

## What Matters Most: *LOVE*

### CONNECT TOGETHER:

10 minutes

**Host Tip:** If your group is unable to work through the entire session, we have recommended on question or activity with an asterisk (\*) in each section of the study.

1. \* Give everyone a chance to introduce themselves and share how they came to be a part of this group.
2. Take a few minutes to review these group guidelines before you begin this 6 Weeks of Community together. These guidelines will help everyone know what to expect from the group and how to contribute to a meaningful life group experience.
3. Love is defined in many ways by our culture. How would you define love?

### GROW TOGETHER

55 minutes:

#### MEMORY VERSE

*"By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."*

***John 13:35*** NKJV

Watch the Session one video now and fill in the blanks in the session one outline. Refer back to the outline during your discussion time.

## 6 Weeks Of Community

### Session 1 Outline

*“If you are a follower of Christ Jesus... all that matter is your faith that makes you love others.”*

**Galatians 5:6 CEV**

*Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. 2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.*

*4 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; 5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; 6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*

*8 Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part. 10 But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away.*

*11 When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 12 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.*

*13 And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.*

**1 Corinthians 13:1-13 NIV**

## FIVE RADICAL STATEMENTS ABOUT LOVE

If I don't live a life of love:

1. Nothing I \_\_\_\_\_ will matter.

*Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. (1 Corinthians 13:1)*

2. Nothing I \_\_\_\_\_ will matter.

*And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge... but have not love, I am nothing (1 Corinthians 13:2)*

3. Nothing I \_\_\_\_\_ will matter.

*and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. (1 Corinthians 13:2)*

Session 1 Outline

4. Nothing I \_\_\_\_\_ will matter.

*And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. (1 Corinthians 13:3)*

5. Nothing I \_\_\_\_\_ will matter.

*“No matter what I say, what I believe, or what I do, I’m bankrupt without Love.” (1 Corinthians 13:3b) MSG*

**WHAT IS LOVE?**

• Love is a \_\_\_\_\_.

*“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.” (John 13:34) NIV*

• Love is a \_\_\_\_\_.

*“Go after a life of love as if your life depended on it – because it does.” (1 Corinthians 14:1) MSG*

• Love is a \_\_\_\_\_.

*“Let us stop just saying we love people; let us really love them and show it by our actions. (1 John 3:18) LB*

• Love is a \_\_\_\_\_.

*God is love. If we keep on loving others, we will stay one in our hearts with God and he will stay one with us. (1 John 4:16b) CEV*



## **SERVE TOGETHER**

10 minutes

1. \*One way to “go after” a life of love is to show appreciation to others. Is there a worker in your church who needs to be shown appreciation? As a group, choose either a church staff member or volunteer whom you could affirm this week. You might select an usher, a janitor, a teacher – someone who is involved in serving your congregation. Discuss ways your group can show love and appreciation to that person this week, such as a gift certificate to their favorite store or restaurant, a thank-you card signed by all the members of your group, tickets to a ball game, etc. Recruit one or two volunteers from your group to handle the details. Then, as a group, make plans to present your appreciation gift to the person you chose.

## **SHARE TOGETHER**

15 minutes

1. \* Use the Circles of life diagram in this work book to help you think of a neighbor, family member, friend, or coworker who would benefit from joining your small group.
  - a. Choose a person on your circles of life diagram to whom you can show the love of Christ this week – someone you have been meaning to call or visit, or someone you need to invite to church. Commit to doing something for that person this week. Tell your small group who the person is and what you will do: send an email, make a call, write a letter, buy a little gift, take him out for coffee, or invite her to join your small group next week.
2. At the end of his message, Pastor Tim asked you to begin discussing a project your whole group can do together to reach out to your community with the love of Christ, particularly in the areas of assisting the poor, caring for the sick, and reaching the lost. This project will become a major focus for your group over these 6 weeks. Our hope is by the end of this *6 Weeks Of Community*, every life group at PromiseLand Church will have begun an outreach project in our community. We’ll talk about this in greater detail next week, but we just want to get it on your radar screen in this session. Start discussing the idea right now. Why is it important for you as a group to reach out to your community?

## **WORSHIP TOGETHER**

10 minutes

**Host Tip:** To maximize prayer time and allow greater opportunity for personal sharing, break into subgroups of the three or four people. This is especially important if your life group has more than eight members.

