

Love each other: helping others grow

discussion guide

based on **Acts 18.24-28** (Linked to sermon from 18/3/18)
which can be accessed at www.stjamesbythepark.org/current-sermon-series

This was part of our 'Love is an action' series, unpacking what it means for us to 'Love God, Love each other, Reach the world'.

Intro: Talk about some of the people or events that have helped you grow spiritually over the years.

Give everyone a sheet of a4 paper. In landscape, draw a set of axis with 'time' across the bottom (the long side) and 'spiritual maturity' up the side. Plot on the graph how your spiritual maturity has changed over time, marking some of the significant growth or decline times. Share what you've drawn and why. Do you notice any patterns between you?

Dan presented two propositions which he said run through the New Testament:

1. Spiritual growth should be the norm *throughout* the Christian life (ie not just in the early years)

2. Spiritual growth happens as we build each other up.

Do you agree / disagree? Why? Can you think of some examples from Scripture and your experience of how those are true?

Read Acts 18.24-28

Apollos is spoken about very warmly in v24-25a, but then it says he only knew about John the Baptist's baptisms (v25b), not the baptisms that Jesus instructed.

Read Luke 3.1-18 (especially v16). Compare it with Matthew 28.18-20 and Acts 2.1-4, 14-18, 37-39. How would you describe the differences between John's and Jesus' baptisms?

(Back in Acts 18) Dan suggested that Priscilla and Aquila helped Apollos grow by:

- **S**potting his gift
- **T**eaching him
- **E**ncouraging him to step (back) out into ministry
- **P**raying for him

Can you think of times when people have done those things in your life to help you grow spiritually?

How is it a sign of loving each other to help each other grow? If we don't love each other, what is that a sign of?

How does this theme speak to our desire to be a God-dependent, grace-filled, Bible-based, mission-focused, authentic community?

Up (love God) – Give thanks to God for the gifts he gives, and pray that we'd all be better at spotting other people's gifts.

In (love each other) – Who are/could/should you be helping to grow spiritually?

Out (reach the world) – Spend some time praying for our Easter events, and that God would use the events and each of us to draw people into God's kingdom.