

The Sound and the Fury

REFLECTION

Tim's reflection here on the need for family and friends touches emotions we all feel at some point. We love our families, but the miles separate us. We're devoted to our friends, but time moves us from college fun to newlywed craziness to the land of crazy children and work pressures. And yet their love is the one thing we continually long for.

This piece is short enough to read twice. So we suggest you do so. Read it through with your coffee or beverage of choice. Then read it again out loud—but not in a public place or else people will think you're an oddball. Tim may do this, but you shouldn't!

After you read it out loud, reflect on your relationships with your family—your immediate family first, then your extended family. Is there something between you and your siblings, your parents, or your spouse? Is it something that rests on you to initiate so that it can be resolved? What keeps you from resolving it?

Maybe you can't relate to loving your family with any depth

because you've been hurt so deeply. Ask God for the strength to endure and the strength to move on from the hurt and into the land of reconciliation and healing. Sometimes we carry things around when we really just need to lay them at the foot of the cross. Is there something you need to lay down right now?

DISCUSSION

Share a time of relational winter with your group. Maybe you're in it now and haven't shared it with anyone. Now would be a good time to share the very thing keeping you from reaching out to those you love.

Use your group time to share specific pain, pain that can find comfort from a group member who's endured a similar situation. In order to know this, however, you must all share with guarded transparency. Remember, share time isn't gossip time or time to hold the conch for the duration of the group. Transparency means to let others see into your need. This is how we help one another: we share without pretense, and we aid without judgment.

Remind yourselves what love means. For your next group time, type the verses to 1 Corinthians 13. Now, on the back of the paper, write out the chapter in your own words. Here's a sample of what it may read like:

If I have special talents that nobody else has, but I don't possess love, then when I act in my talents I am just a big gong—making noise with no point.