

# Small Group Guide

Week of February 18, 2024

Speaker: Mark Delaney

Investing In a Love that Lasts



## Icebreaker



- If you could collect any item, what would it be, and why?
- What's the most embarrassing thing you have in your room or home right now that you wouldn't want anyone to see?



## Discussion



- Discuss the idea of seeing the familiar with fresh eyes in your relationships. How can you cultivate a mindset of exploration and appreciation for those closest to you?
- Share an example of a time when you rediscovered or appreciated something new about a close friend or loved one. How did that experience impact your relationship?
- The sermon encourages us to "rotate the crops" in our relationships by sharing new experiences together. What are some new experiences you could share with your spouse, friend, or family member to add "nutrients" to your relationship?
- The passage in Song of Solomon 8:6-7 speaks of love being as strong as death. What does this imagery convey about the enduring power of love?
- Reflect on the closing message about Christ's enduring love for us. How can this understanding of God's love impact the way we approach our relationships with others?
- The sermon emphasized that true, lasting love never gives up. Share an example where you've seen love persevere through incredibly tough circumstances.



## Thought for the Group



Just as someone might not realize the true value of a collectable comic book, we can easily take our closest relationships for granted. We settle into routines, we stop paying attention, we overlook the profound worth of the people right in front of us - spouses, family members, dear friends. Complacency sets in. So how do we avoid that trap? How do we invest in relationships that can go the distance?

We have to keep being curious about our loved ones, always looking to uncover and appreciate new layers and details. As the bond deepens over years together, there is always more to discover and admire if we stay attentive.

Share new experiences together. Trying new activities, exploring new places, learning together. New experiences become the stories we treasure and the foundation for deeper intimacy. The Bible passages used potent imagery like love being as unshakable as death itself. True love perseveres. It weathers storms, overcomes challenges, and fights to the end for the relationship. There has to be a covenant commitment to doing whatever it takes to make it last.

While human love so often fails and falls short, Jesus Christ models perfect, enduring, unconditional love for us. He pursues us and holds onto us with a tenacity like no other. Meditating on his example has the power to shape how we love others.



## Next Steps



- Set aside intentional time with your spouse, close friend, or family member to express sincere gratitude. Share specific examples of things they've done recently or characteristics you appreciate about them. Gratitude strengthens bonds.
- If there are any unresolved tensions, conflicts, or hurts plaguing one of your important relationships, take the courageous step to initiate a healing conversation.