

LIFE GROUP HOMEWORK:

TAKING IT HOME

1. How will you let your Christian identity and relationship with God define how you are supposed to live in relationship to others, especially other Christians?
2. What practical steps will you take this week to become a "safe" friend to someone else?
3. Go deeper with your Life Group relationships. In the next couple of weeks, share your life story with your group. See the Life Map handout in leader's guide for ideas and suggestions on how to share your Life Map with your group.

SUNDAY JAN. 22, 2017

Series: "Fit For Life"

Message #3: "Becoming Relationally Fit"

By: Pastor Mark Brunott

This message is available on your phone/tablet through YouVersion app. Download app. Click on "more". Then "events". Then "First Free Church".

MESSAGE NOTES:

Two kinds of self: safe self and unsafe self.

Examples of "fig leaves" behind which we hide:

- Work
- Parenting
- Exercise
- Niceness
- Alcohol, drugs, TV
- Denial

About relationships:

- You were made to connect.
- If you are hiding, you will feel alone and hurting.
- God tells us to move forward.
- The best model of a safe relationship is God.

A "safe" friend will:

- Initiate, but not invade.
- Ask questions, but not accuse.
- Tell the truth, and not deny.
- Respond, but not run away.
- Protect, and not expose.

LIFE GROUP HOMEWORK:

QUICK REVIEW

1. Walk through the "5 Marks of a Safe Friend" from Pastor Mark's sermon on Sunday. Which of the five marks do you find most beneficial or helpful in cultivating relationships?
2. Alternative question for groups ready to be more vulnerable: What is your fig leaf? What are you using to hide your "real" self from others?

MY STORY

1. One of our homework writers this week observed that we often want "microwaved relationships". What do you think she meant? What are the challenges associated with an expectation that relationships should be easy and immediate? Use personal illustration and examples from your own life.
2. Share about one of your best friends...tell your Life Group how you became friends and how you cultivated that relationship.

LIFE GROUP HOMEWORK:

DIGGING DEEPER

1. Pastor Mark noted that sin has resulted in major relational problems between people. Read Eph. 2:11-22 and answer the following questions. Take special note of language of "us becoming one" in verses 13-16.
 - According to this passage, how has Christ paved the way for relational reconciliation and restoration between Jew and Gentile?
 - How do Christ's actions on our behalf change the effect of sin on relationships? Consider Titus 3:1-11 in your reflection of this question.
2. Read Eph. 4:17-32 and discuss the following question...What is the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit in forging and maintaining healthy relationships? See Col. 3:1-17 and Gal 5:16-26 for additional insight.
3. In addition to Eph. 4:17-32, now read Eph. 5:1-21. List all the ways sin effects relationships (we lie to each other, we are bitter, etc.) What help and encouragement is given in Eph. 4- 5 so we might overcome these issues? Talk about the approach a Christian should take in exposing these things personally and relationally.