# LESSON FOURTEEN

## Built Different

***"A Disciple Is Defined by Love"***

**SCRIPTURE |** 1 Corinthians 13:1–13

## MEMORY VERSE

"I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought" (1 Corinthians 1:10).

## MAIN IDEA OF THE TEXT

Built different: disciples love like Christ, and this is foundational to any and every other characteristic.

## DISCIPLESHIP RHYTHM

Discipleship Distinctive: Love and Service

## GROUP TIME

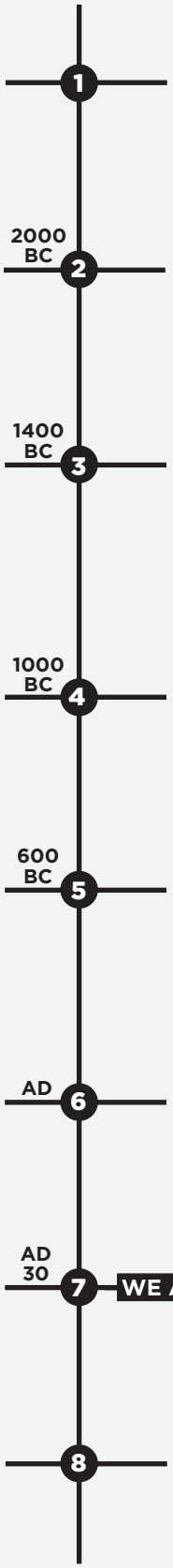
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|---|---|
| 5 minutes | **Welcome** |
| 5–10 minutes | **Attention Grabber** |
| 10 minutes | **Story / Context** |
| 25 minutes | **Discussion** |
| 5–10 minutes | **Closing & Prayer** |

## PRAYER FOCUS

- **Into the Breach** – Pray for our discipleship initiative. We are one week from Commitment Weekend. Pray for yourself, that you would hear what God has for you. Pray that our Lakepointe Church family would join God in the moment we have to impact generations. Pray that we are a faithful church, growing in love and maturing as disciples of Jesus.

***BEGIN this time in prayer, confessing any sins you know of, thanking the Lord for the gift of his Word, and asking the Holy Spirit to guide your study.***

# GOD'S STORY TIMELINE




**1. God Creates the World and Promises a Rescuer** *(Genesis 1-11)*
God created everything good and placed humans in a garden to live in close relationship with Him. But Adam and Eve chose to trust themselves instead of God, and sin entered the world. Relationships, creation, even our connection to God was broken. Yet even in judgment, God promised that one day, a descendant of Eve would crush the serpent and bring healing.
***+This points to Jesus as the promised Rescuer who defeats sin, Satan, and death.***

**2. God Calls a Family and Makes a Promise** *(Genesis 12-50)*
God chose a man named Abram (later Abraham) and gave a covenant to him: that he would have a large family, receive a land, and be a blessing to all nations. Though Abraham and his descendants were deeply flawed, God continued His promise through Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph.
***+This points to Jesus as the true offspring of Abraham, through whom all nations are fully blessed.***

**3. God Rescues His People and Forms a Redeemed Nation** *(Exodus-Deuteronomy)*
Generations later, Abraham's descendants were enslaved in Egypt. God raised up Moses to rescue them from oppression and slavery. God called His people into a relationship with Himself. He made a covenant with them, gave them the law, and instructed them in worship. He was forming a people who would live differently and show the world what it looked like to belong to Him.
***+This points to Jesus as the greater Moses, who rescues us from slavery to sin and writes God's law on our hearts.***

**4. God Gives a Home and Promises a King** *(Joshua-2 Chronicles)*
God brought His people into the promised land under Joshua's leadership. Over time, they asked for a king like the other nations. It was a disaster. But God graciously gave them David, with whom he made another covenant: one of David's descendants would rule forever. Solomon built the temple, but after his death, the kingdom split into two and began spiraling into idolatry and injustice again.
***+This points to Jesus as the forever King from David's line, who reigns with justice and peace.***

**5. God Removes His People and Reminds Them of His Promise** *(Ezra-Nehemiah)*
Because of their rebellion, God allowed His people to be conquered and taken into exile. First, it was the Northern Kingdom, Israel (to Assyria), then the Southern Kingdom, Judah (to Babylon). The temple was destroyed, and the glory of the kingdom faded. Yet God continued to speak through the prophets, reminding the people of His promise to restore them, give them new hearts, and send a Rescuer.
***+This points to Jesus as the one who brings the new covenant, restores hearts, and fulfills every prophecy.***

