



THE GREATEST SERMONS EVER PREACHED (HERE)

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS @ NEW HOPE WINDWARD

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

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TALK IT OVER

HOW TO BUILD LONG-LASTING RELATIONSHIPS THAT THRIVE

ICEBREAKER

Who in your life do you enjoy spending time with because you're "on the same page?" What makes that connection strong?

READ |

Can two people walk together without agreeing on the direction? — Amos 3:3 NLT

In ancient Jewish culture, "walking together" meant moving forward in agreement—in both direction and purpose. If two people are heading toward different destinations, you will eventually drift apart.

That's true in marriage, friendship, family, and work. But here's the good news: unity isn't about being the same—it's about sharing the same destination. Two very different people can walk in step if they agree on where they're going.

The closer your values, goals, and faith are to God's Word, the easier it is to walk in unity with others who share that same foundation. And when you find that kind of alignment, it's powerful. It turns ordinary relationships into life-giving partnerships.

Think of a relationship—at home, work, or church—where you and the other person are "walking in the same direction." What shared value or goal helps you stay in step?

READ |

When conflict happens, our first instinct is to point out what the other person did wrong. But the Bible says, "Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed." (James 5:16 NIV)

The first step toward peace is to **confess your part in the conflict**—even if you think the other person is mostly at fault. Owning your part opens the door for healing, real conversation, and reconciliation.

Think of a conflict you've had. What's one thing—big or small—you could own as your part in it?

READ |

Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose. — Philippians 2:2 (NLT)

Paul was writing to a church community, but this speaks to every relationship: unity doesn't happen automatically. It takes intentional alignment. It's not just about "feeling" love, but choosing to walk in love—especially when it's hard.

Choosing to love a difficult person is hard, but if God is encouraging you to mend a relationship, He will give you the strength and endurance to repair it. That doesn't mean ignoring truth or letting wrong things slide. It means choosing to value the relationship more than winning the argument.

In a relationship that matters to you—like marriage, family, or a close friendship—what's one thing you could do this week to show you value that person more than the disagreement or difficulty between you?

READ |

Let's not have any quarreling between you and me... Is not the whole land before you? Let's part company. — Genesis 13:8–9 (NIV)

Abraham and Lot were family, but their herdsmen were fighting. Instead of demanding his way, Abraham let Lot choose the land he wanted. Why? Because he **valued peace over control**.

Sometimes the best way to keep peace is to create space, whether that means setting boundaries or even stepping back from a relationship. Choosing peace doesn't mean you stop caring. It means you trust God enough to let go of control and trust Him with the outcome.

You can love people and still set boundaries. You can bless someone without building your life around them. Some people are meant to be in your heart, not in your circle.

Is there a relationship in your life that you need to separate yourself from or set healthy boundaries? Is God calling you to make peace like Abraham did?

READ |

Two disciples were walking to a village called Emmaus after Jesus' death. As they walked, Jesus Himself joined them—but they didn't recognize Him until much later, when they shared a meal.

Then their eyes were opened and they recognized Him... — Luke 24:31 (NIV)

Jesus didn't reveal Himself with a miracle, but during a meal—a moment of connection. Sometimes God puts the right people on your path to help you process, reflect, and see Him more clearly. Not everyone will have the answers, but the right ones will walk with you until you do.

Through the power of association, our direction is shaped by those we spend the most time with. Are you surrounding yourself with people who build you, keep you accountable, and encourage you in your faith?

WHAT WILL YOU DO

Evaluate the most important relationships in your life.

- **Relationships to Strengthen:** Spouse, parents, children, a coworker you need to work with, etc. This may require compromise, patience, and consistent communication.
- **Relationships to Reevaluate:** A toxic boyfriend/girlfriend, a relative you need to set boundaries with, a business partner with misaligned values, etc. This may require distance, limits, or ending the relationship with peace.

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Father God, please bring the right people into my life to help guide me on the path of righteousness. Help me recognize who You've called me to walk with. Grant me courage to release what's misaligned, and the faith to invest where You are working. Let my relationships carry purpose, peace, and Your presence. In Jesus' name, amen.

DAILY DEVOTION SCRIPTURES

Day 1: Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.
— **Ecclesiastes 4:9–10 (NIV)**

Day 2: Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all!
— **Romans 12:16 (NLT)**

Day 3: As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.
— **Proverbs 27:17 (NIV)**

Day 4: Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.
— **Galatians 6:2 (NIV)**

Day 5: If two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done... For where two or three gather in My name, there am I with them.
— **Matthew 18:19–20 (NIV)**

TALK IT OVER

HOW TO HAVE GREAT SEX (SONG OF SOLOMON)

ICEBREAKER

If you had to choose one, which is more romantic: a candlelight dinner, a surprise trip, or a handwritten love note?

