

June 22/25, 2017

Go First

**BIG IDEA:** Five ways to go first to develop healthy relationships.

## GROUPS VISION

We believe life transformation happens when we engage with other people, with Jesus as our focus, and take next steps together. A next step is where we Ask, Listen, and Respond to take any action that advances our journey with Jesus.

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## KEY VERSE

**But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.**

**Luke 15:20**

## POTENTIAL NEXT STEP

The love God releases to you is the love that is released through you. Ask God to give you love for the person in your life that's difficult to love. Then ask God for a creative way to express that love.

Do you have a story of someone taking a next step?  
Share with us at  
[groups@valleycreek.org](mailto:groups@valleycreek.org)

## MAIN POINTS & SCRIPTURES

It's easy to go first with those we love when everything is brand new, but what does it look like to go first as the newness wears off?

Here are five ways to go first in our closest relationships:

1. **Go first and admit your mistakes.** On the other side of going first, grace is waiting. **(Luke 15:17-18)** The steps of the humble always land on the pathway of grace. **(1 Peter 5:5 NLT)** It's the power of God that enables us to go first in our relationships. We can have the pride of man or the power of God; we can't have both. Admitting our mistakes and going first when we don't want to is a step of faith. When we step out in faith, we step into His faithfulness.
2. **Go first in being vulnerable.** God is waiting for us to be vulnerable so He can be faithful. **(Luke 15:20)** Our resistance to being vulnerable blocks our blessings. God wants us to get to the end of ourselves so He can reveal Himself. Fear is the barrier to vulnerability; we want to be loved but we are terrified to be known.
3. **Go first by releasing offenses.** Sometimes we forgive but can't move past the hurt; we forgive the act but don't release the offense. **(Luke 15:21-22)** When our hands hold an offense, we can't receive freedom. The courage to go first in releasing an offense is key to walking in freedom. We release offenses by making a daily choice to receive fresh mercies and remember how much we are forgiven and free.
4. **Go first in having fun.** It's difficult to hold an offense when you are having fun! **(Luke 15:22-23)** Often the busyness of life robs us from what really matters; time with our closest relationships. Sometimes going first to have fun means sacrificing our desires so that others can experience joy. Doing so will bring us a level of refreshing we would otherwise miss. **(Proverbs 11:25)**
5. **Go first by expressing love.** Every day is a good day to let the people you love know they are loved. **(Luke 15:28-31)** If we wait for someone else to go first in expressing love, we might be waiting a long time. God will release love to us in order for love to be released through us. **(1 Corinthians 13)** It may feel like we always go first in relationships, but don't give up; at the right time, we will harvest a good crop. **(Galatians 6:9-10)**

We go first in our relationships because we are people of the Kingdom of God, and we follow the King. **(Ephesians 4:29-5:2)**

## DISCUSSION

1. To have healthy relationships we need to go first. Which of the five ways to go first is the easiest for you? Which is the most difficult? (See points #1-5)
2. Every day is a good day to express love. What are some ways you express love to your close relationships? (See point #5)
3. Often busyness robs us from what really matters. When was the last time you had fun with those you love? How do you surrender your preferences in order to share in the joy of the ones you love? (See point #4)
4. Vulnerability is a gift. Have you ever received the gift of someone being genuinely vulnerable? How did it enhance your relationship? (See point #2)
5. **What is the Holy Spirit saying to you? What is your next step?**