**6. God Sends His Son and Fulfills His Promise** *(Matthew-John)*
At just the right time, God sent Jesus into the world—born of a virgin, fully God and fully man. He perfectly obeyed the law, pointed us to the Father, and laid down His life as a sacrifice for our sins. On the third day, He rose again, proving that He is the Savior, the King, and the fulfillment of every covenant promise God has ever made.
***+Jesus is the center of the story—all of Scripture leads to Him.***

**7. God Sends His Spirit and Builds His Church** *(Acts-Jude)*
After rising from the dead, Jesus ascended into heaven and sent the Holy Spirit to empower His followers. The early Church spread the good news of Jesus across the Roman world—planting churches, welcoming both Jews and Gentiles, and learning to live as God's new covenant people. Though imperfect, the Church carries Jesus' mission forward today.
***+This points to Jesus as the risen King who gives the Spirit to dwell in us and send us on mission.***

**8. God Restores All Things and Dwells with His People** *(Revelation)*
The story isn't over. One day Jesus will return to judge evil and make all things new. There will be a new heaven and new earth, where God's people from every tribe and nation will live with Him forever. There will be no more pain, no more death, and no more sin—just joy, justice, and unbroken peace.
***+This points to Jesus as the one who brings the story to its perfect and eternal culmination.***

# 1 GRAB THEIR ATTENTION

***LEADER TIP***

*To grab your participants' attention, start your lesson by telling a story related to the lesson's main idea. We have provided you with three options in this section, but feel free to develop your own.*

## OPTION 1: THE MAN IN THE WATER

On January 13, 1982, Air Florida Flight 90 crashed into the 14th Street Bridge in Washington, DC, and fell into the icy Potomac River. Rescue crews lowered a lifeline from a helicopter to the survivors in the water. One man, later identified as Arland Williams, repeatedly passed the line to others instead of keeping it for himself. By the time rescuers returned for him, he had slipped beneath the water.

Williams had chances to take the lifeline for himself. Instead, he passed it to other survivors. That's the heart of love.

**POTENTIAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- *Describe love for others. How is love more than a feeling someone has?*
- *What does costly love reveal about someone's values?*

**Transition Statement from Attention Grabber to Text:**
Arland Williams's story reminds us that love is not merely something we say or feel. Love gives itself for the good of others. In 1 Corinthians 13:1–13, Paul taught that even impressive gifts, knowledge, sacrifice, and service are empty without love. Disciples are built different because they love like Christ, and this is foundational to every other mark of discipleship.

## OPTION 2: THE GOOD SAMARITAN

In Luke 10, Jesus told a story about a man who was beaten, robbed, and left on the road. A priest and a Levite both saw him and passed by on the other side. Then a Samaritan came along. He saw the wounded man, took pity on him, bandaged his wounds, placed him on his donkey, brought him to an inn, and paid for his care.

Jesus told this story in response to the question, "Who is my neighbor?" The answer was uncomfortable because the Samaritan was the unexpected person in the story. He did not just feel sorry for the wounded man. He moved toward him, cared for him, and carried the cost for his good. In a word, he loved. The others didn't.

**POTENTIAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- *How does this story demonstrate love?*
- *Do you ever find it easy to notice someone's need and ignore them?*

**Transition Statement from Attention Grabber to Text:**
The Good Samaritan gives us a picture of love that moves toward another person's need. In 1 Corinthians 13:1–13, Paul taught that spiritual gifts, knowledge, sacrifice, and service are empty without love. A disciple is built different because they love like Christ, and this is foundational to every other mark of discipleship.

## OPTION 3: WHEN A GIFT MAKES YOU FEEL SMALL

Have you ever received a gift from someone and they told you how expensive it was? They didn't just put a price on it; they communicated the inconvenience of getting it for you. Instead of feeling good and appreciated, you felt bad and like a burden. The gift-giver drew attention to themselves instead of you—the person receiving the gift.

That kind of gift can be useful yet still feel hollow. The action may be generous, but the posture changes how it is received. This helps us understand why Paul said even sacrifice and service can be empty without love. The act itself matters, but the heart behind the act matters too.

**POTENTIAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- *Have you experienced something like this? Share the story.*
- *Why can the way a gift is given change how it is received?*

**Transition Statement from Attention Grabber to Text:**
A gift given without love can become hollow, even when the action looks generous. In 1 Corinthians 13:1–13, Paul taught that spiritual gifts, knowledge, sacrifice, and service are empty without love. Disciples are built different because they love like Christ, and this is foundational to every other mark of discipleship.