READ |

Talking about sex can feel awkward—especially if you’re single, celibate, or not married. But God’s truth about it applies to everyone. You might be preparing for a future relationship, encouraging a friend, or simply wanting wisdom for life.

Sex was God’s idea—created before sin entered the world—making it sacred, not just a human invention or cultural construct. The Bible shows it was designed for:

1. **Procreation** – “Be fruitful and multiply” (Genesis 1:28). God wanted humanity to flourish, not just biologically, but relationally, in family units and community.
2. **Pleasure** – Proverbs 5 paints a picture of joy, passion, and delight. The Hebrew word for “intoxicated” in verse 19 is *shagah*, which can also mean “enraptured” or “infatuated”—a poetic description of passionate delight.
3. **Promoting Unity** – 1 Corinthians 6:16 shows us that sex is more than physical—it unites souls. The Greek word *kollaō* means to be “glued together.” Sex literally *binds*.

If God designed sex to be sacred, joyful, and bonding, what lies from our culture or past experiences do we need to unlearn? (For example: that it’s just physical, that porn is harmless, that “bedroom compatibility” determines a relationship, or that love makes it okay to ignore God’s boundaries)

READ |

In Song of Songs 4:1-7, the husband praises his wife’s features one by one—her eyes, hair, lips, and neck. He says, “You are altogether beautiful... there is no flaw in you.” Of course, no one is flawless. He’s not denying her imperfections; he’s choosing to focus on her beauty, build her confidence, and speak security into her heart.

This is **verbal generosity**—intentional words that affirm, uplift, and reassure. Romance isn’t just candlelight dinners or flowers. It’s the everyday choice to notice, compliment, and speak love in ways that matter. And this isn’t just for husbands—both men and women can grow in showing affirmation and kindness.

If you're married, what's one simple way you could build up your spouse this week with your words? If you're single, what's one way you could encourage someone close to you?

READ |

Your lips drip nectar, my bride; honey and milk are under your tongue...

- Song of Songs 4:11 (ESV)

After affirming his wife's beauty, the husband initiates physical affection. But rather than rushing, he's romantic, poetic, and fully present, modeling the kind of intentionality that builds lasting intimacy. ***Passion takes practice.*** Many couples drift away from simple, non-sexual touch, but these small gestures build safety, connection, and desire.

But not everyone feels loved in the same way. According to Dr. Gary Chapman's *The Five Love Languages*, people tend to feel most loved through one (or two) of these: Words of Affirmation, Acts of Service, Quality Time, Physical Touch, and/or Gift Giving.

What's one thing—big or small—that makes you feel genuinely cared for? If you're married, share this with your spouse. If you're single, think of how you can express it in friendships or family relationships.

READ |

In Song of Songs 4:6, the groom says he will go to the "mountain of myrrh... until the day breaks." In other words, this won't be rushed. Intimacy takes time and presence.

Too often, couples treat sex like an interruption—or something that only happens if everything falls into place. But Song of Songs shows us it should be a **priority**.

Privacy is rare—kids are everywhere, phones are buzzing, stress is high. But we *make time for what matters*. Schedule it. Lock the door. Silence the phone. Tell the kids it's "parent time." Planning intimacy doesn't make it less romantic—it makes it more likely to happen.

If you're married, what's one way you can be more intentional about connecting with your spouse this week—emotionally or physically? If you're single, what's one way you can be more intentional about building close, God-honoring relationships?

WHAT WILL YOU DO

- **Married?** Take time this week to discuss your top Love Languages (find a free assessment online!) and how it can help reignite your passion for each other.

- **Single/Dating?** You can also take the Love Languages assessment, and take time to consider what boundaries you can set now to protect your future intimacy.

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Father, thank You for the beautiful gift of sex, and its intentional design of bringing intimacy and spiritual connection to married couples. Please heal the wounds in those who have experienced misuse or abuse. Strengthen marriages that feel dry or distant. Give singles strength to honor You with their purity, and couples the passion to pursue Your design. Let us be people who invite You into every area of life—including our bedrooms. In Jesus' name, amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS SCRIPTURES

Day 1: Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.
- **Hebrews 13:4 (NIV)**

Day 2: The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body but yields it to her husband. In the same way, the husband does not have authority over his own body but yields it to his wife.
- **1 Corinthians 7:3-5 (NIV)**

Day 3: You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.
- **Matthew 5:27–28 (ESV)**

Day 4: He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the Lord.
- **Proverbs 18:22 (NIV)**

Day 5: Place me like a seal over your heart, like a seal on your arm; for love is as strong as death, its jealousy unyielding as the grave. It burns like blazing fire, like a mighty flame.
- **Song of Songs 8:6 (NIV)**

TALK IT OVER

HOW TO RECOVER FROM A DRAINING SETBACK

ICEBREAKER

Share one thing that completely drains your energy and one thing that fills your tank. (For example: a hobby, an event like the State Fair or a soccer game, cooking, cleaning, road trips, etc.)