1. In simple, one-sentence prayers take a few moments to thank God for his love. If praying aloud with people is new or awkward for you, feel free to pray silently.
  
2. One of the best ways to show each other love is to pray for each other. Share your prayer request with your small group and then take time to pray together. Be sure to pray for friends and love ones who do not have a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Record your prayer request on the Life Group Prayer and Praise Report page. Keeping track of group prayer request and answers to prayers would be a great job for someone in your group. Any Volunteers?

## **BEFORE YOU LEAVE**

1. Take a few minutes to look at the Life Group Calendar in the work book or create a calendar of your own. Healthy groups share responsibilities and group ownership. Fill out the calendar together, noting where you will meet each week, who will facilitate your discussion time, and who will provide a meal or snack. Not special events such as birthdays, anniversaries, socials, etc. Coordinating these details would be another great job for someone in the group.
  
2. Collect phone numbers and emails from your small group members. The Group Roster (called My Life Group) in your work book is a good place to keep this information or you can create your own. Pass your study guides around the circle and have your group members fill in their contact information.

## **6 Weeks Of Community**

3. Here is a ministry someone in your life group can take responsibility for: organize an email prayer hotline. This is a great way for your group members to share prayer requests and answers to prayer between your life group gatherings. When a need for prayer arises, just a call, text or email the entire Life Group with either a prayer alert of your request or with a praise report of God's answer to your prayers.
  
4. One last thing. Get a volunteer probably the person keeping attendance to send attendance and a report to Angela McClure at [angela.mcclure@promiseland.org](mailto:angela.mcclure@promiseland.org) or hand a printed copy to her at Church on Sunday. Please do this each week so we can track the progress of the groups and how to best assist you in your growth.

## **REACHING OUT TOGETHER**

### **CONNECT TOGETHER:**

10 minutes

**Host Tip:** If your group is unable to work through the entire session, we have recommended on question or activity with an asterisk (\*) in each section of the study.

4. Welcome any people who are new to your group this week.
5. \* Check your progress on last week's group assignment to show love and appreciation to a church staff member or volunteer.
6. How are you progressing with your personal commitment from last week to reach out to someone with the love of Jesus Christ? Did you get started? If so, how did it go?
7. Would anyone like to tell the group about an answer to prayer or something they are learning from their 6 Weeks of Community? Be sure to record answers to prayers in the life group prayer and praise report.

### **GROW TOGETHER**

55 minutes:

#### **MEMORY VERSE**

*"Be wise in the way you act with people who are not believers, making the most of every opportunity."*

***Colossians 4:5*** NCV

**Watch the Session two video now** and fill in the blanks in the session one outline. Refer back to the outline during your discussion time.

Session 2 Outline

**REACHING OUT TOGETHER**

Love is kind. (1 Corinthians 13:4) NIV

*[The disciples said to Jesus,] Send the people away so they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat." 37 But he answered, "You give them something to eat." They said to him, "That would take eight months of a man's wages! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?" 38 "How many loaves do you have?" he asked. "Go and see." When they found out, they said, "Five — and two fish." 39 Then Jesus directed them to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass. 40 So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties. 41 Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to set before the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. 42 They all ate and were satisfied, 43 and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish. 44 The number of the men who had eaten was five thousand.*

**Mark 6:36-44**

**MEETING THE NEEDS OF OTHERS**

- Recognize the \_\_\_\_\_.

- Take \_\_\_\_\_.

*My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. (2 Corinthians 12:9) NIV*

- Get \_\_\_\_\_.

- Measure the \_\_\_\_\_.

- Prepare your \_\_\_\_\_.

*God will give you much, so that you can give away much, and when we take your gifts to those who need them they will break out into thanksgiving and praise to God for your help. (2 Corinthians 9:11) LB*

Be \_\_\_\_\_.

## 6 Weeks Of Community

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. **(James 1:22)** NIV

Those you help will be glad not only because of your generous gifts to themselves and to others, but they will praise God for the proof that your deeds are as good as your doctrine. **(2 Corinthians 9:13)** LB

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**Host Tips:** If your group has eight or more members, we suggest you break up into subgroups of three or four people for greater participation and deeper discussion. At the end of the discussion time, come back together and have someone for each group report on the highlight of their discussions.

