



“I Like Me Better When I’m With You” | Ronnie Johnson | 2.10.19
Life Group Weekly

START

To get things started, go around the circle and answer the following question:

What is your favorite romantic comedy?

SHARE

This week we started a new relationship series called “Mixtape.” If you have ever made a mixtape for someone, chances are your motivation was to move them. Whether it was to remind them of your love, make them rethink things about your relationship, or even convince them to get back together; mixtapes are created to inspire movement!

In this series, we are going to talk about moving our relationships closer to what God had intended them to be. Whether you are single, dating, engaged, or have been married for years, we all have meaningful relationships in our life. And if we are honest, these relationships always have room for improvement.

Over the next several weeks we are going to look at what the Bible has to say about those people who are closest to us, so we can all move forward together!

G R O W

Read John 15:9-17

Ronnie kicked off this series by talking about singleness and that every relationship we have is made up of individual parts. Nine out of ten times, relational problems are actually singleness problems. The starting point for talking about any relationship is talking about the individuals involved in the relationship. If we all work on our own problems, our relationships will improve significantly. Relationships always begin with each individual.

Last week we looked at the beginning of John 15 where Jesus urged His disciples to remain in Him. As we continue to read, notice the shift in what Jesus is saying: “My command is this: love each other as I have loved you” (John 15:12). Jesus always moves from the individual to the collective because the secret to you being able to love others well is by understanding how much God loves you. As we continue to abide in Christ, and begin to grasp His deep love for us, loving others becomes natural to us in our everyday life.

An ability to love others is the natural fruit of abiding in God!

When we try to have healthy relationships without first understanding God’s love for us, we are putting the cart before the horse. It doesn’t work. As Ronnie reminded us this week, “When we don’t know who we are in Christ, we create unrealistic expectations for our relationships.”

Jesus is reminding His disciples (and us) that it all comes back to knowing how much God loves us and who we are in Him. When we begin to rest in this, we are freed up to love others well!

When you read that Jesus loves you (John 15:12) do you truly believe it? What is one practical step you can take to believe it a little more this week?

Can you think of a relationship in your life that would benefit from applying this John 15 principle? How would that relationship begin to transform if you and the other person took some time to realize how loved you both are?

M O V E

We all have meaningful relationships in our lives, but to ensure we are heading in the right direction, we first have to know where we are going. The best place to figure out where these relationships are heading, is to go back to the beginning. To the very first page of the bible!

Read Genesis 1:26-2:3

For years, scholars have debated Genesis 1, usually for all the wrong reasons. The first chapter of the Bible is not a science textbook; it is communicating something MUCH greater. God is telling us who He is, who we are, and how our relationship with Him and with each other were originally designed to work.

“Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness” (Gen 1:26).

We could spend months on this single verse, but for this week here is one important thought: Every person you come into contact with this week is a human being created in the image of God! We are all image bearers! Whether it is your spouse, your kids, your neighbors, your coworkers, your best friend, your worst enemy, or the clerk at the grocery store; every single interaction you have is with an eternal soul created in the image of God!

We all know how easy it is to dismiss people and have our own agendas in relationships. When life gets busy, our interactions with others are often the first thing to go. But from the beginning, God designed us to be relational beings. Of course, we have work to do; God placed us on this earth to work it and keep it (Gen. 2:15). But before any of that, He put us here to be in relationship with Him and with each other.

How does that reminder change the way you approach your relationships this week? Can you think of one practical step you can take to put your relationships before your tasks?

Is there someone in your life that is tough to love? You don't have to say their name out loud, but what are some ways you can see them as an image bearer this week?

P R A Y

As a group, spend some time praying with and for each other. If you are in a coed group, consider breaking up into men and women's groups to share more freely.

T O G O

Ephesians 4:32

“Be Kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”