READ | **REST YOUR BODY**

In 1 Kings 19:1-8, after Elijah's mountaintop victory at Mount Carmel, Jezebel threatens his life. Just like that, Elijah spirals. He runs to the wilderness and collapses under a broom tree saying, "*I've had enough, Lord. Take my life.*" (1 Kings 19:4). This is a vivid picture of burnout—physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

God doesn't scold him. Instead, He sends an angel to provide food and rest. Twice, the angel says, "*Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you.*" (1 Kings 19:7). God knows Elijah doesn't need a lecture, but to rest and refuel.

Psalms 127:2 says, "*It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest... for He gives His beloved sleep.*" In Hebrew culture, the Sabbath day of rest was sacred. God wired our bodies and souls to need rest to function well. So don't feel guilty about rest and rejuvenation. If God rested on the seventh day, shouldn't we also, being in His image, take the time to rest?

How much do you prioritize true rest? What's one way you can make more space for it this week?

READ | **RELEASE YOUR EMOTIONS**

After 40 days of walking, Elijah reaches Mount Sinai and hides in a cave. God asks him, "*What are you doing here, Elijah?*" He already knew why, but it was an invitation for Elijah to open his heart. Elijah poured it out honestly, fears and all: "I've been very zealous... but the Israelites have rejected Your covenant... I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too." It was raw, fearful, and full of frustration—but it was exactly what God wanted.

God wants us to come to Him the same way: raw and honest. You don't have to clean up your emotions before you talk to Him. He can handle the real you.

Why do we sometimes hold back our struggles, burdens, and disappointments from God when He invites us to bring them to Him? (For example: pride, shame, doubt, etc.)

READ | REFOCUS ON GOD'S VOICE

God tells Elijah to stand on the mountain because *"the Lord is about to pass by."* First comes a windstorm so strong it tears through rocks. Then, an earthquake. Then, a fire. But Scripture says, *"the Lord was not in them."* Finally, there's a *gentle whisper*. In Hebrew, the phrase is *"demamah daqah"*—a *thin silence* or *still small voice*.

God is making a point. Elijah had just witnessed fire fall from heaven, so Elijah expected God to speak through something loud again. But God reveals a deeper truth: His presence is not always in the spectacular. Sometimes, it's in the silence.

Psalm 46:10 says, *"Be still, and know that I am God."* In our world of noise, God often speaks most clearly in stillness. If we're constantly busy, distracted, or anxious, we might miss His whisper.

How do you feel after you spend time alone with God? Set aside a specific time this week to be still before God—no noise, no phone—and simply listen. Discuss this with your group and choose accountability partners to help ensure you keep your appointment with God.

READ | RESUME YOUR MISSION

In 1 Kings 19:19 it says, "So Elijah went from there..." and continued his mission. Once he found rest in God and was rejuvenated by His presence, Elijah obeyed God's calling. He didn't dwell in his weariness, or reject God's instructions. But he was only able to proceed with the work God called him to once he had *rested*.

Even when you feel defeated or weary, your purpose isn't canceled. God's not through with you. Sometimes God may even seem silent during your hardest seasons when you feel forgotten, confused, or alone. But silence isn't abandonment; it's preparation. Your greatest impact might come *after* your biggest low. Trust that even in the quiet, God is always working behind the scenes... in His perfect timing.

What are some misconceptions we have about God's silence, and how does Scripture reassure us that God's silence doesn't mean His absence?

WHAT WILL YOU DO

Pick one of these four steps Elijah took and do it this week:

- **Rest your body:** Take one guilt-free night off. Go to bed early. Protect your Sabbath.

- **Release your emotions:** Write or pray your honest feelings to God. Don't hold back.
- **Refocus on God's voice:** Take five or more minutes of silence daily—no noise, no phone. Just listen.
- **Resume your mission:** Help one person. Serve, encourage, or pray for someone this week.

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Father, thank You that You don't run from our weakness, but meet us in the middle of it. Thank You for rest, for grace, and for second chances. Teach us to stop and be still. Help us pour out our hearts to You and hear Your gentle whisper. Renew our energy. Refocus our vision. Remind us that You're not done with us. In Jesus' name, amen.

