

Victoria Fellowship Church
International & Interdenominational
Bible Study Worksheet – October 24, 2021

Theme: Love: A More Excellent Way

Topic: Love is Selfless

Main Text: 1 Corinthians 13:1-5, 1 Samuel 18:1-4

Key verse: 1 Corinthians 10:24 *“Let no one seek his own, but each one the other’s well-being” (NKJV)*

INTRODUCTION: The Cambridge Dictionary defines ‘Selfless’ as **“caring more about other people’s needs and interests than about your own.”** Synonyms of ‘selfless’ include *unselfish, self-sacrificing, considerate*. The opposite of selfless is self-centered. Selflessness becomes a subject of study because the fallen nature we inherited from Adam is one which makes us inclined towards selfishness (Genesis 3; Romans 1:18–32). Before we knew Christ, we thought and acted as if we were the center of the universe. Even after coming to faith in Christ, the temptation for believers to revert to the selfish nature is still strong. We often forget that love “does not insist on its own way” (1 Corinthians 13:5). Love is not selfish.

1. **(a) What evidence of the selflessness of love do we see in the relationship between David and Jonathan as captured in 1 Samuel 18:1-4? (b) According to 1 Corinthians 10:24, what is another way of showing selfless love? (c) What else does 1 Corinthians 13:5; Romans 12:10 have to say about selfless love?**

One word to describe what Jonathan did, as recorded in 1 Samuel 18:1-4, is ‘generous.’ Jonathan not only made a covenant with David, but he also stripped himself of his robe and armor, including his sword and his bow and belt and gave all to David. David, a poor shepherd boy, could not have afforded these vital weapons of war. But that is not all that selflessness entails. Courtesy is another way that selflessness displays itself. To be courteous is to be considerate in our behavior, to think of others before we act. So, 1 Corinthians 13:5 says, *love “does not behave rudely,…”* (NKJV). It respects the rights and privileges of others, moving us to be polite and respectful to those around us. Whether we love others can be measured by how willing we are to be courteous to them, even if we must bend over backward to show respect. If we respect other people with our thoughts and language, and if we honor their time by keeping our appointments, we are being selfless in love.

2. **(a) Those closest to us are often the most difficult to show courtesy. On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate yourself when it comes to being courteous to your spouse, children, domestic staff? (b) In what ways do you see being early to appointments/meetings a selfless act? (c) What principle does Philippians 2:3,6 offer in this regard?**

Being courteous to others in speech and action takes significant effort and concern for the other person. And this has to do with self-control – withholding my own interest or concerns to allow for the interest of the other person to take precedence. And this self-control is a fruit of the Spirit. Only those who control their emotions instead of letting their emotions control them can demonstrate selfless love. Christian love is the sacrificial self-giving that seeks the highest good in another. That is the kind of love God has for us. The Bible says, *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son... For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved”* (John 3:16-17 NKJV). The God who had every right to condemn the world, instead acted not in His own interest, but in our interest. He did not wipe us off the face of the earth the first time we broke His commands. He shows us patience today in calling us to repentance. If our great God has shown such love, how can we think that we can show any less toward others? Love means that we are willing to give our lives for the sake of others. This is how God has loved us, offering up His only begotten Son to die a shameful death under His wrath to save us (John 3:16).

3. **(a) How did Jesus exemplify selfless love in John 3:17; Romans 5:8; John 15:12-13? (b) What standard of selfless love did God set in John 3:17? (c) In what practical steps will you take this week to demonstrate or deepen selfless love in your family and in VFC?**

Prayer: *Thank You Lord for showing us that love is selfless. Help us to abound increasingly in Your love for us so that we can be selfless in our love for You and for others, to the glory and honor of Your name. In Christ’s Name we pray. Amen.*

