

TOGETHER

Living as Christ's Church

Week 4—Together in Love

1. Who's your superhero? What superpower do you wish you had?
2. Read Ephesians 4:32 and Ephesians 5:1–2.
 - The word *therefore* in Ephesians 5:1 reminds us to look back at what has come before. How does Ephesians 4:32 introduce and provide a context for 5:1–2?
 - What words and phrases in all three of these verses do you find comforting? Explain.
 - Without these reminders of God's love and forgiveness, the command to love as Christ loves would be totally impossible. This command would create spiritual pride at those times when we trick ourselves into believing we're succeeding. It would create utter despair at those times when we try but fail again and again. To which of these temptations are you most prone? If you can share an example, do so.
3. Name two or three challenges you face as you seek to "walk in love, as Christ loved us."
4. Think about your callings in your family, occupation, congregation and society. Make a list of individuals God is calling you to serve in each of these.
 - Look back over your list. In which of the four realms—family, occupation, congregation, or society—do you feel most challenged in terms of living a Christlike life?
 - Without naming names aloud, choose from your list one person who is difficult to love. In what one or two specific ways will you demonstrate love to that person in the week ahead? Share your plan with your group.
5. Read John 15:12–13. Each of us is one of the hard-to-love people for whom Jesus died. He gave up his life for us—for each of us individually—when we were his enemies. We're still hard to love. Yet, Jesus loves us, fully, totally, humbly.
 - How does this reveal the depth of his love?
 - How does this comfort you, especially at those times when you remember your failures to love others?
 - How does this motivate and strengthen you to love those around you?

Before you leave today, pray for the hard-to-love people in your lives. Ask God to remove any anger and frustration. Ask for wisdom in seeing each situation clearly and truthfully. Ask for the Holy Spirit's help in being gracious and selfless to others.

Then continue praying for these things for yourself and for each other throughout the week.

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