

Week 2 – Selfless Love

COACHING VIDEO: bit.ly/FCWeek2

Introduction (15 min)

DEBRIEF THE WEEK (5 min)

Last week, we started our experience with Flourishing Communities and committed to spending time dreaming about what our community could look like.

Share in pairs: Did you do the action step(s) from last week? What was it like? How was God at work in you and through you?

VISION + OBJECTIVE (2 min)

We love selflessly, through our words *and* our actions, because of Jesus' love for us. Embodying our faith through how we love is the foundation of the flourishing community.

ICE BREAKER (8 min)

Discuss how our culture and generation defines love. Brainstorm the different ways we use the word, how love might be expressed differently depending on the relationship, or even how the media depicts what it means to love.

Biblical Reflection (20 min)

CONTEXT & BACKGROUND

- 1 John is an ancient letter written to ancient churches after Jesus' resurrection. This new community is navigating what it means to be Christ-followers as they experience opposition from Jews who don't believe that Jesus is the Messiah.
- The author wrote the letter in hopes of helping the community flourish (1 John 1:1-3). This passage, right in the middle of the letter, digs deeply into the theme of love. John claims that love is a key marker of true Jesus-centered community.

READ 1 JOHN 3:16-24

Observation:

- What words, phrases, images, or ideas did you see repeated? Which of these might you have skipped over if it wasn't repeated?
- How does this passage define "love"?

Interpretation:

- How do the repeated words relate to each other?
- What does this text teach us about God?
- What does this text teach us about love?

Application & Listening Prayer:

- What makes it difficult for us to love each other as described in the passage?
- How is God speaking to you and inviting you to respond?

Response (35 min)

ACTIVITY (10 min activity, 15 min sharing)

Spiritual Journey Timelines: Because love is the foundation of the flourishing community, reflect on how you have personally experienced God's love in your life. Sharing our stories also helps us know one another more deeply.

- Make a list of the significant events in your life and consider times when you felt close or far from God.
- Draw a line graph visually depicting the ups and downs of your spiritual journey and mark the key moments or time periods.

Share your timelines in pairs (if time is limited) or as a whole group (if time and attention allows). Encourage everyone to practice attentive listening to honor the person sharing.

ACTION STEPS (5 min)

- **Collective:** Brainstorm communities that you connect with regularly (e.g. engineering classmates, family, housemates, etc.). As a group, spend a few minutes listening to God asking: "How can we demonstrate your selfless love this week?" Decide on an idea to pursue together.
- **Personal:** Say "yes" to how God is inviting you to respond to 1 John 3.

PRAYER (5 min)

Close in prayer together to commission us to respond to God and rely on him as we take our next steps.