

Sermon Based Small Group Guide  
For September 12, 2021 sermon:  
**Connect: "Don't try this on your own"**

**Warm up:**

1. Welcome to the first week of our small group season and our "Connect" series. Whether your group is made up of "veterans" (even the same people who have met year after year), or is a brand new group, or a mix of new and old, take some time at the very beginning to 1.) Introduce yourself and 2.) What desires and hopes you bring to being part of a small group.

2. Talk as a group about the importance of two small group core principles:

-Confidentiality: People will only share honestly if they feel the people in your group care enough about them to listen with their hearts, pray for each other, and keep these disclosures of struggles or needs confidential. Make this group a safe place.

-Genuine care: We need our small groups to be the cornerstone of our congregational care. When there is a need in your group, try to meet that need there first. You may need to involve more people (a pastor, Olivet's benevolence team, etc.) but begin the care by meeting each other's practical needs. Any question?

**Digging deeper:** (20-30 minutes)

1. Love is probably the most important thing in the Christian life. God's love for us that led Him to send His Son to be our Savior is the foundation of our faith. Love for God is our appropriate response. Love for each other is our testimony to a watching world.

Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 together and respond to these radical statements about love:

-Without real (sacrificial) love, nothing I say really matters.

-Without real love, nothing I do in or for the church really matters.

-Without real love, everything I say about my Christian faith is empty.

2. What is love?

According to John 13:34: "Love is a \_\_\_\_\_."

According to 1 John 3:18: "Love is shown by my \_\_\_\_\_."

According to 1 John 4:16: "When I love, I am \_\_\_\_\_."

**Apply it:** (10 minutes)

Serve: As a group, choose a church staff member or ministry volunteer that you feel needs to be shown love and support. Who? How will you show them they are loved?

Share: Each of you choose someone outside your group and church to show the love of Jesus to in a practical way. Who is that person in your life? What will you do?

Pray: How can your group pray for you? Thank God for His amazing, generous love!