

Love & Friendship

Small Group Discussion Guide

Purpose: This discussion is designed to help group members honestly reflect on messy relationships, invite God into the middle of them, and trust Him to bring peace, healing, and growth.

Opening – Icebreaker (5 minutes)

Friendships and family relationships can be messy. Without naming names, share a light or humorous example of a misunderstanding, awkward moment, or relational tension you've experienced. Keep it safe and surface-level.

Scripture Focus

1 Samuel 18:3

“And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself.”

John 14:27

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”

Isaiah 61:1

“He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted...”

Discussion Part 1 – Messy Relationships Are Real (10 minutes)

Jonathan was caught between loyalty to his father, King Saul, and loyalty to his best friend, David. His relationships were complicated, painful, and emotionally draining.

- Where do you see similar tension today between family expectations, friendships, work relationships, or church relationships?
- The message talked about regret-proofing our future. What is one relational area where you do not want to look back with regret if nothing changes?
- Why do you think we are often tempted to hide our relational messes instead of inviting God into them?

Discussion Part 2 – What God Brings into the Mess (20 minutes)

1. God Brings Peace

Jesus offers peace that goes far beyond a temporary truce or avoidance of conflict. His peace brings stability even when circumstances remain difficult.

- What is the difference between avoiding conflict and experiencing the peace Jesus promises?
- Is there a relationship in your life where you need God's peace more than immediate resolution?
- How would trusting Jesus change how you respond in that relationship?

2. God Brings Healing

Some relational wounds are deep and cannot be healed with quick fixes. God often does a slow, restorative work that leaves scars—not as weaknesses, but as reminders of His faithfulness.

- What does deep healing look like in relationships compared to surface-level solutions?
- Have you ever seen God use a painful relational scar as a source of wisdom, compassion, or strength?
- What might it look like to trust God with healing rather than rushing the process?

3. God Brings Growth

Once relationships become broken or strained, they cannot always return to what they once were. However, God can grow them into something new, stronger, and more beautiful.

- Why is it tempting to want relationships to go back to the way they were?
- How does the image of Kintsugi (broken things repaired with gold) reshape the way you view broken relationships?
- What might God want to grow or develop in a relationship rather than simply restoring the past?

Personal Reflection (5 minutes)

Take a quiet moment to reflect and pray silently:

- Who is one person or relationship you need to intentionally invite God into right now?
- What is one practical step you can take this week (prayer, conversation, boundary, forgiveness, or asking for help)?

Prayer & Closing (10 minutes)

Invite group members to share prayer requests related to relationships, if they feel comfortable. Pray together for peace, healing, and growth. Close by reading Romans 15:5–6 aloud.

“May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus.”