



Intimate Encounters - Part 3

When expectations aren't met in a relationship, it creates a gap— and gaps get in the way of intimacy. When those gaps occur, will we choose to believe the best or the worst? Contemporary research into the psychology of relationships confirms what Paul wrote about love two millennia ago. It's less of a feeling, and more of a choice to lean into a relational reality defined by trust, hope, and perseverance.

Getting Started

1. What was the most adventurous thing you did this week?

What About You?

2. What do you think it means to be generous in a relationship? What helped you form this idea?
3. What is it that makes relationships *risky*?
4. Can you identify anything from your past (broken relationships, hurts, insecurities, etc.) that would lead you to unhealthy or unrealistic expectations?
5. Have you ever been a part of a relationship that felt transactional?

Look It Up

1 Corinthians 13:1–7,

6. Why do you think Paul chose the gifts and abilities he did to start this discourse on love? What is it that keeps these attributes from being valuable on their own?
7. Which qualities of love as described here do you find most difficult? Which of these "action items" come more naturally for you?

8. Where do you see tension between our culture's definitions of love, and how Paul talks about love?

Putting It All Together

10. Will you commit to trust over suspicion this week? How can you tangibly put this into practice? What would it look like for you to *believe the best*?
11. What steps could you take to close the gap with someone this week? How can you prepare to do this?
12. What is standing in the way of you being a more protective, trusting, hopeful, and perseverant person right now?