# 2 SET THE STAGE

***LEADER TIP***

*This section provides the historical, cultural, and literary context needed to properly interpret and apply the text.*

## OUTLINE

I. Greetings and Thanksgiving (1:1–9)
II. Problems in the church (1:10–6:20)
  A. Divisions and factions (1:10–4:21)
  B. Gross immorality (5:1–13)
  C. Litigation before pagan courts (6:1–11)
  D. Fornication with prostitutes (6:12–20)
III. Replies to questions from the Corinthians (7:1–14:40)
  A. Questions about marriage (7:1–40)
  B. Limitations of Christian liberty (8:1–11:1)
  C. Veiling of women in public worship (11:2–16)
  D. Disorderly behavior at the Lord's Supper (11:17–34)
  **E. Exercise of spiritual gifts (12:1–14:40)**
IV. The Resurrection of the Body (15:1–58)
  A. Centrality of Christ's resurrection (15:1–20)
  B. Sequence of resurrection events (15:21–28)
  C. The resurrection and suffering (15:29–34)
  D. Nature of the resurrection body (15:35–49)
  E. The believer's victory over death (15:50–58)
V. Conclusion (16:1–24)
  A. Collection for the believers at Jerusalem (16:1–4)
  B. Paul's plans for visiting Corinth (16:5–9)
  C. Exhortations, instructions, and salutations (16:10–24)[1]

## CONTEXT

This chapter is often read at weddings, but Paul first wrote it to a divided church that was comparing gifts, competing for importance, and forgetting the good of one another. Paul did not downplay spiritual gifts, knowledge, faith, generosity, or sacrifice. He showed that without love, even impressive things become empty. Love is the way of Christ, the mark of maturity, and the foundation beneath every other characteristic of discipleship. Disciples are built different because they love like Christ, and this is foundational to every other mark of discipleship.

## FALLEN CONDITION FOCUS

We can do very impressive things as those made in the image of God. But we can also do them without an ounce of love. And apart from Christ, that is our tendency. We use our knowledge, gifts, service, sacrifice, and even religious activity to build ourselves up, prove our importance, protect our pride, or control how others see us.

[1] F. Alan Tomlinson, "1 Corinthians," in *CSB Study Bible: Notes*, ed. Edwin A. Blum and Trevin Wax (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2017), 1811.

## GOSPEL RESPONSE

Jesus is the fullness of love. He is patient and kind toward sinners, humble in His service, faithful in His suffering, and self-giving in His death. Through His death and resurrection, He rescues loveless people and pours His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. Because we belong to Christ, love becomes more than a command to obey. It becomes the shape of the new life He is forming in us.

## DISCIPLESHIP RHYTHM: DISCIPLESHIP DISTINCTIVE: LOVE AND SERVICE

Love and service are where discipleship become visible in ordinary life. They show up when we notice someone's need and move toward them with the heart of Christ. Sometimes that looks simple and practical. Sometimes it costs more than we expected. But love does not remain an idea. It becomes a way of using our words, gifts, time, attention, and resources for the good of others.

That is why 1 Corinthians 13 belongs in the middle of Paul's teaching on spiritual gifts. The Corinthians had spiritual activity, but their giftedness was not making them more loving. Paul said tongues, prophecy, knowledge, faith, generosity, and sacrifice can all be empty when love is missing. The Spirit gives gifts to build the church, and love keeps those gifts aimed in the right direction. Disciples are built different because they love like Christ, and this is foundational to every other mark of discipleship.

# 3 LOOK AT THE BOOK

***LEADER TIP***

*In this section, you will find exercises you can use to lead your group through Observation, Interpretation, and Application. As the leader, work through all the exercises below to ensure you understand the text well.*

**1 Corinthians 13:1–3** Chapter 13 is the middle of Paul's teaching on spiritual gifts. Chapter 12 explains that the Spirit gives gifts for the common good. Chapter 14 will correct the way certain gifts were being used when the church gathered. Chapter 13 explains what must govern all of it. The Corinthians did not need less concern for spiritual gifts. They needed gifts shaped by love.

Paul began with speech. "If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal" (v. 1). The Corinthians appeared to place a high value on impressive spiritual speech. Paul did not deny that tongues can be a gift of the Spirit. He simply said speech without love does not serve its purpose. It may draw attention, but it does not build up the church.