DAILY DEVOTION SCRIPTURES

Day 1: The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.
— **Psalm 34:18 (NIV)**

Day 2: But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.
— **Isaiah 40:31 (ESV)**

Day 3: Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.
— **Matthew 11:28-30 (NLT)**

Day 4: But He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.
— **2 Corinthians 12:9 (NLT)**

Day 5: Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. — **Hebrews 12:1-2 (ESV)**

TALK IT OVER

WHAT WILL WE DO IN HEAVEN?

ICEBREAKER

If you could spend one day in Heaven, what would you do first? (For example: ask Jesus about something, find friends and family who had passed, etc. There is no wrong answer!)

READ |

Many people picture Heaven as sitting on clouds and playing harps forever. But Heaven isn't just a destination, but rather an upgraded reality. It's the end of pain, death, and sorrow. The "old order" of sin and suffering will be gone. Jesus will reign as the Prince of Peace.

He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away. — Revelation 21:4 (NIV)

In the Garden of Eden, God designed life to be full of beauty, purpose, and peace. Sin fractured that design. But in Heaven, **Jesus restores everything to its original glory.** Heaven is not a retreat from life—it's life as it was always meant to be!

What are some preconceived notions you have about Heaven? (No shame!)

READ |

"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord... they will rest from their labor."

—Revelation 14:13

This rest isn't sleep, but deep, soul-level refreshment. God modeled it in creation. On the seventh day, He chose to rest not because He was tired, but to show us that rest is part of His design.

Practicing rest now prepares us for Heaven's rhythm. That doesn't mean lying around all day, but rather setting aside time to slow your pace, trust God, and renew your spirit. You might: *Turn off any digital distractions for an afternoon. Take a walk. Share an unhurried meal with loved ones. Spend quiet time with God, just listening.*

However, the rest we will experience in heaven doesn't mean boring, sleepy town vibes. Revelation describes Heaven as the "wedding of the Lamb," a divine, jubilant gathering where joy overflows. Picture a feast, laughter, perfect unity, the most beautiful party you've ever imagined!

Share a time when you felt deeply rested and full of joy—maybe on a trip, during a fun weekend, or doing something you love with someone you love. Now imagine that multiplied a hundredfold—that is just a *glimpse* of Heaven!

READ |

From the very beginning, work was part of God’s perfect creation. In the Garden of Eden, Adam cared for the garden—not as a burden, but as a meaningful assignment from God.

In the new heaven and new earth, the curse will be gone, but our calling to serve will remain. “His servants will serve Him.” (Revelation 22:3) We will have fulfilling responsibilities in Heaven that perfectly match how God made us.

That means the work you do now—when done with love, diligence, and integrity—is a preview of the worshipful work we’ll do for all eternity.

Based on the gifts and talents God has given you now, what kind of responsibility or assignment do you think He might give you in the new heaven and new earth?

READ |

Jesus told a story about servants entrusted with their master’s resources. The faithful ones invested what they were given and multiplied it. To them, the master said, “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

Our faithfulness on earth doesn’t earn us a place in Heaven—that comes only through Jesus—but it does shape the responsibilities we’ll have in eternity. God has entrusted you with gifts, time, opportunities, and influence. He calls you to steward them for His glory and His Kingdom.

One day, you’ll stand before Him. Imagine hearing those words from His lips—“*Well done.*” That’s the reward worth living for.

What’s one gift, skill, or opportunity God has entrusted to you that you want to be faithful in using for His Kingdom? (For example: encouraging others, managing finances wisely, mentoring a younger believer, serving in your church, raising your kids to know Jesus, or showing kindness to people at work.)

WHAT WILL YOU DO

- **Rest with Purpose:** Choose one day this week to savor rest—not distraction.
- **Practice Praise:** Worship and pray even when you don’t feel like it.
- **Love Further:** Ask, “Who has God placed on my heart to share about Jesus?” Make the extra effort to love on them this week.

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You for showing us that eternity is not static but full of rest, celebration, and meaningful work. Help us rest deeply, praise passionately, and serve faithfully today. May we live in such a way that when we stand before You, we hear the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant." Empower us to walk in purpose now, so we can enjoy Your embrace later. In Jesus' name, amen.

DAILY DEVOTION SCRIPTURES

Day 1: Let us rejoice and be glad and give Him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and His bride has made herself ready. — **Revelation 19:7 (NIV)**

Day 2: No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and His servants will serve Him. — **Revelation 22:3 (NIV)**

Day 3: Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness! — **Matthew 25:21 (NIV)**

Day 4: But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables Him to bring everything under His control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like His glorious body. — **Philippians 3:20-21 (NIV)**

Day 5: My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. — **John 14:2-3 (NIV)**



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