

# Cuffing SZN - 3 Ghosted

**Key Texts:** Proverbs 14:30; Proverbs 22:1; Proverbs 25:28; Luke 10:27; Philippians 3:13–14

**Big Idea:** We need to handle a breakup not how we want to, but how we should.

## Intro:

Breakups hurt. Unfortunately, a lot of breakups are executed poorly, which only increases the heartache! One example of handling breakups poorly is the current trend called “ghosting.” To ghost somebody is to pull a total disappearance act. Whether it’s a slow fade or act of immediacy, when a person vanishes from your relationship like Houdini, you have been ghosted.

Ghosting is just one example of a breakup being handled poorly. The reality is that most relationships end in breakups. According to various polls, less than 2 percent of all marriages are between high school sweethearts.

When it comes to relationships, a lot of our attention is often focused on the beginning of relationships. Little attention is put toward discussing the end of relationships.

In life, there are a lot of breakups, and they are not just limited to dating! Knowing how to end a relationship the right way is an important skill to have, and says a lot about our character.

Maybe you’ll need to “break up” a relationship with a friend who’s dragging you down. Maybe you’ll need to “break up” with the current boss as you pursue a new job opportunity. Maybe the boss needs to “break up” with you! Life is full of relationships—some are lifelong, and some we move on from. Knowing how to transition well will save you a lot of unnecessary pain, and at the same time, honor the others involved.

Today, we’re focused on breaking up with a significant other in a dating relationship—and here’s the bottom line: *We need to handle a break up not how we want to, but how we should.*

# Don't hate. When you hate, you lose.

*We handle a breakup not how we want to, but how we should, by choosing to show love.*

## 1. When we hate, ultimately, we look bad.

When we experience a break up, whether playing the role of the “dumper” or “dumpee,” it is so easy to hate. We might want to blast the person on social media, vent unnecessary details to everyone who asks (or doesn't), or manipulate relationships just to cause the other person harm. But when you hate, ultimately, you look bad.

*Proverbs 25:28 pg. 315*

*A man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls.*

When we do what we want—rather than what we should—by venting and hating, ultimately, we look bad. Every type of adversity, every “storm,” rattles us. We look desperate, shattered, and hopeless.

We might feel all of these things, but the truth is we won't be emotionally broken forever. At some point, we will move on, and we need to avoid long-term consequences while going through temporary emotional turmoil. We need to lock the door and close the windows on hate.

Many people try to manipulate other relationships after their breakup. Like calling one of your friends, who was also friends with your ex-girlfriend saying, “You need to choose between her or me.” This is allowing hate to fuel your actions, and ultimately, you lose. Don't be shocked if they choose your ex-girlfriend over you.

## 2. Hatred blocks healing and growth.

After a breakup, sometimes we don't want to heal. We'd rather sit in our sorrow and pain. Others get stuck in their pain and are unable to heal. The only way to heal and grow is to keep hate out of the process.

*Proverbs 14:29-30 pg. 310*

*29 Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who has a hasty temper exalts folly.*

*30 A tranquil heart gives life to the flesh, but envy makes the bones rot.*

Whether it is prompted by jealousy, anger, or heartbreak, holding on to hate is like cancer. We cannot heal and grow while holding on to hate. If we want to move forward in victory, healing, and growth, we need to shut the door on hate.

## Choose a GOOD name.

*We handle a breakup not how we want to, but how we should, by honoring the other person. How you handle a breakup shows a lot more about you than the other person.*

When we break up, we can be tempted to think, “It doesn’t matter how I act, the relationship is over anyway!” However, a breakup forces us to look in the mirror and evaluate our true character.

*Proverbs 21:1-2 pg. 313*

*1 A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, and favor is better than silver or gold. 2 The rich and the poor meet together; the Lord is the Maker of them all.*

The writer says that a good name, someone’s solid reputation of character, is more valuable than what the world says is most valuable.

Despite how ugly the situation or how poor the relationship, we must choose to commit to breaking up how we should, not how we want to. Choose a good name and honoring the other person in the process of breaking up.

You might think, “You don’t know how he or she treated me!” Honoring a person when breaking up (or being broken up with) doesn’t mean that your heart isn’t broken. It doesn’t mean you need to remain friends.

However, it does mean that we strive to treat people, even dishonorable people, in an honorable way. Avoid gossip, “getting even,” or striving to manipulate relationships. Your heart might be broken, but how you handle a breakup says much more about you than the other person.

How you handle a breakup is important, because it shows a lot more about you than the other person. The process of breaking up (whether playing the role of the “dumper” or “dumpee”) can show us who we are and provide an incredible opportunity for growth.

## Check Your Purpose

*We handle a breakup not how we want to, but how we should, by checking our purpose.*

Dating is fun. It’s enjoyable. Holding hands, always having someone to sit next to or snuggle with, receiving constant text messages, and posting cute pictures on social media are all fun parts of having a relationship. What starts out as fun and enjoyable can easily become the purpose that gets us through each day. And when our purpose is gone as a result of a breakup, we can go into shock. We crave a dating relationship!

A breakup can be a painful but helpful opportunity to ask, “What and who am I truly living for?”

A breakup shouldn’t break our purpose. A breakup shouldn’t leave us feeling that we don’t have anything to live for or that we are worthless, ugly, or not good enough. These are all signs that we placed our purpose in the person we were dating.

When it comes to your purpose, God might allow you to be wrecked, through a breakup, so your purpose can be checked!

Matthew 22:36-37 pg. 483

36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" 37 And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

A breakup can often serve as the opportunity to look into the mirror and see who or what we really love. A breakup gives us the opportunity to refocus on running our own race.

Philippians 3:12-15 pg. 571

12 Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. 13 Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. 15 Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you.

For those of us who follow Jesus, our life goal is to know Jesus better, and our prize is Jesus! As we run through the ups and downs of life, and our eyes are fixed on Jesus, we strive to pursue Him. By choosing to run our race in pursuit of knowing Jesus by prayer, community, and Scripture, we will have a better perspective on our circumstances. As we pursue Jesus, we will know He treasures us, and we will be fueled by His purpose!

We can handle a breakup not how we want to, but how we should by checking our purpose. Checking our purpose in a breakup (whether playing the role of "dumper" or "dumpee") might affect our decision to break up, how we go about breaking up, or how we choose to respond to being broken up with. No matter your dating situation, check your purpose!

## **Conclusion:**

Maybe the heartbreak that comes from a breakup has knocked you off your course spiritually. Maybe you've stopped running your race in pursuit of Christ because you are in shock, purposeless, or heartbroken.

I encourage you to check your purpose! Dating relationships will come and go, but Jesus is here to stay with you. He will never leave you or break up with you, and His purpose is still available to you. Use a break up as an opportunity to check your purpose, so that you can run your race more determined and intentional than ever before.

## Small Group Questions

- Have you ever gone through a breakup? If so, what was your experience like? If not, when was a recent time you saw another person experience a breakup, how did you see them handle it?
- Typically in a breakup, how we want to handle a breakup is not how we should. What are some of the best ways you've seen or experienced a breakup handled?
- What are some of the worst ways you've seen or experienced a breakup handled?
- Today's message said, "When you hate you lose." Do you think this is true? Why or why not?
- Have a student read Proverbs 22:1-2. What stands out to you about this passage? How would you describe "a good name"?
- Why should we treat the other person in a break up in an honorable way, even if they were dishonorable to you?
  - What are some ways we can do that?
- Why is it important that we check our purpose in handling a breakup?
- How can dating distract us from running our race? (See Philippians 3:13-14.)
- How can dating help us run the race Jesus calls us to?