

DISCUSSION GUIDE

The Follower's Trail Guide

NAVIGATING THE PATH OF JESUS

OPENING UP



Think about one of your oldest or closest friends. What is the one thing that has made your friendship last or particularly special?

TEXT



The Way of Love | John 15:12-17

¹²“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵No longer do I call you servants,^[a] for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. ¹⁷These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

MESSAGE OUTLINE



Big Idea: Walking in the way of love looks far different than we imagine

1. Jesus defines our definition of love (vv.12-14)
2. Jesus redefines the nature of our relationships (vv. 15-17)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



- In this week's passage, Jesus refers to his followers as his friends. Have you ever thought of Jesus as a friend? Do you believe that God desires to be your friend? Why or Why not?
- Read John 14:13-14. How does Jesus define love? And what does he say is the mark of his friends? Does Jesus' definition of love and friendship surprise you? How is it different than the world's definition of both?
- Jesus' picture of friendship is tied to sacrificial love. Share a time when a friend displayed sacrificial love to you or when you displayed sacrificial love to a friend. Have you made any sacrifices out of your love for Jesus? If so, share an instance with the group.
- In John 14:15-16, Jesus redefines the nature of our relationship with him. Even though he is our Lord, he has invited us, by grace, into an intimate friendship with him. Have you answered Jesus' invitation? If so, what does it look like to be friends with Jesus?
- Read John 14:16-17. What does the "fruit" that is mentioned in verse 16 look like? How does verse 17 relate to that fruit?

LIFE CHALLENGE



Walking in the way of love looks far different than we imagine. It requires sacrifice and close relationship – friendship. According to Jesus, his friends obey his commands. Take time to reflect upon the commands Jesus has given. Are you a friend of Jesus'? Are you living in obedience to his commands? What would it look like this week for you to surrender your personal wants/desires for Christ?

The reason Jesus modeled sacrificial love was so we would love one another. What would it look like for you to "lay down your life" (or desires, or needs, or priorities) sacrificially for a friend this week? When we sacrifice for our friends, we show them Christ's love.

CLOSING PRAYER



Father God, thank you for being the ultimate model of love for us. Thank you for laying down your life for us before we were "friends" or ever made the decision to obey you. Help us to live in obedience to you and grow in godliness, bearing fruit. Open our eyes this week to see the ways we can sacrifice for the people you've placed in our lives and show them the same love you've shown us.