

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

## Introduction

By choosing to be part of a Relationships group, you've said "yes" to being more intentional about the relationships in your life – well done! Over the next several weeks we'll dive into different aspects of relationships and see what God's word has to say about shifts we can make to create healthier connections with people in our lives. Each week, we will watch a 5-10 minute video from Pastor John that goes along with the weekend sermon then use questions from the *Talk About It!* section as a guide for group discussion.

**Making the Most of Your Time Together**

We do not only grow by listening to God's word but also through relationships with others. The friendship and insights of those in the group will enrich your small group experience as you grow together. Here are some guidelines to keep in mind for a healthy group discussion:

**Be involved** – Jump in and share your thoughts. Your ideas are important, and you have a perspective that is unique and can benefit the other group members.

**Be a good listener** – Value what others are sharing. Seek to really understand the perspective of others in your group and don't be afraid to ask follow-up questions.

**Be courteous** – People hold strong opinions about the greatest needs in our world. Your Holy Ambition may vary greatly from someone else's, but that's ok. We were not all designed in the same way or to accomplish the same things. Spirited discussion is great. Disrespect and attack are not. When there is disagreement, focus on the issue and never allow the discussion to turn into a personal attack.

**Be focused** – Stay on topic. Help the group explore the subject at hand, and try to save unrelated questions or stories for afterward.

**Be careful not to dominate** – Be aware of the amount of talking you are doing in proportion to the rest of the group, and make space for others to speak.

**Be a learner** – Stay sensitive to what God might be wanting to teach you through the lesson, as well as through what others have to say. Focus more on your own growth rather than making a point or winning an argument.

## SESSION 1 – FRIENDSHIP

### Getting Started

In groups of 2-3 answer the following question:

*What are a couple of things that people in this group may not know about you but you don't mind them knowing? Think of something they might not guess! (Middle name, hobby, hidden talent, etc.)*

### Take It In (Watch the Video):

- *write out your notes*

### Talk About it!

1. Who were one or two of your best friends growing up? What kinds of things did you do together?
2. Read **Proverbs 17:17** -- How loved, supported, and connected do you feel through the friendships you currently have in your life on a scale of 1-10?
3. Read **Proverbs 18:24** -- How would you rate the overall quality of your current experience of friendship in your life on a scale of 1-10, 10 being 'awesome!?' What factors contribute to this rating?
4. Read **Mark 5:37** and **Mark 9:2-13** -- Discuss Jesus's friendship with James, John, and Peter. Is it surprising to you that Jesus had close friends? What did he do to demonstrate his friendship?
5. Why have friendships been difficult for you? Or - if friendships are going great - why do you think that is?
6. Read **1 Samuel 18:1-4** -- How does the friendship between David and Jonathan inspire you? Can you recall a time when you intentionally 'forged' a friendship - what did that look like for you? What would be one improvement you would like to see in your life in the realm of friendships?
7. Read **John 15:13-15** -- How does friendship with Jesus become a source of empowerment for your life and relationships? How could you follow Jesus in being more intentional with your relationships?