

Table Group Discussion Guide

Series: Practical Wisdom

Title: “How Do I Build Meaningful Relationships?” on July 19, 2026

Start Here (5 minutes)

1. Think about someone in your life who shaped you just by being around them — not through formal teaching but through proximity. What was it about them that rubbed off on you? Is there anyone playing that role in your life right now?

Getting to Know Each Other (10 minutes)

2. Have you ever had to distance yourself from a relationship — a friendship, a work partnership, a family dynamic — because it was pulling you in the wrong direction? What made you finally recognize it, and what was hardest about making the change?

Getting Into the Word (20 minutes)

Read together: **Proverbs 4:14–16, Proverbs 24:17, Proverbs 26:4–5, and Luke 6:41–42**

The sermon introduced three characters from Proverbs: the **wicked** (those who purposefully deceive, divide, exploit, and harm others), the **enemy** (those who live in direct opposition to God, his ways, and his people), and the **fool** (either immature and in process, or someone who devalues wisdom, trusts themselves too much, and is overly reactive). The corresponding responses: *stay away from the wicked, stay kind to your enemies, stay alert around fools.*

3. Which of those three characters shows up most in your life right now — in your relationships, your workplace, or your online feed? Which of the three responses is hardest for you to actually live out, and why?

Proverbs 24:17 says “Do not gloat when your enemy falls; when they stumble, do not let your heart rejoice.” The sermon introduced the naming-then-treating framework: you can name someone as your enemy without that changing how you’re obligated to treat them. In fact, naming them honestly is what keeps you from the two bad alternatives — fighting them or going squishy.

4. Is there someone in your life where you’ve avoided the honest naming because it feels too harsh? Or where you’ve named them as an enemy and used that as permission to treat them badly? What would it look like to hold both at the same time?

Proverbs 26:4–5 appears to contradict itself: don’t answer a fool or you’ll become like one — but also answer a fool or they’ll think they’re wise. The sermon said this isn’t a contradiction to resolve. It’s a tension that requires discernment.

5. Think of a recent situation where you had to decide whether to engage with someone or let it go. How did you decide? Looking back, do you think you made the wise call?

Going Deeper with Each Other (20 minutes)

Luke 6:41–42 asks why we’re so focused on the speck in someone else’s eye when we have a plank in our own. The sermon said: we won’t see others clearly until we see ourselves clearly. And Jesus is toughest not on the wicked or the fool — but on the self-righteous.

6. Be honest with the group. Is there a situation in your life right now where you’re much clearer about what the other person is doing wrong than what you might be contributing? What would it look like to turn the lens on yourself first?

One of the most sobering realities of leadership — at work, in a family, in a church — is that if you live long enough in that role, you’re the villain in somebody else’s story. The Psalm 139 audit asks: “God, show me how I’ve been the wicked, the enemy, or the fool in someone else’s life.”

7. Has there been a season where you were the difficult person in someone else’s story — even unintentionally? What helped you see it? **ACTION BONUS:** Is there someone you owe an apology or a conversation to? Name them privately to yourself and take one concrete step toward it before the group meets again.

Jeff said: “The healthier we become, the easier it is to attract healthy people. The more we align ourselves with Jesus, the easier it is to find the people we’re meant to walk with.” The relationship audit and the personal audit aren’t two separate things — they’re the same work.

8. What is one thing you know needs to change in you (not someone else) that would make you a better person to be in relationship with? Say it out loud to the group if you’re able.

Coming Back to Where You Started (5 minutes)

The sermon ended here: “Jesus already sees you clearly, and Jesus already loves you fully.” The audit isn’t so you can fix yourself enough for God to accept you. It’s so you can begin to see yourself the way he already sees you.

9. Has anything shifted in how you’re thinking about the audit — of others or of yourself — after this conversation? What’s one thing you’re taking away?

Pray for Each Other (10 minutes)

Go around the table and let each person share one specific thing they want the group to pray for — something real, connected to what came up in the conversation. Then pray for each person by name, out loud, before you leave.

If the group is ready for it, try praying Psalm 139:23 over each person specifically:

“Search [name], O God, and know their heart. Show them anything that needs to change — and remind them that you already see them clearly and love them fully.”

One Thing to Carry Into the Week

The **“now what”** from the sermon: before you evaluate anyone else this week — before you audit a friendship, an influence, a relationship — pray Psalm 139:23 first. Just that one prayer. Search me, O God. Every morning before you pick up your phone. Let that be where the audit starts.

Try it at least once before the group meets again. Come back and tell someone what happened.