

LIFEGROUP QUESTIONS:

(feel free to use whatever questions fit best with your group)

Read John 4:10-11

- *What are the different ways that God has demonstrated with love to you / us?*
- *What strikes you about the way God loves?*
- *How does this relate to loving those around us?*
- *Take time to reflect on the different relationship 'circles' you are in (family, work, church etc). How might you demonstrate love in these different contexts?*

Read Hebrews 10:23-25

- *Get practical! How might this group do what the writer of Hebrews says?*

Questions from the sermon:

- *Feel free to look at the sermon notes below - what are your reflections, encouragements or challenges?*
- *Where are the True Connections in your life? Are there any connections that you need to invest in OR review?*
- *How might you be encouraged to build good connections with others?*

Take the opportunity to pray for the different relational connections you have.

Is there anyone who needs a fresh experience of God's love (in your group, or people who you know)? Take a moment to pray for them.

Relational Wellbeing - True Connection

INTRODUCTION:

Bring out your phone - Phones are always searching for connection

That is the same with us as human beings we are designed to be in a relationship to have deep connections with one another.... And with God.

Read Gen 2:18

"The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone""

But there are different types of connections

1. **5G. TRUE CONNECTIONS** - We can have those close intimate connections with friends or family or spouse - this is what they look like:

“Both parties are wholly present, known, understood, and mutually invested. What each truly thinks, feels, believes, fears, and needs can be shared safely” Dave Smith

We will look at how to build these later.

2. **3G. SUPERFICIAL CONNECTIONS** - people that we feel fun to be around, temporarily feel good.... But... don't really open up to that level of honesty and vulnerability, and that sense of truly being know.

3. **Roaming. COSTLY CONNECTIONS** - We can have unhealthy OR costly - connections. Not necessarily bad or abusive (although may be). Those People in our lives actually us to feel worse about ourselves, put us down, and when we leave an interaction - feeling less secure, or not good enough in some way. Or maybe even hurt.

4. **No signal / airplane mode. NO CONNECTIONS.** Or we can find that we have no connections. Maybe because of circumstances... or as was the case at the beginning of this teaching series with Elijah. He isolated himself. AIR PLANE MODE....

One of the warning size that our well-being is being depleted or is depleted is withdrawing and isolating from those who love us.

That includes our family and our friends, but that also includes God. We begin to insulate and withdraw... we do the very opposite of what we need.

Let's read what Elijah did

1 Kings 19:12-13 & 15-16

“After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper... The Lord said to him, “Go back the way you came, and go to the Desert of Damascus. When you get there, anoint Hazael king over Aram. Also, anoint Jehu son of Nimshi king over Israel, and anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah to succeed you as prophet.”

Part of Elijah's restoration to wholeness and well-being was reconnecting with others. The starting place was connecting afresh with God in a new way, and from that then flowed the capacity, the guidance to connect with other human beings.

So how do we build good connections?

“This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.” 1 John 4:10-11

- we begin from the place of love... our capacity to love can be amplified by receiving the love of God that he longs to pour out into our lives.

1. Be Present (see Elijah)

‘The most desired gift of love is.... Focused attention’
Attention says: I value you enough to give you my most precious asset - my time

Listen... without interruption... without judgement...

2. Be Real... Honesty (see Elijah)

We can tend to wear masks - to present how we want others to see us.... Elijah was real with God... he ranted!

3. Build Up & Bless

'And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds' Heb 10:24

Be positive, we live in a culture that tares others down. How can we build up... carry one another's burdens... seek the best... be a blessing. Fill others lives with words of love, encouragement, affirmation & praise.

THE MOST significant CONNECTION IS WITH GOD!

"You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you." St Augustine