



Nana's Pound Cake | Ronnie Johnson | 2.28.21
Weekly Study

START

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

If you could be anywhere in the world right now, where would you be?

SHARE

Welcome to Week Three of Let's Talk About Relationships! In this series, we have been taking a look at what Scripture has to say about our relationships with one another. This week, Ronnie talked to us about shame and how God can transform us because of the finished work of Christ Jesus on the cross. But before we dive in, take some time to catch up with your Group by answering the following questions.

What was the best conversation you had this week? Why?

What is one word you would use to describe how you are currently feeling?

What is one thing you feel like God is trying to teach you right now?

If you haven't taken the time to hear everyone's story yet, take some more time to let two or three more people share by asking them to answer the following questions.

- 1. Tell me about your upbringing. What are a few of the significant life events that shaped and molded you?**
- 2. Have you ever had a moment where you realized God is real and loves you? If so, tell us about it.**
- 3. How have you changed in the last five years?**
- 4. Describe yourself in five words and explain why you picked each one.**

5. Who is God to you?

Every person has a unique journey they have been on that has led them to this point. Taking the time to share your story is a fantastic exercise for you and for everyone listening!

GROW

Read Genesis 3:1-10

What do you know about the context of Genesis 3? Why is this passage so important?

What do you think God is trying to communicate to us with this story?

We all have a vertical relationship with God; we are a bunch of imperfect people pursuing a perfect God, who is slow to anger and full of grace. However, we also have horizontal relationships with each other. These relationships are between two imperfect people which means they are messy. However, when our vertical relationship with our perfect God is our firm foundation, our horizontal relationships are much easier. That's the goal of this series!

This week, Ronnie took us back to the Garden to remind us where things took a turn for the worst.

The first two chapters of Scripture tell the story of humans being in a perfect relationship with God. However, Chapter 3 is the moment sin entered the picture. We call this the "fall" or the "fall of humanity." This is the moment Adam and Eve felt shame. For the first time, the man and woman saw themselves as evil, wrong, weak, and disconnected from God. They felt ashamed.

We still feel that shame today. It's the reason our horizontal relationships with each other can be so challenging. Shame wages war on our relationships. It's the reason we feel so insecure around each other and are constantly competing with each other. Fortunately, God graciously stepped in to take care of the shame problem once and for all, but before we talk about that, take some time to talk about the negative baggage that comes with shame with your Group.

Do you ever experience shame in your life? How does it keep you from being the man or woman you feel God is calling you to be?

What does Genesis 3 reveal to you about your own relationships?

M O V E

Read Ephesians 5:21-33

What stuck out to you about this passage? Why?

Do you ever find this call from Paul challenging? Why?

In this passage, Paul gives husbands and wives a really big call. He tells them to love their spouse the way Christ loved the church. Which means the next question we need to ask is: **How did God love the church?**

He died for us while we were still sinners. God didn't wait until we had it all together before he came to die for us. The Bible says, "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

Scripture calls us to do the same! We need to love our spouse the way God loved us. That's a huge ask. As Ronnie reminded us this weekend, "This challenge for husbands to love their wives like Christ loved the church is an impossible task." We are never going to get it perfect but remember that's the point of grace.

The more we remember what Jesus did for us, the better we will understand how to love our spouse and our community!

What does it look like to love your spouse the way God loved the church? If you aren't married or in a relationship, what does it look like to love your friends the way God loved the church?

The only way to love is to remember that God first loved us. What is one practical way you can remind yourself of God's love this week so you can turn around and share that love with the world?

P R A Y

We need prayer now more than ever. Spend some time-sharing prayer requests. If you are in a coed group, consider breaking off into two separate groups (or calls if you are an online group) to share more freely.

T O G O

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.

1 John 4:7