

Sermon Based Small Group Guide
For September 26, 2021 sermon:

Connect: "Relationships- are you a builder or a wrecker?"

Warm up:

1. This should be fun...we are taking a page from what the students have been doing in our youth ministry for some time. They begin their study time by sharing their "Happy and Crappy" for the week. The best and worst of their week. So go around the table or circle and have everyone share their "Happy" and their "Crappy" for the past week.
2. Choose a close friendship in your life (from the past or a current one). What were the characteristics of that relationship that made it meaningful and kept it strong?

Digging deeper: (20-30 minutes)

1. One of the things that makes the Bible so helpful is that it shows even the struggles of its "heroes" so we can not only be encouraged by their successes, but learn from their failures. What are the relationship struggles revealed in the following stories? (You don't need to read all the Scripture. It is for context and review.)

- What went wrong between Cain and Abel? (Genesis 4)
- What were the struggles between Esau and Jacob? (Genesis 25:19-34)
- Why were Joseph and his brothers at odds? (Genesis 37)
- Many, not all, have an eventual resolution. What resolved the conflict between Joseph and his brothers? (Genesis 45:3-8)

2. The principle of sowing and reaping is that what we "plant" (seeds) we will eventually harvest (more than we planted. Read Galatians 6:7-10 together.

- How does this principle affect every relationship?
- This isn't just a "negative" principle...it is true in very positive ways too! What do people "sow" (positive and negative) in their relationships that show up later in much greater ways?
- The "reaping" happens later (sometimes much later) than the sowing so the impact of what we do is not always immediately obvious. How should we speak and act to our spouse, or child, or fellow believer or ANYONE with this in view? If we've planted poorly...is there anything we can do?

Apply it: (10 minutes)

Pray: As a group, have everyone share the name of an unsaved person God has placed on their heart to reach. Make a list and pray for each other's friends.

Share: Each of you choose someone outside your group and church to show the love of Jesus to in a practical way. Who is that person in your life? What will you do?

Serve: Talk about a project you could do together (physical? financial?) in the next few weeks to bless someone outside your group.