

Group discussion *Each number below includes questions that relate to the scripture. I offer a few answers, but your perspective may be better. The point is to discuss, not to get 100% agreement. Rule of thumb: the fewer questions you ask, the better. Save time for "the big question."*

Read I Corinthians 13:4-7 aloud.

1. Go through the passage phrase by phrase and ask for examples of each characteristic.

A good example of patience is...

When have you seen love being kind...

Who in our group does a good job living each of these characteristics of love?

You could go around the circle and ask which of the characteristics are strong in each person.

See the kid-friendly activity for a creative idea for discussing the traits of love. Adults like to play too!

2. When have you experienced this kind of love?
3. In what ways is love better than knowledge? Better than planning or serving or even faith? *See I Cor. 13:1-3.*

How much does love come naturally and how much is it learned or developed?

If two Christians disagree on a Bible passage, how could I Cor. 13 guide the way they treat one another?

While there are endless debates about scriptures and doctrines, the command to love is crystal clear.

4. Love in action pair-shares. Pair up with another person and take turns finishing the following sentences. Go back and forth for about 2 minutes, adding one sentence at a time.
 - Round 1: My greatest joy is...
 - Round 2: My greatest victory is...
 - Round 2: My greatest fear is...

5. What was helpful about today's sermon?

What are some ways it might apply in your relationships?

† **The big question** *If you ask only one question, let this be it. Allow at least 20 minutes. Go around the circle and give each person an opportunity to answer. It's okay if they pass, but at least they get a chance to respond.*

How do family relationships from childhood affect your faith today?

Resources

Bible notes

- This passage is clear. Not a lot of fuzzy interpretation questions. Just a challenging passage to live. Mark Twain said, "I don't worry about the parts of the Bible that I can't understand; it's the ones I do understand that bother me." This is one of those texts.
- I Corinthians was Paul's letter to a church he loved. He answered their questions and raised his concerns. In chapters 11-14, he addresses arguments over worship. Apparently, the tongue speakers and prophets were creating chaos and acting like their spiritual gifts elevated them over other Christians. It is not an accident that Paul's reflection about love being the sign of spirituality falls in the middle of a worship war.

Kid-friendly activity...kids & adults growing together.

Celebrate the good things God has done this last week! *Applause!*

Love scavenger hunt.

Divide into teams of 3-5 people. Make sure each team includes adults & kids. Let young kids be captains – it will thrill them to have a leadership role for a change.

I Corinthians 13:4-7 lists fourteen traits of love. Tell each team to find an item that represents each characteristic. (Examples: a thermometer for patient, a blade of grass for perseveres, etc.)

The first team to find all fourteen items wins and gets to go through the dessert line first.

Come back together and ask a kid from each team to share what they found for each characteristic. (Adults have to be silent, other than cheering.)

Does love come naturally, or is it something you have to develop?
Does it come naturally with siblings?

Pray through the traits of love and dismiss the kids so adults can share prayer needs.



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LIFE Group Guide

I Corinthians 13 – Loving others

By John Grant (jgrant@collegehills.org)

The theme for this conversation: **treating others in loving ways.**

Kevin's message comes from Song of Solomon, and I could not find a passage to serve as a LIFE group text. Once you've heard the sermon, you may decide to discuss key themes, so take good notes. This guide discusses a complementary text on love, I Corinthians 13.

This guide takes a different approach. Rather than pondering the nature of love, it invites your group to practice loving behaviors like expressing appreciation. It may not appeal to the rational logical types, but there are other spiritual styles (emotional, artistic, relational) that are equally valid.

Leadership tip: Never skip a meeting, even if you expect only 3-4 people. Sends a message that the group is a priority and that each person matters.

I. Relate *Use a few of these to introduce the theme and "break the ice." No right or wrong answers – maybe goofy but not wrong! Look for opportunities to affirm and encourage individuals through these questions.*

- ❖ Show one item from your wallet that you value. Tell why it has value and what that says about you.
- ❖ Chocolate or vanilla or something else?
- ❖ Split into sub-groups of 3-4. Give each person a blank card and ask them to keep score of who can guess which person in their circle might do the following....

Would yell at a referee.

Would ask for directions if lost.

Would go to the restroom if a movie got scary.

Would rather ride a motorcycle than a horse.

Would see a movie more than once.

Would choose ESPN over CNN.

Would prefer to drive a Jeep over a Mercedes Benz.

Would rather participate in a sport than watch one.