

STAND ALONE MESSAGES

SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

Message Series // Stand Alone - Break Through In Marriage and Relationships

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BIG IDEA

Marriage is an adventure. There are mountain top experiences and valley struggles, twists and turns, and many more things along the journey. But sometimes along the way we can get stuck...stuck in our marriage (and other relationships). When we get stuck, what do we do? In this discussion guide, we will look at 3 things that can lead to a breakthrough in your relationships.

*"Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus." - **Philippians 2:5***

DISCUSSION

When it comes to experiencing breakthroughs in your relationships, the first thing you need to do is **SHOW EMPATHY**. Empathy is the "capacity to understand or feel what another person is experiencing from within their frame of reference". Read **Philippians 2:5-8** to see a picture of empathy from Christ. Our struggle is that we can get so focused on **OUR** vantage point that we don't see the **OTHER'S** view. What did Jesus do to show empathy? What are the struggles you personally have when it comes to seeing the other's vantage point? Why is empathy so key in beginning the breakthrough in relationships that are stuck?

The second thing you can do to allow breakthroughs in relationships is **FORGIVE QUICKLY**. Read **Colossians 3:13**. There are many times we can find ourselves sitting in something for awhile (pain, struggle, hurt, anger)...and find that we are unable to move on. And beginning the process of forgiveness can be the most difficult thing you can do in a relationship. What are some obstacles that stand in the way of wanting to forgive someone? Where have you seen forgiveness in your life or the life of someone else pave the way for a powerful breakthrough?

The last thing one can engage in for a breakthrough is to **OFFER GRACE EASILY**. Read **Ephesians 2:6-8** and **1 John 3:1**. Grace defined is "unmerited favor". It's giving someone something they don't deserve. Not only is forgiveness key, but offering grace allows the relationship to move further down the line into a more deeper and intimate place. Why is it so easy for us to want grace given to us, but want justice served to others when they wrong us? How can offering grace move your "stuck" relationship into a deeper reality?

NEXT STEPS

Read this quote..."*The contradiction for the Christian is to be a willing recipient of the grace God offers us but reluctant to extend the same gift to our spouse. How ironic that the missing ingredient in our marriage when we act that way is the primary ingredient in God's heart when He deals with us.*" (Dr. Tim Kimmel). Let's start taking next steps toward experiencing breakthroughs in our marriages, or any other foundational relationships in our lives. What is one next step you need to take to get unstuck in your relationship? How can your small group help you take that next step?