



SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Week 1 April 23, 2023
“Instructions Not Included”



OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You for not forgiving us from a distance. Thank you for sending a savior into this world to reveal what You are like, who You like, who You love. We know you call us to have the same mindset as your son in all of our relationships but we don't always get this right. So would you please give us eyes to see the people around us the way that You see them, and give us ears to hear that still small voice that shows us and teaches us how to remove unnecessary obstacles to repairing our broken relationships? We pray this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

Philippians 2:1-8 (NIV)

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion,² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves,⁴ not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

⁵ *In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:*

⁶ *Who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;*

⁷ *rather, he made himself nothing
by taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.*

⁸ *And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to death—
even death on a cross!*

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INTRODUCTION

House flipping (purchasing a rundown house, fixing it up, and reselling it) has become increasingly popular over the last few years. The popularity of flipping shows such as HGTV's *Fixer Upper* and *Flip or Flop* probably has something to do with it. Although many people attempt to fix up a home, very few people know how to fix a relationship that is broken. When it comes to repairing relationships, no one responds well to being convinced, coerced, convicted, or controlled. Yet we try those approaches over and over again.

Fixing a broken relationship is not intuitive, it is a learned skill; and if we are Jesus' followers, reconciling relationships is not optional, so it's a skill we need to learn. The Apostle Paul tells us that we need to have the same mindset as Christ Jesus in our relationships: Jesus humbled himself so that we could be reconciled to our heavenly Father.

QUESTIONS

1. If someone were to examine your past (and perhaps current) strained relationships, what grade would they give you in terms of the effort you put into repairing those relationships? Why?
2. Which of these four relational tools we talked about in the sermon do you reach for first when conflict arises: convince, coerce, convict, or control?
3. Do you have friends or family members who are estranged from members of their families? From where you sit what's keeping the feuds alive?
4. If you are estranged from a friend or family member what's stopping you from taking steps to repair it?
5. Read Philippians 2:1-8 (on page 1). What stands out to you? How could applying some of the phrases you read help you take steps in repairing a relationship?

FINAL APPLICATION

This week, think about a broken relationship you have and ask yourself this question: “What’s stopping me from trying?”