

LIFE IN THE KINGDOM:
THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Love: 1 Samuel 18:1-5; 23:15-18; John 15:9-15

July 12, 2020

NOTE

Dear CGs,

As the city begins to reopen and we resume some semblance of normalcy, we want to thank each of you who have given to the Disaster Relief Fund or individually served with the places we've suggested in these notes. Because of your generosity, so many have been helped in this crisis. As a community, we've been able to deliver meals to the field hospital in Central Park and provide counseling for healthcare workers. We supported the Dream Center in East Harlem where 1,000 people received groceries, totaling 1,600 meals. We were also able to contribute \$7,500 to City to City's Crisis Relief Grants for a small church in Queens that was hit hard by the pandemic. And we gave substantially to Hope for New York's crisis fund, giving directly into the hardest hit areas of New York. The impact of your gifts has been exponential. Thank you!

In Christ,
The ES CG Team

WORSHIP

Take a moment to remind yourself why you are still meeting together: *To grow as disciples of Jesus by cultivating our relationship with God and friendship with others.*

Listen to a song of worship: [Isn't It Love - Andrew Peterson](#) or [It Must Be Love - Babbie Mason](#)

Or **read** the following together:

"If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing." 1 Corinthians 13:3

SCRIPTURE

20 MINUTES

Read the following Scripture together. Then invite the group to respond through the questions below.

1 Samuel 18:1-5 New International Version (NIV)

¹ After David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself. ² From that day Saul kept David with him and did not let him return home to his family. ³ And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. ⁴ Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his tunic, and even his sword, his bow and his belt. ⁵ Whatever mission Saul sent him on, David was so successful that Saul gave him a high rank in the army. This pleased all the troops, and Saul's officers as well.

1 Samuel 23:15-18 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁵ While David was at Horesh in the Desert of Ziph, he learned that Saul had come out to take his life. ¹⁶ And Saul's son Jonathan went to David at Horesh and helped him find strength in God. ¹⁷ "Don't be afraid," he said. "My father Saul will not lay a hand on you. You will be king over Israel, and I will be second to you. Even my father Saul knows this." ¹⁸ The two of them made a covenant before the Lord. Then Jonathan went home, but David remained at Horesh.

John 15:9-15 New International Version (NIV)

⁹ "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. ¹¹ I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹² My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵ I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.

- ▶ **What are the marks of friendship-love according to these passages?**
- ▶ **How do you think your community is demonstrating these marks of friendship-love?**
- ▶ **Could this kind of love influence your relationships across differences of ethnicity, gender, ideology, age, etc.? Why or why not?**
- ▶ **How is Jesus Christ's love for us on the cross a primary means by which Christians grow into loving character? What could you do practically to grow in love?**

GOING FURTHER THIS WEEK

Use the [Fruit of the Spirit devotional guide](#) to grow deeper in your practice of this kind of love.

FELLOWSHIP AND PRAYER

25 MINUTES

- ▶ Pray that "God's love will be poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit" (Romans 5:5), so that we would grow in love in all our relationships.
- ▶ Use the prayer below to guide you in praying for actions of love across every barrier, especially ethnic and ideological differences:

Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may so move every human heart and especially the hearts of the people of this land, that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; that our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Then with the Scripture discussion in mind, pray for each other and the particular needs in our city and world.