In verse 2, Paul moved to prophecy, understanding mysteries, knowledge, and faith. These are significant gifts. Paul was not describing shallow religion. He was describing the kind of spiritual power and insight many believers would admire. But if love is absent, the person exercising those gifts is not spiritually mature. The gift may be real, but the person is missing the way of Christ.

Verse 3 reaches into generosity and sacrifice. A person could give away everything and even surrender their body to hardship but still act without love. That is sobering because it means love cannot be assumed from the outward action alone. Service can be mixed with pride. Sacrifice can be used to gain attention. Generosity can still keep the giver at the center. Paul wanted the Corinthians to see that love is what makes gifts and service truly serve Christ and His people.

**1 Corinthians 13:4–7** Paul now described love in a way that served as a direct challenge to the Corinthians. He was not giving them a greeting-card definition. He was showing them the kind of character that must shape every gift.

"Love is patient" means love is slow to anger with people. It is the opposite of having a short fuse. This is the kind of patience God demonstrated throughout Scripture when He bore with sinners and was "slow to anger" (Exodus 34:6). The Corinthians needed this because gifted people can become impatient people. They can wonder why others do not see what they see, grow as quickly as they grow, or value the same things they value. Love stays with people when growth is slow.

"Love is kind" adds warmth to patience. A person can put up with someone while still becoming cold toward them. That is not what Paul meant. Kindness moves toward another person's good. It is the way Jesus treated the weak, the ashamed, the overlooked, and the sinful. He did not merely tolerate people. He helped them.

Paul then said love "does not envy." Envy is desire that has gone crooked. It looks at someone else's gift, opportunity, or honor and resents it. That would have mattered in a church comparing spiritual gifts. If the Spirit gives gifts as He determines, then envy is a refusal to trust His wisdom. Love can rejoice when God uses someone else.

Love “does not boast” and “is not proud.” Paul had already warned the Corinthians about being “puffed up” several times in this letter. They were proud of leaders, proud of knowledge, and even proud when they should have been grieving over sin. Love does not need to parade itself. It does not use gifts to make the gifted person look bigger. Love remembers that every gift has been received.

Verse 5 says love “does not dishonor others.” That word points to behavior that is shameful or out of step with what is fitting. The Corinthians had dishonored one another in lawsuits, at the Lord’s Supper, and in the way they treated weaker believers. Paul wanted them to see that love asks whether our behavior fits the gospel we claim to believe.

Love is “not self-seeking” connects with Paul’s earlier command: “No one should seek their own good, but the good of others” (1 Corinthians 10:24). Love does not make the self the center of every decision. This is where love looks like Jesus. He had every right to be served, yet He gave Himself for others.

Love is “not easily angered.” It is not constantly looking for a reason to be offended. Love also “keeps no record of wrongs.” It’s the idea of keeping an account, like a ledger. Love does not store up every injury so it can bring the list back out later. This does not mean love ignores sin. Paul has confronted sin clearly throughout the letter. It means love does not use wrongs suffered as ammunition for bitterness, revenge, or superiority.

Verse 6 says love “does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.” Christian love is never separated from holiness. It does not celebrate what destroys people. It does not call sin harmless in order to seem gracious. Love rejoices with the truth because truth is part of another person’s good. Jesus is full of both grace and truth.

Verse 7 gives love a steady strength: it protects, trusts, hopes, and perseveres. Love is not naïve. It does not pretend evil is safe. But love does not become cynical as its first instinct. It keeps seeking the good of others. It keeps believing God can work. It keeps carrying what love requires, even when people are difficult and growth takes time.

For the Corinthians, these verses were a mirror. They had gifts, but were they becoming patient? They had knowledge, but were they becoming kind? They gathered for worship, but were they honoring one another? Paul was showing them that love is the character of Christ under every gift, every act of service, and every mark of discipleship.

**1 Corinthians 13:8–13** Verse 8 begins with the statement, “Love never fails.” Paul contrasted love with gifts that belonged to the church’s present season. Prophecies will cease. Tongues will be stilled. Knowledge will pass away. Paul was not dismissing these gifts. They are good gifts from the Spirit, but they are temporary. They are needed because the church still lives with partial knowledge and incomplete sight.

In verses 9–10, Paul said, “We know in part and we prophesy in part, but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears.” The word translated “completeness” points to the arrival of what is full and mature. Paul was looking toward the day when Christ returns and God’s

people see Him fully. Until then, spiritual gifts serve the church in a partial age. They help the body grow, but they are not the final goal.

