



## small groups

*Discussion Guide*



# Uncommon Love

*1 Corinthians 13*

## Ice Breaker

*(5 minutes)*

### **Discuss**

- This week's lesson was about love. What's your favorite love story?
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## Lesson Review

*(40 minutes)*

### **Read 1 Corinthians 13**

As we've done every week in this series, we examined similarities between the church in First Century Corinth and the church in 21st Century America. Andy pointed out that the Corinthians were deeply divided on very important doctrinal issues. Last week's Supreme Court ruling revealed that we are too.

## **Discuss**

- If you were a Supreme Court justice, how would you have decided in *Obergefell v. Hodges*? Give reasons. And be respectful. Assume that someone in your group disagrees.

Andy said that Christians who support gay marriage have long been worried about being branded heretics. And those who support a traditional view of marriage are worried about being branded bigots. The question Andy chose to address is how we will address this question. In other words, before we square off in doctrinal debate, we have to set out some guidelines for fair play. We have to decide how we will disagree.

The temptation will be to disagree along the “way of power.” That way encourages us to vilify our opponent, to posture and politic our way to victory. The alternative is to follow the way of love, which values Christian unity.

### **1. The way of love is more powerful.**

Paul says that all the good deeds and spiritual gifts in the world don’t matter without love. If we have all the right answers, and know all the pertinent Bible verses, and don’t represent them with love, then we’ll only be a clanging cymbal. We’ll annoy our opponents rather than winning them over.

### **2. The way of love is more Christlike.**

Christlike, agape love is always sacrificial. Love is not self-promotion at another’s expense, but sacrifice for another’s good.

### **3. The way of love is more beautiful.**

It is good to have convictions, but it is also good to hold them with humility. It is good to embrace the mysterious aspects of God. To live in the tension scripture sometimes creates.

Hold your belief humbly while you love extravagantly. Andy suggested that we should stop drawing lines in the sand and start throwing more dinner parties.

## **Discuss**

- With whom do you disagree most ardently? Your answer doesn't have to relate to the issue of gay marriage. Which person or group of people really gets to you?
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## **Application**

*(15 minutes)*

## **Discuss**

- What have you sacrificed for the good of someone with whom you disagree? What can you sacrifice for them this week?

## **BONUS ASSIGNMENT**

We celebrated communion at the end of the service and Andy said that communion is a symbol of Jesus' sacrificial love. At the Last Supper where Jesus established the sacrament of communion, he partook with a tax collector and a zealot – two people with wildly different political and theological views. If you know a fellow Christian who shares different views than you on important topics (maybe they're in your group!), consider inviting them to share communion. Invite them to dinner and tell them you'd like to share bread and wine and pray for one another at the table. Or invite them to your small group and arrange to serve communion. You don't need a pastor or any special elements. All you need is some crackers, some grape juice, and a desire to follow the way of love.

