

Opportunities to Love: How to “One Another” Well

*Our mission at LifePath is to make communities of disciples that reconnect people to Jesus, to **one another**, and to God’s redemptive work in the world.*

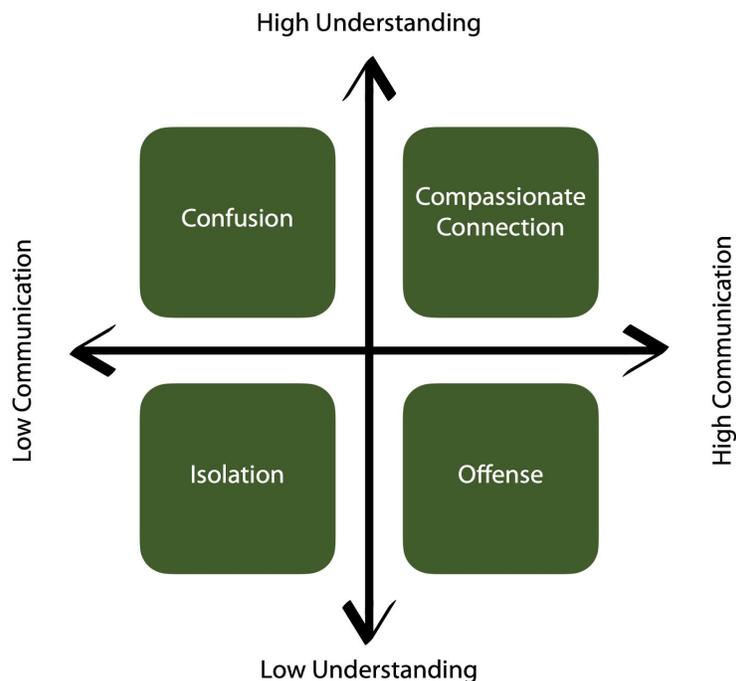
Loving and connecting with one another is central to our discipleship mission. While our large Sunday gatherings will continue on Zoom, the lifting of the stay-at-home order means some people will choose to find ways to share face-to-face time. This can be tricky to navigate in a loving way with various perspectives and levels of comfort, but in Christ, it’s absolutely possible for us all to flourish during this time. We want to approach this season intentionally and in a Christlike way, making sure that our hearts are postured toward unity and love.

“Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.”
-John 13:35

So then, let us aim for harmony in the church and try to build each other up.
-Romans 14:19

May the Lord lead your hearts into a full understanding and expression of the love of God and the patient endurance that comes from Christ.
-2 Thessalonians 3:5

As disciples, it is especially important during this season that we place a high value on both understanding one another and communicating well with each other.



How to begin conversations with others about meeting together

When we communicate clearly and ask caring questions without judgment, we create space for everyone. When you communicate about these issues, remember to not take anything personally, and don't make assumptions. Approach the conversation with an abundant amount of grace.

Here are some scripts and tips if you need them.

- *I'd love to see you. Do you feel comfortable finding a way for that to happen?*
 - If no, asking for a timetable isn't helpful. Simply allow for someone to say that they aren't comfortable, and let them know that they're loved.
 - If yes, you can follow up by asking what sort of venue might be best. A hike together? A visit at a house ? What will your approach with masks be? Be honest and open so that everyone can love and understand well.
- *Thank you for asking. I'm not ready for that yet, but I look forward to eventually being able to get together in person.*
OR
- *Thank you for asking. I would like to get together, too. Can we talk about ways to stay safe and healthy?*

Questions to ask and things to discuss beforehand if you plan to meet in person:

("We" language emphasizes collaboration. "You" language makes people feel like they are imposing rules on others.)

- Would we be more comfortable inside or outside?
- Should we wear masks?
- Should we maintain 6 feet between everyone, or are we comfortable with being closer?
- Are we comfortable with shared food & drink, bring-your-own, or no food & drink at all?
- What is the maximum number of people we feel comfortable with?

Ideas for Getting Together Safely

In Your Home

- Wipe down high-touch surfaces before people arrive. Things like tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, toilets, faucets, sinks, etc.
- If you don't have disinfecting wipes, you can use any household cleaner sprayed on a clean cloth or paper towel (the EPA has an approved list of cleaners, but most common brands are on it like Fantastik, Lysol, Clorox, etc.)
- Make sure to have a place where people can wash their hands with soap and warm water. Encourage everyone to do this as they enter.
- Keep hand sanitizer out and available for everyone to use whenever they would like.
- Space out chairs in advance.
- When people arrive, use a non-contact greeting like a wave.
- Good ventilation helps, so think about opening a few windows or adjusting the air conditioning. (But don't run fans that can blow particles across a room.)
- If there will be food present, take precautions that will limit sharing of serving utensils, passing of dishes/containers, etc.
- Prepare your bathroom(s) for guests by leaving the fan running or cracking a window, leaving the door open when not in use, and having disinfecting wipes out and available for guests to wipe down surfaces when they are done.

In Your Yard

- If possible, allow access to your backyard without going through the house.
- Ask guests to bring their own chairs if they prefer. If you're providing chairs, space them out before guests arrive.
- When people arrive, use a non-contact greeting like a wave.
- Let everyone know how to find the bathroom(s) inside.
- Prepare your bathroom(s) for guests by leaving the fan running or cracking a window, leaving the door open when not in use, and having disinfecting wipes out and available for guests to wipe down surfaces when they are done.
- If there will be food present, take precautions that will limit sharing of serving utensils, passing of dishes/containers, etc.

Things You Can Do With Friends In Public Spaces

- Bring take-out to a park and have a picnic.
- Take a walk. Or a bike ride. Or roller blade. Bring your dog.
- Play cornhole. Or ladderball. Or croquet.
- Toss a frisbee. Or a ball. Or kick a soccer ball.
- Get coffee at a cafe with outdoor seating.
- Create your own nature scavenger hunt. Collect items or just take pictures.
- Go birdwatching. If you're into that sort of thing.