**Host Tips:** This week there are just two questions in this section because we want you to spend most of your discussion time working on the Share Together section of the study.

1. James 1:22 tells us it's not enough to just know truth. We have to put it into practice. And 2 Corinthians 9:13 (LB) says our deeds should be *"as good as [our] doctrine."* What does this mean on a practical level? How do these truths relate to sharing your faith?
  
2. \* Pastor Tim said, "God wants to use your life group to reach the world for Jesus Christ." If you want to know God's plan for solving the world's problems, look around the room. You're it. You are God's plan... God works through his people – through physical, tangible demonstrations of compassion, mercy and care. What do you think about that statement? Does it excite you, scare you, or overwhelm you? Why?

**Host Tip:** There will be no Serve Together questions this week. We want you to focus the rest of your time on the Share Together Section of your study.

## **SHARE TOGETHER**

25 minutes

God want to use your Life Group to reach out to the world for Jesus Christ. To discover how, follow the six steps from Pastor Tim’s message this week:

1. \* **Recognize the Need.** What physical and spiritual needs do people have in your community? Use the list below to help spur creative thinking in your group for local outreach idea. As a group, decide what your project will be.

### **Life Group Outreach Ideas:**

- Volunteer at the local food bank once a month.
- Divide into teams and rotate weekly visits to a shut-in or nursing home.
- Partner with our prison or jail ministry to start a life group using a book i.e. The Purpose Driven Life.
- Help with the charity efforts of the church (Care2Shre, Toy Drive, Ecuador Relief, 911 First responder’s day...)
- Start a weekly sports program for the kids who live near your church.
- Volunteer in an after-school tutoring program for kids who are at risk of dropping out of school.
- Divide into teams and rotate weekly volunteer service at a homeless shelter.
- Volunteer for the hunger project (where they feed children that would go hungry in Brevard county.)

2. **Take Inventory.** What talents, abilities, experiences, and resources are available in your group to help meet the need you have selected?

3. **Get organized.** Determine how much time your project will take and what kind of resources will be required. Make a plan. Figure out a timeline, divide up responsibilities, and assign tasks.

4. **Measure the need.** Pastor Tim said, “You’ll never know what God can do through you until you come to the end of yourself – until you face a hungry crowd with only a sack lunch.” Is you project a big enough challenge to your faith? If not, why not?

5 & 6. **Prepare Your Heart and Be Available.** We will talk about these last two points in the worship together section

## **WORSHIP TOGETHER**

10 minutes

1. **Prepare Your Heart.** The Bible says in 1 Chronicles 29:14 that everything we have was given to us by God. In silent or spoken prayer, thank God for what he has given you and then offer it back to him to do with as he will.
2. \* **Be Available.** Romans 12:1 tells us to worship God by offering our bodies to him as living sacrifices. In prayer, offer yourselves to God. Ask him to give you strength and courage to step out in faith as you join together in your community outreach project.
3. **Pray For Each Other's Prayer Requests.** Pray especially for the people you are inviting to come to your small group or church with you. Be sure your prayer coordinator records the group's prayer request on the Life Group Prayer and Praise Report.

## **BEFORE YOU LEAVE**

Was anyone missing from your group or church this week? If someone was absent, ask for a volunteer from the group to call or email that person and let them know they were missed. It's very important for people to know they are cared about.



## Belonging Together

*Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: 10 If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!... 12 Though one may be overpowered two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.*

**Ecclesiastes 4:9–12 NIV**

## Lessons on Love from 1 Corinthians 13:7

- **LOVE ALWAYS** \_\_\_\_\_

*A gossip betrays a confidence but a trustworthy man keeps a secret.*

**Proverbs 11:13 NIV**

Protects = \_\_\_\_\_

- **LOVE ALWAYS** \_\_\_\_\_

We believe \_\_\_\_\_ each other ... we believe \_\_\_\_\_ each other.

- **LOVE ALWAYS** \_\_\_\_\_

Be \_\_\_\_\_ about other people's accomplishments.

- **LOVE ALWAYS** \_\_\_\_\_

*"Some friends do not last, but some friends are more loyal than brothers."*

**Proverbs 18:24 GNB**

*"In Christ, we who are many from one body, and each member belongs to all the others."*

**Romans 12:5 NIV**

## Discussion Questions

**Host Tips:** If your group has eight or more members, we suggest you break up into subgroups of three or four people for greater participation and deeper discussion. At the end of the discussion time, come back together and have someone for each group report on the highlight of their discussions.