The child image in verse 11 helps explain the movement from partial to complete. A child speaks, thinks, and reasons like a child. That is appropriate for childhood, but maturity brings a different way of seeing and understanding. Paul was saying the gifts the Corinthians prized so highly belonged to the present stage of God's work. They mattered, but they were not ultimate.

Verse 12 adds the image of a mirror. Ancient mirrors did not give the same clarity as modern mirrors, so Paul said, "Now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face." Our knowledge of God now is real but incomplete. One day believers will know fully, even as they are fully known. That future should humble the Corinthians. They did not know as completely as they thought they did, and their gifts were not as ultimate as they imagined.

Paul closed with faith, hope, and love. These three remain, but "the greatest of these is love" (v. 13). Faith will become sight. Hope will be fulfilled. Love remains because love reflects the life of God and the way of Christ. Spiritual gifts matter, but love gives them their proper shape and purpose. Disciples are built different because they love like Christ, and this is foundational to every other mark of discipleship.

**1 CORINTHIANS 13:1–13**

13 If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I
am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 And if I have prophetic powers,
and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so
as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 If I give away
all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I
gain nothing.

4 Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant
5 or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful;
6 it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. 7 Love
bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

8 Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for
tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. 9 For we
know in part and we prophesy in part, 10 but when the perfect comes,
the partial will pass away. 11 When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I
thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave
up childish ways. 12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to
face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully
known.

13 So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of
these is love.[2]

[2] *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2025), 1 Corinthians 13:1–13.

Gather in groups of three to five people to discuss the Observation and Interpretation questions.

**OBSERVATION EXERCISE 1: GIFTS WITHOUT LOVE**

Read 1 Corinthians 13:1–3. What examples of spiritual gifts does Paul list? What happens if love is missing?

*Suggested Response: Paul mentioned speaking in the tongues of men or angels, having the gift of prophecy, understanding mysteries, possessing knowledge, having faith that can move mountains, giving all he possessed to the poor, and giving over his body to hardship. He said without love, he was only a resounding gong or clanging cymbal. Without love, he was nothing. Without love, he gained nothing.*

**OBSERVATION EXERCISE 2: THE CHARACTER OF LOVE**

Read 1 Corinthians 13:4–7. Make a list of characteristics Paul used to describe love. Pay attention to what love is and what love is not.

*Suggested Response: Paul said love is patient and kind. He said love does not envy or boast, is not proud, does not dishonor others, is not self-seeking or easily angered, and keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. Paul said love always protects, always trusts, always hopes, and always perseveres.*

**OBSERVATION EXERCISE 3: THAT WHICH LASTS**

Read 1 Corinthians 13:8–13. What three things did Paul say will remain? What things did Paul say would stop or pass away?

*Suggested Response: Paul said love never fails. He said prophecies would cease, tongues would be stilled, and knowledge would pass away. He said we know in part and prophesy in part, but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. Paul compared this to leaving behind the ways of childhood and seeing only a reflection in a mirror before seeing face to face. He said faith, hope, and love remain, and the greatest of these is love.*

**INTERPRETATION EXERCISE 1: GIFTS NEED LOVE**

In 1 Corinthians 13:1–3, Why did Paul compare spiritual gifts and the absence of love?

*Suggested Response: Paul was showing that spiritual gifts and sacrificial actions do not automatically equal spiritual maturity. A person can speak powerfully, understand deeply, give generously, and still miss the heart of Christ. He was not lowering the value of gifts. He was teaching that gifts only serve their proper purpose when they are shaped by love. Without love, even impressive things become empty because they are not building up the people God meant them to serve.*

**INTERPRETATION EXERCISE 2: LOVE AS THE TEST OF MATURITY**

In 1 Corinthians 13:4–7, Paul made the point that the Corinthian church was divided because of a lack of love, not a lack of spiritual gifts. How would love mend the divisions?

*Suggested Response: Paul's description of love would have exposed what was missing in Corinth. The church had spiritual gifts, but they were also marked by pride, comparison, dishonor, impatience, and self-seeking. Paul showed that love is not mainly proved by how strongly someone feels but by how they treat people. Love is patient with weakness, kind in how it responds, truthful about sin, and steady when relationships are difficult. This means giftedness should be tested by whether it is making disciples more like Christ.*

**INTERPRETATION EXERCISE 3: LOVE IS GREATER THAN GIFTS**

In 1 Corinthians 13:8–13, how is love greater than the gifts listed?

