



Series Vision:

In a world that has always been badly torn by division, ethnic cleansing and racism, Jesus came and gave his life to create one new people, who would be unprecedented in unity and values (Eph 2:15). In John 17, Jesus gives us a window into what's on his heart by praying for himself, the disciples and us. He prays that we be one (John 17:23). The reason this is so important is because **the one-ness of the church is directly correlated to its witness in the world** – Jesus says that we are brought to complete unity, then the world will know that Jesus was sent by God.

This isn't what we're experiencing today. We've allowed the church to be defined by divisive constructs (for example, as Christians – red or blue). The first thrust of this series will be helping us to step out of the current mess we're in to hear what the Scriptures says about the church. The second will be to lay out a groundwork for the posture and practices that will help us to step into being one.

****Continued Prayer and Fasting for Our Nation as we seek unity in the body of Christ THROUGH the election. Here are the details to share with your lifegroup:**

With Election Day on November 3, we too as the people of God have an opportunity to pray and fast for this important process and day of our nation's governance. Between October 30 and November 8, we invite the whole church to participate in 10 days of prayer & fasting, as we cover and bring our nation before the Lord, before and after the election. We want to see the Kingdom of God come on earth in our nation as it is in heaven and ask God to protect us from the enemy's attempts to create chaos. More details about this fast can be found at epicentre.org/election.

LOOKING BACK:

FAMILY TIME (25 min)

- Vision Statement: Have a group member explain the vision of your lifegroup. Invite another group member to share your vision piece next time.
- Intro Question: Do you have a favorite song? What is it? Why is it your favorite?
- Prayer Requests, Praise Reports and Updates from previous week(s).

LOOKING UP:

WORSHIP (20 min)

- Cast Vision for Worship...What it is, why we do it, how we can do it.
- Spend time in worship together.
- This past Sunday's worship set: <https://youtu.be/4A97bwXsx0M>
 - "Never Lost"
 - "The Everlasting"

****Encourage your group members to engage God's heart for one another during worship and share any affirmations or words of encouragement they receive with each other as Holy Spirit leads. One way to do this on Zoom is through the private message option while worship is ongoing. Feel free to debrief this experience as you feel led.**

BIBLE STUDY (20 min)

Context to the passage:

Jesus has been journeying with His disciples for quite some time now. These verses represent the greatest commandment He gives them right before He is to lay down His life for the sins of these disciples and all of the world. His disciples do not understand the magnitude of the persecution, betrayal, and hatred that He will endure all the way to the Cross, and thus, they are not to understand the power of this command until after He fulfills his Father's will at Calvary. Jesus' heart all along is to create a *kainos* (new people), so he initiates a *kainos* covenant (see Luke 22.20) with them: the communion. Now, in this passage, he tells them that there is a *kainos* commandment for the *kainos* people: That they love each other. This is first and foremost what we're to do.

John 13:34-35 (The Voice)

34 So I give you a new command: Love each other deeply and fully. Remember the ways that I have loved you, and demonstrate your love for others in those same ways. 35 Everyone will know you as My followers if you demonstrate your love to others.

Guided questions for your group to explore together:

- 1) What does it look like to love each other deeply and fully?
- 2) What are some of the ways Jesus loved His disciples?
- 3) How can we demonstrate these ways of Jesus' love to others?

LOOKING FORWARD (20-30 minutes)

Allow this be a space for God to minister to the hearts of your people in this time. Maybe play some soak/instrumental music while everyone takes some time to engage the Lord's heart (here's a good soak track you can use - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xx1MjhzKcYw&t=1169s>). Here are some more guided thoughts and questions for this time of seeking to engage God's heart. Encourage your group members to read through them, and answer which ones feel very real to them this week:

- a) Jesus, what's an aspect of Your love You want to highlight to me right now?
How can I carry and live out this aspect of Your love in my heart this week?
- b) Jesus, You told the Pharisee and zealot: If you're going to make it, you have to love each other. Are there specific kinds of people (on a political, racial, socioeconomic, or other level) that are hard for me to love? **Ask the Lord to highlight a specific person that you're in relationship with that's difficult for you to love and ask God to reveal things in your heart. Also, ask Him how to pray for their heart and engage with them this week.

**Encourage your group members to take some time and ask the Lord to speak into each of these points in this time. If you have some additional time, spend it praying for one another and sharing God's heart with each other as led by Holy Spirit.

KIDS' LESSON:

God has given us clear commandments throughout the Bible and the biggest message is about love! Let's take a look at the passage this week and ask God to reveal more to us about loving God and loving others.

John 13:34-35

34 So I give you a new command: Love each other deeply and fully. Remember the ways that I have loved you, and demonstrate your love for others in those same ways. 35 Everyone will know you as My followers if you demonstrate your love to others.

Questions

1. Think about the past year.
 - a. What has made you feel loved?
 - b. How has God shown His love to you? Through the Bible? Through your classmates, friends, family?
2. What does it mean to love others?
3. How can you demonstrate your love for others in the ways God has shown you?
4. Ask God to lead you into loving others well this next week! How can you bless someone with God's love? What can you do to encourage them or help them feel God's love?
5. Put it into practice! Tell your siblings, parents, friends and show them God's love- and invite them to do the same.