For this week's please break into separate groups for men and women.

1. \* Which of the four statements about love from 1 Corinthians 13:7 spoke to you most powerfully? Why? How can you apply these truths to your personal life this week?
  
2. What can we do to apply these truths to our group life? What does it mean to really trust each other and to persevere in our relationships together? What can we do to build trust and foster hope within our group?
  
3. Talk about a time when you needed the faith of your friends to lift you in prayer, or a time when God answered your prayers for someone else.
  
4. Have one or two group members share their story of how they come to Christ and the role friendship played in their decision.

## Serve Together

10 minutes

1. \* A recent survey revealed that the number one characteristic of a growing church is the atmosphere of love among the membership. How would you describe the atmosphere of love in your church (welcoming, warm, safe, impersonal, cliquey, etc.)? What can your small group do to help build a more loving community in your church?
  
2. Love is a commitment. Have you made a membership commitment to your church? If not, what is holding you back?

## Share Together

45 minutes

1. Your group outreach project can be a great conversation starter for inviting seekers as well as Christ-following friends to join your life group. When people express interest or curiosity about your project, invite them to join you at your next group meeting to find out more about it. Who can you tell about your group outreach project this week?
  
2. \* Think of a friend who is not currently connected to a church. Why not invite that person to come to church with you this weekend? What is the worst thing that could happen if you invite them? What is the best thing that could happen if you invite them? Is the potential benefit worth the risk? Remember, over 90% of Christians first went to church because a friend or family member invited them. Tell your group the name of at least one person who you will invite to church or to your next life group meeting.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## **Worship Together**

10 minutes

1. Would anyone like to share an answer to a prayer from last week? Be sure to record answers to the prayer in the Life Group Prayer and Praise Report.
  
2. Pray for your life group outreach project.
  
3. \* Love requires us to believe *in* each other and *for* each other. Pair up with a spiritual partner for the rest of your prayer time. A spiritual partner is someone we can talk to about our spiritual growth and “call for back-up” when we need prayer support. Take a moment to select someone in your group to be your spiritual partner for the remaining weeks of this study. (We strongly recommend that men partner with men, and women partner with women.) After you have paired up, pray for each other’s requests. Plan to check in with each other by phone, email or over coffee at least once before your next small group meeting. This could be a great time to pray for each other during the coming week and share what you are learning from your *6 Weeks of Community*.

## **GROUP GUIDELINES**

It's a good idea for every group to put words to their shared values, expectations and commitments. Such guidelines will help you avoid unspoken agendas and unmet expectations. We recommend you to discuss your guidelines during session one in order to lay the foundation for a healthy group experience. Feel free to modify anything that does not work for you group.

### **Clear Purpose**

To grow healthy spiritual lives by building a healthy life group community

### **Group attendance**

Give priority to the group meeting (call if I am absent or late)

### **Safe Environment**

To create a safe place where people can be heard and feel loved (no quick answers, snap judgments, or simple fixes)

### **Be Confidential**

To keep anything that is shared strictly confidential and within the group

### **Conflict Resolution**

To avoid gossip and to immediately resolve any concerns by following the principles of Matthew 18:15-17

### **Spiritual Health**

To give group members permission to speak into my life and help me live a healthy, balanced spiritual life that is pleasing to God.

### **Limit Our Freedom**

To limit our freedom by not serving our consuming alcohol during life group meetings or events so as to avoid causing a weaker brother or sister to stumble. (1 Cor 8:1; Rom 14:19-21)

### **Welcome Newcomers**

To invite friends who might benefit from this study and warmly welcome newcomers

### **Building Relationships**

To get to know the other members of the group and pray for them regularly.

