



DISCUSSION GUIDE

May 31/June 3, 2018

Face-to-Face

BIG IDEA: Jesus shows us how to be great friends.

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.

My Story.

An encounter with Jesus leaves a story to tell. Share yours at valleycreek.org/MyStory.

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KEY VERSE

“My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.”

John 15:12

POTENTIAL NEXT STEP

This week, ask, listen and respond to God when it comes to your calendar. Ask God to give you clarity for creating margin in your schedule for the friendships He is inviting you into.

MAIN POINTS & SCRIPTURES

All of us would love to have friends but, if we're honest, we don't love putting in the work it takes to get them. The state of our friendships is less about our personality and more about reaping what we have sown. **(Galatians 6:7)** Jesus has more for us in friendships and He modeled for us what being a great friend looks like. If we want to be a great friend, we must understand that friendship happens face to face. **(Exodus 33:11)** Here are some ways to put this into practice.

1. **Be available.** We have to choose to be available and know, like anything worth doing, friendships will cost us something. It cost Jesus everything to have friendship with us. **(John 1:14)** Jesus chose to pay the cost of being available to you; it cost Him heaven, public shame, and ultimately, His own relationship with the Father. **(Hebrews 12:2)** He wasn't okay with a long-distance relationship. He came down, made Himself available, made time for us, and joined our lives. **(John 1:14 MSG)** So, what does that mean for us? It means:
 - a. **We make moves.** Just like Jesus moved into our life, into our neighborhood, we are invited to make moves as well. It may mean that we change the way we linger after church, or coming early to talk to people and start new friendships.
 - b. **We are emotionally available.** To engage the friends God is calling us to in this season, we have to be emotionally available. **(Hebrews 12:2)** We can't allow past situations in friendships to keep us guarded or unavailable. Because of our identity as beloved sons and daughters, we can be a 'safe' place when friends interact with us.
 - c. **We create margin.** Every part of our fast-paced lives requires prioritization. We should be willing to put our current relationships and calendar on the altar with open hands. Jesus gave up His relationship with the Father to bring us to the Father. We may have to give up old friendships and good things on our calendar to step into the life God has called us to in this season. Time is a treasure and if our time is focused on being available for friendships, our heart will steer towards those friendships. **(Matthew 6:21)**
2. **Be available before you're needed.** Jesus ended up with friendships on purpose because He chose to be available before He was needed. Jesus walked to a well in an unlikely place at an unlikely time to talk to an un-loved woman. He met Peter at his boat twice and led him to his destiny. Every story about Jesus was about being available, and He is available for us. **(Ephesians 1:4-5)** Before Adam and Eve disobeyed God, Jesus chose you. **(Ephesians 1:5)** That is a true friend. **(Proverbs 18:24)** Jesus came face to face with you, He paid the price for friendship and it was costly. He chose to be available before you needed Him.

DISCUSSION

1. What are some tangible ways you can make margin in your calendar to be available to your friends? (See point #1)
2. Jesus made Himself available to you so you can make yourself available to others. When life is caving in, who would you call at 3am? Who would call you? (See point #2)
3. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you? What is your next step in being a great friend?