

# Real-Life Relationships

How do we relate in love to those we disciple?

## Week 1: February 10-16

**Introduce Guests/Share Life:** *How has this week been going? Good? Bad? Ugly? Things to celebrate?*

**Open in Prayer:** *Include any prayer needs that came up while you were sharing life together.*

**Recall the Guidelines:** *Ask: "What is the purpose of the guidelines?" Answer: To be relational!*

**Share the Vision:** *Our small group is a discipleship group. That means all of us are learning how to be disciples who make disciples. Discipleship is all about relationships. Let's be open as we share.*

**Hook Question:** Have you ever missed out on something because you were too late or it expired? Explain.

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

For the next several weeks, our group will be doing a series of stories on a man named Joseph. Each of these stories will be chronological and build on each other. While the story will build, you can still invite a friend to hear any story! Each one is also able to stand alone. We will focus on Joseph because of the many relational challenges he faced. God wants to use this story of Joseph to teach us how to be more relational.

Here is the background. To understand the setting for the story of Joseph you have to know about his great-grandfather, Abraham. Abraham is the father of the nation of Israel. God established His covenant promise with Abraham. God promised to multiply his descendants into a great nation, to give him a land of promise for a place for them to dwell, and to bless all the nations of the earth through Abraham. This nation, Israel, would be set apart for God. Through this nation God would give His law, the Scriptures, to us. Through this nation God would give us His prophets and promises. Through this nation God would give us His Son, Jesus. God was Jesus's Father; but His mother, Mary, was a descendant of Abraham.

Why is this important? Because the promise of God to Abraham passed down to His son, Isaac; and from Isaac to Jacob. Jacob was the father of Joseph. Joseph was one of twelve sons of Jacob. God gave the promise of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to all twelve of Jacob's sons – including Joseph. Joseph's story is one of constant relational challenges. There is a lot for us to learn. This is where our story begins...

**Tell the story from Genesis 37:1-11:** *Use different storytellers. Teach your group to share God's Word.*

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

**Read the story from Genesis 37:1-11:** *Ask the group to read these verses.*

## Discussion Questions: learn to talk about God's Word with others...

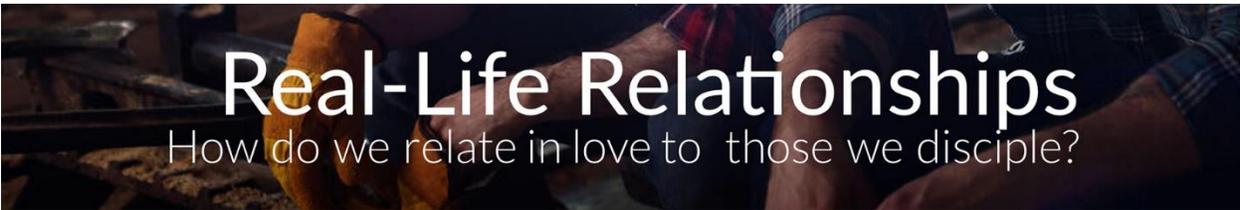
Head  
Questions:  
Quicker  
tempo.

- What do you like or dislike about this story?
- What does this story teach us about people?
- What does this story teach us about God?
- What does this story teach us about relationships?

Heart & Hand  
Questions:  
Slow down &  
wait!

- What do you think God is trying to show you right now? How do you need to change?
- Who could retell the story for us right here one last time?

**Thank your storyteller for sharing the Word. Ask for a volunteer storyteller for next week.**  
*Close in prayer.*



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## ***Week 1: Intentional Leadership in Disciple-Making***

### **Generous With Our Time**

On Sunday, February 3, Pastor Jerry delivered a message that concluded our series on *Living the Generous Life*. If you missed it, listen. This message challenged us to embrace this truth:

*“There is a direct connection between making disciples who reproduce and how generous I am with my time.”*

Let’s take a look at how this plays out practically in the life of a disciple-maker who leads a small group...

#### **Small Group as the HUB**

For effective intentional leaders, small group is the hub where they learn more about the people in their groups and build relationships with them. Small group is not the end of discipleship, it is the means. Through the group, small group leaders have an opportunity to see who shows up faithfully for discipleship, to listen for transparency, to build relationships through their own transparency with others, and to see who gets excited about taking what they are learning to others. As intentional leaders identify these people in their groups, they begin to be extremely generous with their time to disciple them towards maturity (reproduce).

#### **Limited Relationally**

Intentional disciple-makers understand that they are limited relationally. They can only be *very* generous with their time with a few people. When they identify someone in group who shows signs of leadership and the potential to reproduce, they begin to focus on being most generous with their time with them. Intentional leaders know they cannot have more than 1-3 of these types of relationships at a time, so they make the most of the ones they have.

#### **What Real-Life Relationships Look Like**

It comes as a surprise to many that relationships are not something they are naturally good at or as good at as they thought. It’s a skill, but it can be learned. We will learn more about this over the next few weeks, but suffice it to say that these relationships require a significant amount of our time. Discipleship is not the weekly meeting. That’s the hub. What happens outside the hub is vital. Helping a disciple move from spiritual immaturity to maturity is not easy work. It is relational. It is intentional. It is patient. It happens over time, meals, service opportunities, prayer, group meetings, sporting events, hobbies, worship, coffee, etc.

Over the next few weeks we will work on developing skills in relationships for disciple-making. Be praying about how God wants to make you a stronger intentional leader in your discipleship.