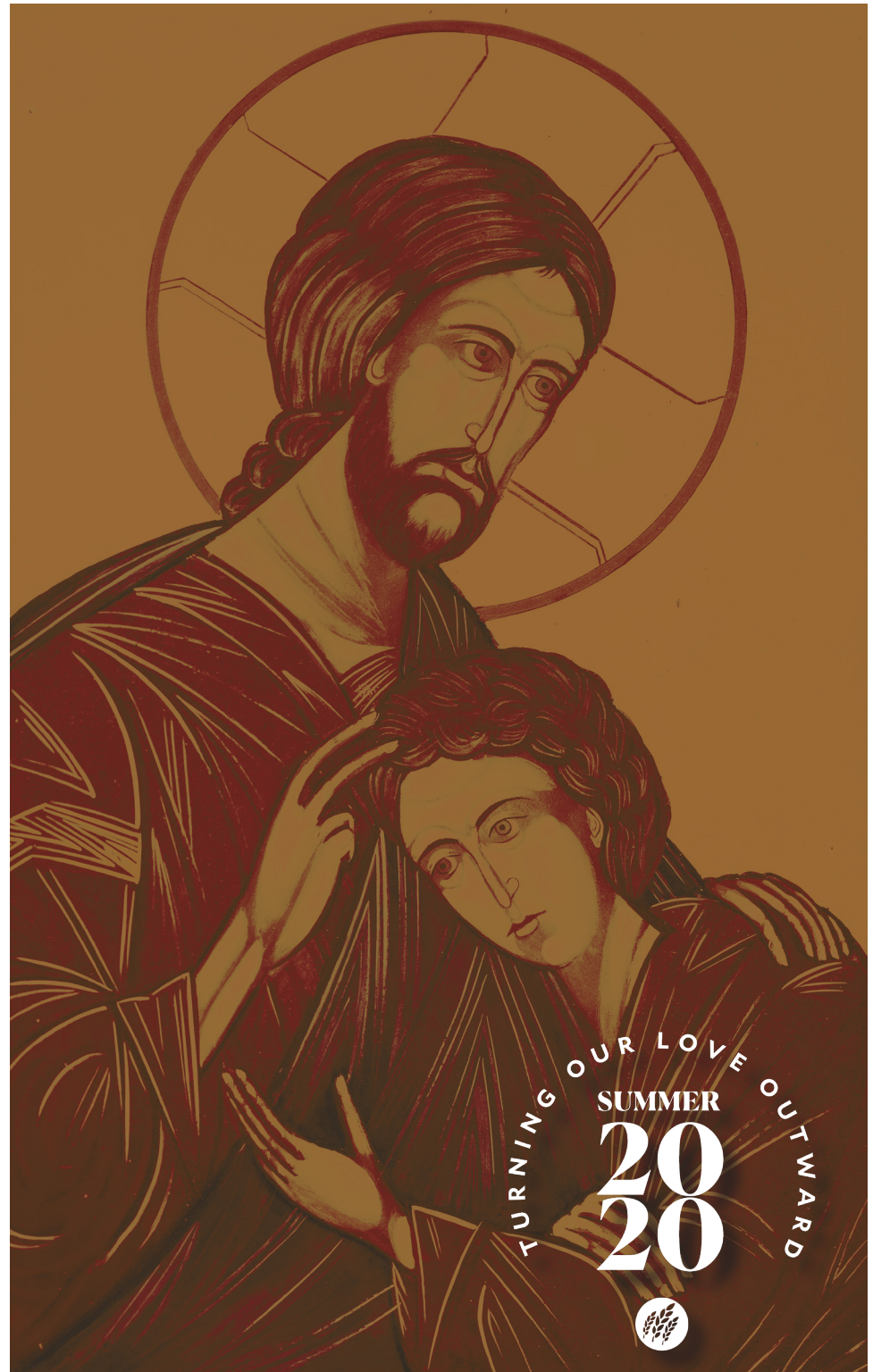


Better Together

*EXPLORING REAL WAYS
TO LIVE IN AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY*

.....
STUDY GUIDE
.....





BE KIND & COMPASSIONATE TO ONE ANOTHER // *Ephesians 4:32*

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

The Greek word for “kind” literally means being “fit for use,” or being “virtuous.” Kindness stands in opposition to being harsh and bitter, particularly when one is wronged or opposed.

Similarly, the Greek word for “compassionate” literally means “tenderhearted” or “kindhearted.” The Apostle Paul commands the Ephesians to be kind and compassionate toward others because this is the attitude a person must have in order to forgive as Christ forgives.

An inability or refusal to forgive others may reveal the state of a heart to be “hardened” rather than “tender.” Kindness, after all, is among the fruit of the Holy Spirit that is to be found in followers of Christ (Galatians 5:22-23).

The compassion Christ displayed to others flowed from the deep places within his own spirit. Christ invites us to tap into this source of kindness: “Come to me, all you that are weary...learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart” (Matthew 11:28-29).

PRAY:

Ask God to reveal something meaningful through this time of reflection.

READ:

Offer your full care and attention to reading the provided scripture passages.

DISCOVER:

I Corinthians 13:4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

Colossians 3:12-17 Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

I Peter 3:8-9 Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another, be sympathetic, love as siblings, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.

II Peter 1:5-9 For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, kindness; and to kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But if anyone does not have them, that person is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that their cleansing from past sins.

DISCOVER, CONTINUED:

1) In the verses above, kindness and compassion are often mentioned with other Christian virtues that stand in contrast to ungodly responses. Reflect these virtues and characteristics using the following:

- a. Christian kindness is related to:
- b. Christian kindness stands in contrast to:

2) Think about a time in life when you have been wronged or opposed by a sibling in the church. Which of the lists above best describe your response? Why?

3) What is it about us that resists “being kind and compassionate” when we are wronged?

4) In II Peter 1:5-9, believers are called to be diligent in “adding” to their faith certain qualities of moral excellence. In what ways does our church encourage the practice and growth in these areas, and in what ways are these virtues ignored or discouraged?

5) What, specifically, would we need to change, add or do in our church to encourage kindness and compassion with one another?

