Love Never Fails Small Group Guide

Warm-up Question: (Choose one, make up your own, or skip this part all together, depending upon the nature of your group.)

1. What is one of the best things under \$10 that someone could buy for you?
2. Generally speaking, are you comfortable expressing emotion? Explain.

Read the following passage: 1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13.

The New Testament writings have a striking emphasis on love. This was extraordinarily unusual in religious contexts in the Greco-Roman world. This emphasis on love was ultimately grounded in God's nature. John wrote, "God *is* love." Jesus's actions help us understand the essence of this love: Love is a humble, vulnerable, and willing giving of the self for the sake of another. As we receive God's love, we can extend that same love to others.

Questions for Discussion (Choose several that are relevant for your group):

1. Read John 1:1-3, 14. What Old Testament allusions is John making in these passages? What is John communicating about Jesus's identity? How does Jesus help us understand God's character?
2. Read 1 John 4:10-11. God's love is the transforming power that helps us reciprocate this same love back to God and extend it to others. Are you regularly receiving God's love? How can community help us experience the love of God?
3. Read John 13:1-17. Why did Jesus wash the feet of his disciples? What do Jesus's actions teach us about love?
4. Read John 15:15. Jesus's love for his disciples was not merely an impersonal act of sacrifice from a distance. He was vulnerable and transparent with them. Why should this be a goal in our loving relationships with others? How do we determine when we should not make ourselves vulnerable with another person?
5. Read John 14:21-24. What is the connection between loving Jesus and obeying Jesus? In your relationship with God, do you tend to see love and obedience as natural counterparts, or do you tend to feel a tension between the two? Explain.
6. Read 1 John 4:13-18. Is a future evaluation of your life by God something you take seriously? How does the love of God help us address the fear of judgment? What about other fears?

7. Read John 13:34-35. How does love connect to the mission we have been given to “make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19)? What happens if we attempt to fulfill this mission without the love of God?

Pray