



Week 2 (May 6-12): Lesson Guide

Introduce guests/share life.

Cast vision & open in prayer. Say, “We are just a group of broken people journeying with Jesus together.”

Recall the guidelines together.

Hook Question: Can you share about a time when someone violated an agreement they made with you? How did you feel?

Ask someone from your team to tell or read the following background for the story:

The Bible teaches that the terms of marriage were designed and prescribed by God Himself. The terms for the marriage agreement are one man to one woman, one flesh, and one lifetime. Within these terms an incredible thing happens in marriage – the two become one flesh (Gen. 2:24, Matt. 19:5, Eph. 5:31). In this one flesh agreement, everything that belongs to the husband also belongs to the wife, and everything that belongs to the wife also belongs to the husband (1 Cor. 7:4, Eph. 5:28-30). In this way, marriage is the closest human relationship to the relationship we have with Jesus. Jesus is the groom, and we are His bride (Eph. 5:25-27, 2 Cor. 11:2). Everything we have belongs to Him – Jesus purchased us with His blood (Acts 20:28, 1 Cor. 6:20, Gal. 3:13). Likewise, we have been joined with Christ so that we are His joint heirs (Rom. 8:17). In Christ, Jesus has shared all He has with us (1 Cor. 3:21-23). We are in Christ.

This ownership of one another is why the violation of the marriage term is such a deep betrayal. When we share with another what should only be shared with the one we are in agreement with, it can devastate the soul. The wounding is great because the commitment is so great. The same is true in our relationship with Jesus. He has paid so high a price to win us back to God. He has shared all He has with us; and, in return, we have committed all we have to Him. He is never unfaithful. When we are unfaithful and give in to sin by sharing with others what should only belong to Jesus, we betray Him deeply. Still, He never leaves us or forsakes us (Matt. 28:20). Nothing can separate us from His love (Rom. 8:31-39). What faithfulness!

Today’s story is about a married couple in the Bible: Isaac and Rebekah. This couple has a great story. God brought them together in an incredible way. They entered into the marriage agreement together. Like all couples, they also had their struggles. Today’s story is about one of those struggles. Put yourself in their shoes. Try to feel what they might have felt. Isaac and Rebekah were foreigners in a strange land. They didn’t feel safe. Isaac made a choice. This is where our story begins...

Tell the story from Genesis 26:7-11: Change up the storyteller often!

Rebuild the story: Group members retell the story based on what they remember.

Read the story from Genesis 26:7-11: Ask the group to read together.

Discuss these questions:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| Head Questions:
Quicker tempo. | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you think Isaac felt in this story? • How would you have felt if you were in Rebekah’s shoes? • What does this story teach us about people? |
| Heart Questions:
Slow down & wait! | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are married, how do you need to grow in the way you relate to your spouse? • How have you been treating God like Isaac treated Rebekah? |
| Action | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask someone to retell this week’s story one last time. |

Close in prayer. Recruit a storyteller for next week.

byDesign

Week 2: Coaching Guide

Summer Season Readiness

Last year, the mission statement for the Summer Season was a change in pace to match the change of pace in our culture. Hmm. You know how you grow and mature over time? As I look back on this vision, it feels weak to me this year. If this is the reason for the change, why not just keep meeting in group and instruct group leaders to be patient with those out of town? As I have reflected on the Summer Season, I believe God wants to stir us up this summer and stoke the fire of our hearts to make disciples of Him. There is still a change of pace, but the mission statement is evolving:

The mission statement of the 2018 Summer Season is to stir up the culture of relational disciple-making in our church family.

We will unpack our strategy and vision for this mission statement at the cookout on Saturday, May 5th. However, let me share three things with you that I believe the Lord is calling us to for this summer:

1. **Stir up our relationships with Jesus.** Disciple-making is deeply rooted in authentic relationships. Recently, Pastor Jerry said, "I believe that many people in the church struggle to understand what relational discipleship is because they do not walk in an authentic relationship with Jesus." As group leaders, our example for relational discipleship begins with the way Jesus relates to us and His example of relationships in His Word. This summer, we will stoke the fires of our hearts towards Jesus.
2. **Open new doors to relational discipleship.** We need doors through which we can invite people to join us in authentic relationships. As the pace changes this summer, it will create an opportunity for group leaders to express relationship in new ways with those they are discipling. We will be encouraging group leaders to initiate relationships with others in creative and meaningful ways. Who could you go to the gun range with? Take a vacation with? Share meals with? See summer movies with? Play board games with? Go camping with? How could we use our free time to strengthen relationships? Who are the few men or women (gender specific) that you need to focus on growing in relationship with this summer?
3. **Maintaining the Group Connection.** The Summer Season is eight-weeks long (June 17-August 11). The focus of this season will be on authentic relationships with Jesus and with those you are discipling outside of group. Therefore, we will only meet four times during the eight-week period. Two of these meetings will be fellowship meals centered around sharing the Lord's Supper together. Two of these meetings will be group meetings where you will story. No curriculum will be provided, so you will choose a story and questions for your group.

We believe God has great plans to use this Summer Season to stir our hearts and passion for making-disciples of Jesus. Jesus did not say go and make small groups; He said, "go and make disciples." This summer, we will focus on the basics of relationships so that we can grow in His example of relational discipleship. Join us!