

THE **crossing** **small groups**

Love Listens 1 Corinthians 13:4 Sermon Discussion Leader Guide

Purpose of Discussion: To discuss one or two practical ways we can fight pride by showing love through our words and actions.

Sermon Refresher: The entire point of our lives is love. Jesus says that loving God and loving our neighbors is the most important thing we can do. If we don't learn how to love, then we miss the point. 1 Corinthians 13 is an important chapter in the Bible because it teaches us how to love and what love looks like. In 1 Corinthians 13:4, we learn the reason love and pride cannot coexist is because pride keeps us focused on ourselves and our story rather than on God and others. In order to push back against pride and to free ourselves up to love, we must remember that one day we will live resurrected lives, full of resurrected glory. This reality empowers us to take our eyes off ourselves and to verbally and "verbishly" love each other.

Icebreaker: What was the best compliment you've ever received and how did it make you feel? What impact did it make in your life?

Discussion:

1. In Genesis 1:26-28, we read that we were created in God's image to image his glory and greatness. How does sin distort and twist our God given desire for greatness and glory?

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2. We all have a tendency to magnify the faults in others while minimizing our own. Jesus talks about this tendency in the Sermon on the Mount when he says we are to take out the plank in our eye before we try and take the speck out of our neighbor's eye. How does having a critical heart hinder our ability to love?

3. What happens when pride replaces love in our church and in our small groups? What are the warning signs that this might be happening?

4. In the passage we've been looking at, each of the fifteen descriptions of love are verbs. Love isn't primarily a feeling but an action. One of the ways we can actively love each other is through pointing out the good in others. Why can it be challenging for us to point out the good in others through an encouraging compliment?

5. David Augsburger in his book, *Caring Enough to Hear and Be Heard* says this: "Being heard is so close to being loved that for the average person, they are almost indistinguishable." In what ways is listening a challenge for you? What are some practical ways we can grow in our ability to listen and therefore grow in our ability to love?

Sharing and Prayer:

Take a moment and share one practical step you want to take this week to grow in your ability to fight pride and love others. Pray for each other in light of what is shared.