



care

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Use these questions in conjunction with the videos and worksheets in the small group kit for *Care* by DwayneBond.

DWAYNE BOND

1. WHY LOVING THE CHURCH MATTERS

1. Share about a Christian whose example of care for others has shown you the Lord Jesus.

Read John 13:1-17, 34-35

2. What is the benchmark for how Christians ought to love one another (v 34)? Why is that a high bar?
3. In verse 15, Jesus says that his actions are an example for us. What does Jesus' washing of the disciples' feet reveal about what Christian love looks like?
4. What does Jesus promise will be the effect of loving other disciples (our church family) like he does (v 34-35)?
5. To what extent is your church known for how you love one another? Can you think of a time when your care for each other impacted the watching world?

2. WHAT GETS IN THE WAY OF CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER?

1. How would you have answered the question above before you read this chapter? How about now?
Chapter 2 considered how our lack of love for others stems from our love for something else: idols. Read *Exodus 32:1-6*; *1 Corinthians 10:1-14*. In this section of 1 Corinthians (8:1–11:1), Paul is answering a question about whether it was okay to eat food sacrificed to idols.
2. What is idolatry, and what makes it so dangerous?
3. “Idolatry would never be a problem for me.” How would you answer a statement like that from a Christian, based on this passage?
4. Pages 33-34 mention four idols: significance, comfort and security, power, and money. How might each of those lead you to fall short in caring for your brothers and sisters in Christ? What other idols might be a problem for you?
5. Consider the sections toward the end of the chapter on racism, politics and social media. Which of these were you most personally challenged by, and why?
6. What encouragement do you find in these verses in our fight against idolatry? (For additional encouragement, read 6:9-11.)

3. LOVED BY A LOVING SAVIOR

1. Can you think of a particular time when an awareness of God's love for you helped you to love someone else?

Read Hosea 11:1-11

2. Based on this passage...
 - how had God shown his love for his people, Israel, in their past?
 - how does he express his love for them in Hosea's day?
 - how does he promise that he will show his love for them in the future?
3. What about us today? (If you can, recall New Testament Scriptures that speak into each of the following.)
 - How has God shown his love for his people, the church, in the past?
 - How does he express his love for us in the present?
 - How does he promise that he will show his love for us in the future?
4. "If this is how God has loved us—and if this is his posture toward the brothers and sisters we gather with Sunday by Sunday—how can we not seek to love others in the same way?"(p 48). In what specific ways is your love for God's people different than his is? In what ways would you like to change and grow?

4. ONE-ANOTHERING IN ACTION

1. Share about a time when you've seen your church rally around a member in need.

Read Colossians 3:12-17

2. Identify all the different things believers are called to do for one another in these verses.
3. What does it mean that love "binds everything together in perfect harmony" (v 14), do you think?
4. Pages 57-59 talk about serving one another in the church with our money, words, time, and gifts. Which of those is the area where you most need to grow, and why?
5. Take the opportunity to honor and encourage one another right now! Tell another member of your group how you've noticed them serving and loving others, or using their gifts, in a way that you've found personally encouraging.
6. What's one thing that you want to do this coming week that will put what we've learned about one-anothering into action? Check in next time you meet to see how it went!

5. UNCONDITIONAL LOVE IN A DIVIDED CULTURE

1. What would you say are the big issues in your culture that currently cause the most division?

Read Ephesians 2:11-22

2. What previously divided the Ephesians before they became believers?
3. How has that now changed, according to Paul? Talk through all the different steps that made the Ephesians' new unity possible. How would they have needed to have lived differently as a result, do you think?
4. How can we tell the difference between "love" that's actually based on reciprocity or uniformity and love based on the unity of the gospel?
5. As you look at your church and your own heart, in what areas and on what issues do you think you are at most danger of division?
6. Which of the "Five Dynamics of Unconditional Love" on pages 73-79 did you find most helpful, and why?

6. WHEN MULTIETHNIC CHURCH BECOMES A LOVING FAMILY

1. Where would you need to go to witness the most diverse gathering of people in your city or community?

Read Acts 2:1-14, 29-47

2. In what way was the church at the end of Acts 2 more diverse than at the beginning of the chapter? What was it that brought them together?
3. What marked them out as a loving family (v 42-47)?
4. What issues might this increasingly diverse church family have had to work through as time went on? (You could draw on your knowledge of Acts.)
5. How do you think your church is doing regarding the dual aims of 1) being a multiethnic family; 2) being a loving family? What signs of encouragement can you thank God for? In what areas do you need to ask for his help to grow?
6. Which of the barriers to becoming a loving family, described on pages 85-91, do you think your church is currently grappling with?
7. What is one practical thing that you want to do as an individual to forge meaningful connections with brothers and sisters who are different than you? What could you do together as a group?

7. OUT OF THE CHURCH AND INTO THE WORLD

1. What do you love about the community you live in?

Read John 1:1-18

2. According to these verses, in what ways was Jesus' incarnation—his coming to live among us—so extraordinarily radical?
3. What would it look like for us to live in our community with a similar attitude, posture, and mission to the one displayed by Jesus, as described in this passage?
4. "It's so easy to become 'army-base Christians'" (p 102). Is this a temptation for you? In what ways? Consider the four postures for displaying Jesus' love in your neighborhood described in this chapter: engage, embrace, serve, stay.
5. Where do you think you're currently at in that process as an individual? What would the next step (or the first step) look like for you? Is there a group or individual whom God has laid on your heart?
6. Where do you think you're currently at in that process as a church? What would the next step (or the first step) look like for you collectively? How could you help to make it happen?

8. OUR FUTURE HOPE

1. When are you most tempted to give up on caring for God's people?

Read Romans 5:1-11

2. What does Paul say that believers are to do, in light of the truth of the gospel (v 2, 3, 11)?

3. What temporary things are you personally most tempted to "boast" in? What about as a church?

4. What would it look like to increasingly boast in Christ instead?

5. If you're able to, share about a time in your life when walking through a hard season with your local church formed your character in good and God-honoring ways.

6. Read Revelation 21:2-4. How do these verses grow your hope in God's plans for his people?

7. Looking back over the whole book, what truth about God do you most want to hold on to? What action step do you most want to continue walking in?