*Suggested Response: Paul said gifts like prophecy, tongues, and knowledge belonged to the church's present need. They are real gifts from God, but they serve believers while we still know in part and see in part. One day, when Christ brings all things to completion, those partial gifts will no longer be needed in the same way. Love is greater because it reflects the character of God and the way of Christ. Gifts build the church for a season, but love is foundational to every mark of discipleship.*

***LEADER TIP***

*In this section, you will find questions to choose from that will help your group consider how God calls them to respond to the text. Help your group set measurable action steps.*

*Leaders – share your story with your group. It takes 3-5 minutes. You are modeling this for your group, so follow the guidelines. (Click here for the guidelines).*

*Challenge – group people into 2's or 3's and have them prepare to share their story with each other next week. Set aside 15-20 minutes of your group time for this.*

**QUESTION 1: In 1 Corinthians 13:1–3, Paul said the most impressive things we can do amount to nothing if we don't have love at the foundation. What are some ways people do the right thing but with the wrong motivation?**

*Suggested Response: I may serve, speak, give, or help in ways that look right on the outside, but my heart can still be driven by pride, resentment, control, or a desire to be noticed. Paul reminds me that love matters because people matter to God. The goal is not only to do something useful, but to do it with the heart of Christ.*

*As your group responds, use follow-up questions to guide below surface-level responses. Encourage transparent responses.*

**QUESTION 2: Review the description of what love is and is not (1 Corinthians 13:4–7). Which one feels most challenging to practice with real people right now?**

*Suggested Response: I may be challenged by patience, kindness, not keeping a record of wrongs, not being self-seeking, or persevering when relationships are difficult. These words become searching when I attach them to actual people and situations. Paul is helping me see where love needs to become more visible in my everyday life.*

**QUESTION 3: What relationship in your life could use patience and kindness? What would that look like?**

*Suggested Response: Patience may look like slowing down before I respond, giving someone room to grow, or not assuming the worst. Kindness may look like a gentle word, practical help, or choosing not to be sharp when I feel frustrated. Love becomes concrete in the way I treat the person in front of me.*

**QUESTION 4: Paul said love keeps no record of wrongs. How can you be honest about hurt without keeping a ledger?**

*Suggested Response: Being honest about a hurt does not mean dismissing it. It means addressing the hurt with the person involved, seeking reconciliation, then moving forward. Identifying hurt is not the same as keeping a ledger. The outcome may mean setting wise boundaries for the future. Keeping a record means continuing to bring the wrong back up so I can punish, control, or feel superior. It looks like keeping the other person in the jail of unforgiveness. Love does not deny hurts, but it refuses to let bitterness become the way I relate to people.*

**QUESTION 5: In 1 Corinthians 13:8–13, Paul said gifts are temporary, but love remains. What short-term thing are you tempted to hold onto more than love?**

*Suggested Response: I may value being right, being gifted, being productive, being respected, being needed, or being in control. Those things can feel important, but Paul reminds me that they are not the*

*deepest mark of discipleship. Love is what gives every gift, word, and act of service its proper direction.*

**QUESTION 6: How can our group practice Love and Service in a way that helps people see Christ more clearly?**

*Suggested Response: Our group can practice love by paying attention to real needs, speaking with patience, serving without needing attention, forgiving honestly, and encouraging one another to use our gifts for the good of others. We can help one another remember disciples are not defined by giftedness alone. A disciple is built different because they love like Christ, and this is foundational to every other mark of discipleship.*

# 4 CHALLENGE

***LEADER TIP***

*End your study time with one final challenge and prayer. Your final challenge should pull together everything you covered in this lesson and call your participants to action.*

Disciples are built different because they love like Christ, and this is foundational to every other mark of discipleship. Paul did not let the Corinthians separate giftedness from love. They could speak, serve, give, understand, and sacrifice, but without love they were missing the way of Jesus.

This week read 1 Corinthians 13:4–7 with actual people in mind.

- Where does love to become more patient or kind in you?
- Where are you tempted to keep score, seek your own way, or assume the worst?
- How can you use your gifts, words, time, or service for someone else's good?

Love is not decoration added to discipleship. It is the shape of life in Christ. The gifts God gives us are meant to be carried by the heart of Jesus so the church is built up and people are loved in His name.

Let's pray.