

Life Group Discussion Guide

OUR RELATIONSHIPS

Philippians 2:1-4

Stuart Jones - October , 2018



INTRODUCTION

Say the word “relationship” and any number of thoughts or images are quick to pass through your mind.

Many might see a Norman Rockwell painting with people engaged with one another, enjoying the moment in the company of friends. Others might think of a holiday where family members get together and celebrate. Still others will think of a special friend in whose presence they feel comfortable and at home.

Personal growth is directly related to relationships: a memorable teacher, a demanding coach, a generous friend, an encouraging moment administered by someone who genuinely cared for you. The apostle Paul reminded Timothy that the successful perpetuation of the gospel message must be entrusted “to the faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Timothy 2:2).

Think of the words you would use to describe the most satisfying of relationships. They might be words like fun, shared interest, faithful, enduring, consistent and safe. In those moments before his death, Paul speaks of Luke’s faithful presence with him when others had gone away (2 Timothy 4: 11). If asked another question, “who benefits from a relationship?” the obvious answer would be both parties. The benefits of Luke’s relationship with Paul is seen throughout his life and his life’s work. Reciprocity is the defining characteristic of relationships. If both people don’t benefit in a relationship, you don’t have a relationship at all... you have an arrangement.

Many relationships are little more than un-fulfilling arrangements. For instance, marriages based upon rules, which the couple adheres to in order to preserve a level of peace and tranquility, are not satisfying or fulfilling.

Stop today and think of how others benefit from a relationship with you. Seek to determine with whom you have a relationship and with whom you have an arrangement. Jesus came to restore man’s relationship with God by His sacrifice on the cross.

DISCUSSION STARTER

1. What is worth more, time or money? Explain.
2. Stuart mentioned paying someone to change his oil so he didn't have to spend four hours doing it himself. What things do you pay for to give yourself more time for other things? Explain.

EVALUATE IT

1. Read Luke 5:27-32. Why do you suppose Jesus called a despised tax collector to follow Him and attend a dinner party with a bunch of tax collectors and sinners?
2. Stuart said, "The kingdom isn't actually built by brick and mortar. Relationships build the Kingdom of God." What is he saying?
3. Read Read Philippians 2:3. What does it mean to, "consider others better than yourselves?" How do we do this in a healthy matter without becoming a doormat?
4. Stuart told a story about Thomas Jefferson helping another man ford a river. The man said, he chose Jefferson to help because he had a "Yes" face. What does it mean to have a yes face? How do we go about getting one?

MAKE IT PERSONAL

1. Answer the question Stuart asked, "How many resources are we willing to spend on people for the sake of the Kingdom of God?"
2. How do people benefit from their relationship with you? How does God benefit from His relationship with you?