NEW HEIGHTS
CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

"Our Heart is People. Our Message is Jesus."

Table Group Discussion Guide

Series: The Spacious Life | Title: "What Do We Do With Our Love?" | November 15, 2026

*Please respect each other by keeping confidential what someone else has shared during the group time. This helps to keep the environment a safe place to show our wounds and find healing.

Looking Back (5-10 minutes)

Last week's practice: before your feet hit the floor — before the phone, before the list — say four words out loud: *Thank you, Jesus. Today*. We were practicing **peace**, one of the nine things Paul says in Galatians 5:22–23 that the Spirit grows in a person: love, joy, **peace**, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

1. Did you say it? What was different about the mornings when it came first instead of the phone?

Getting Started (15 minutes)

2. What's a first impression you had of someone that turned out to be completely wrong? What changed your mind?

"When we fail, it's circumstances. When someone else fails, it's character."

3. Who do you tend to judge faster — strangers, or the people closest to you?

Getting Into the Word (25 minutes)

Read **Matthew 7:1–5**. Jesus isn't talking about discernment. He's talking about closing the book on someone. Don't close the book on anyone.

4. Forget the splinter for a minute. What's the log — the thing in your own eye that makes it hard to see someone else clearly? A hurt, a fear, a bias, a story you've already decided about them?

Read **Matthew 5:43–48**. The word for perfect in verse 48 is teleios — complete, grown up. And love here isn't a feeling. C.S. Lewis: a steady wish for the loved person's ultimate good.

5. Is there someone outside your circle you've quietly stopped wishing well? You don't have to like them. What would it look like to want their good anyway?

Going Deeper with Each Other (25 minutes) *If your group has more than eight people, split into circles of three or four for these questions and come back together to pray.

"No human being gets the defining word over your life."

6. Has someone tried to? A parent, a teacher, a coach, a pastor — one sentence over you that you're still carrying. You don't have to say who. Just: what did they say, and do you still hear it?

Henri Nouwen: *The return to the Father is ultimately the challenge to become the Father*. **The mark of spiritual maturity is spiritual parenthood.**

7. Who is a few steps behind you on this path — someone you could walk with this season? Or is it time to open your home and be the one who sets the table? What's actually stopping you?

Pray for Each Other (10 minutes) * Before you start: wherever you are with Jesus — all in, newer at it, still deciding — you're welcome here. Nobody has to pray out loud. Just say "pass" and the next person will pick it up.

Go around the circle. Each person says whether there's someone they need to pray for before Thanksgiving — the one they're hoping doesn't show up. Don't say who. Just say: *yes, there's someone*.

Then go around a second time, and each person prays a short prayer for the person on their right — that God would keep their heart open.

One Thing to Carry into the Week

This week we're practicing **patience**. (Galatians 5:22)

Think of the one person you're hoping doesn't show up on Thursday. You know who it is. Pray for them. Once a day, every day until Thanksgiving. Doesn't have to be warm. Doesn't have to be sincere yet. *Lord, bless them.* That's enough. Then see what happens to your heart when you or they walk in the door.

One more thing, since this is the last week of the series. You'll notice self-control kept showing up — underneath gentleness, underneath faithfulness, underneath peace. That's not an accident. Jesus spends most of this sermon on the gap between what rises in you and what you do next, and that gap is discipleship. Paul calls all of it fruit — grown, not manufactured. Keep making room.