### **Other**

**MY LIFE GROUP**

*Roster and Contact Information*

	Name	Phone Number	Email
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			

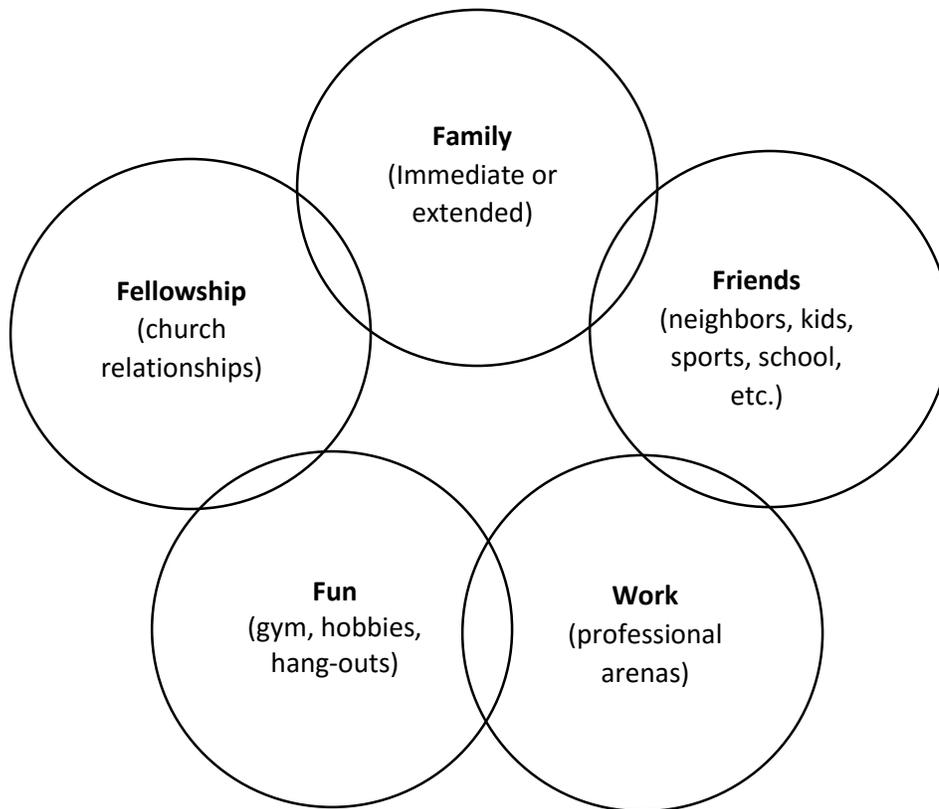




## **CIRCLES OF LIFE**

*Discover Who You Can Connect In Community*

Use this chart to help carry out one of the values in the Group Guidelines to “Welcome Newcomers.”



Follow this simple three step process:

1. List one or two people in each circle.
2. Prayerfully select one person or couple from your list and tell your group about them.
3. Give them a call and invite them to your next meeting. Over 50 percent of those invited to a life group say, “Yes!”

## **ANSWER KEY**

### SESSION ONE:

#### **What Matters Most**

- Nothing I SAY will matter
- Nothing I KNOW will matter
- Nothing I BELIEVE will matter
- Nothing I GIVE will matter
- Nothing I ACCOMPLISH will matter
- Love is a COMMAND
- Love is a CHOICE
- Love is a CONDUCT
- Love is a COMMITMENT.

### SESSION TWO:

#### **Reaching Out Together**

- Recognize the NEED
- Take INVENTORY
- Get ORGANIZED
- Measure the NEED
- Prepare your HEART
- Be AVAILABLE

### SESSION THREE:

#### **Belonging Together**

- Love always PROTECTS
- Protects = COVER OVER WITH SILENCE
- Love always TRUST
- We believe IN each other ... we believe FOR each other
- Love always HOPES
- Be ENTHUSIASTIC about other people's accomplishments.
- Love always PRESEVERES

## **6 Weeks of Community Resources**

### **DISCUSSION VIDEO LINKS**

You can download the Discussion Guide and get the YouTube links to the teaching sessions at:  
[www.promiseland.org/6-weeks-of-community](http://www.promiseland.org/6-weeks-of-community)

#### **Session ONE**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uV\\_wLkY0-b4&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uV_wLkY0-b4&feature=youtu.be)

#### **Session TWO**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uV\\_wLkY0-b4&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uV_wLkY0-b4&feature=youtu.be)

*Session three, four, five and 6 coming soon.*

Please email [hello@promiseland.org](mailto:hello@promiseland.org) if you have any questions or need assistance.

Please email Angela at [angela53080@gmail.com](mailto:angela53080@gmail.com) with attendance and other detailed information as laid out in your discussion guide.