

Asking for a Friend | The Relationship Questions

Ryan Bramlett | John 13:33-34

Alright Traders Point, welcome. How are you guys doing? My name is Ryan and I am the campus pastor at our Downtown campus. I'm honored to be here today. I just want to extend a special welcome to everyone. It's pretty wild that we have people meeting all over our city. So from here in the room at Northwest to North, Downtown, and Northwest, to everyone in the room welcome. Thank you so much for carving out some of your time and being here with us today.

Today we're kicking off a brand new series of messages titled *Asking for a Friend*. I'll go first. I'm going to put one out there. I'm asking for a friend—have you ever been in this situation? How many times do you have to ask someone to repeat themselves before you just give up? How many times do you ask someone to repeat themselves before you just smile, nod, laugh, and hope what they said was a joke and it doesn't require a response.

"I'm sorry, one more time?"

"I beg your pardon?"

"Oh, okay, yeah, yeah, yeah," and I have no idea what they just said.

I'm going to put another one out there and maybe you have an answer to this. Does the five second rule apply to all foods? Is there a sub-category of foods that it only works for? Like if you drop a chip on the ground, for sure you pick the chip up and you eat it. But what if you drop like Jell-O on the floor? Is it still covered under the five second rule? I don't know.

If you're here, maybe you're wanting answers to those questions as well. I hope you find them. But in this series we're going to be taking a different approach. What we've done is we've taken a bunch of questions from you guys that you've submitted over the past few months and looked at the most frequently asked questions we've gotten as a church. We're going to try to answer as many as we can.

And before we jump into the set of questions we're going to look at today, I want to put something out there. I want everyone to hear this. This is a safe place for your questions; this is a safe place for conversations.

Like I said, we're going to answer as many as we can but I want you to know this is a safe place for that. Somehow along the way there has been this stigma attached to questions specifically within the church. It's like somehow questions or doubts are a bad thing, or you should hold onto them and have more faith.

But we really believe we have good, strong answers to some of life's biggest questions and we're not going to shy away from them. So if that is you, I want you to know this is a safe place for all of that. For some situations, and maybe you're in one right now, you know there is not necessarily a simple answer. That's where conversations are so great.

But for today we're going to be under this umbrella of relationships. This is the one with all the relationship questions. What we're going to do is take a look at some of the most frequently asked questions we've gotten, then look at the Bible to see what it says, to see what Jesus says and how we should handle relationships.

And lucky for us Jesus says a lot about relationships. So no matter where your spot is in this room, whether you would say you believe in Jesus and believe he is God, or you would say you are not so sure just yet, you wouldn't go that far, none of us can avoid the fact that he changed the game when it comes to relationships.

From his time on earth his wild teachings birthed a whole new way of life. It changed our relationships with one another, it changed how we view ourselves, and it changed marriages. It was a really big deal, and nothing has been the same since.

So what we're going to do is jump in and see what he says. I want to go to this one Scripture to set us up. It's going to be the framework for everything we look at today, and it's this kind of love that can be found in our relationships. It is in John 13. If you have a Bible, you can get there but if not everything will be on the screen behind me.

What's going on here is Jesus is leaving, he is about to leave earth, and he is talking to people he is in relationship with. These are people who saw him do incredible things, love people like they had never seen done before.

And this is what he leaves them with, and what he leaves all of us with. Jesus says, "So now I'm giving you a new commandment." I'm giving you a new way to live, a new way to approach relationships. "Love each other. **Just as I have loved you, you should love each other.** Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples."

This is big. So Jesus in these few lines sets it really clear for us. He says: I want you to love others, and then he goes and defines this kind of love. So this isn't a love we get to decide on. It's not based on our emotions or how we are doing that week. He says: No, I want you to love people like I have loved you.

This is a big kind of love. What he is calling us to do, this is big love. This is a self-sacrificial love. This is a love that comes in and serves people. This is a love that comes in and carries the burdens of other people. This is a love that says, "I love you so much that I'm even willing to die for you."

This is a big and heavy, crazy, wild love. Jesus says: Yeah, that's the kind of love I want you to take to the world. Then he shows us why this is such a big deal and why we approach our relationships with this kind of love. He says: This is the proof. This is the proof of who I am and all I have done. This is the proof of my love. This is how the world will come to know who I am. It's through your love and through your relationships.

So relationships are actually going to be the lens through which people come to know Jesus. Relationships will be how we showcase God's love. This is a big deal.

Don't get me wrong. If you're in the room and you don't believe in Jesus, I truly believe what he says about relationships will practically help your relationships starting today. But for those of us in the room who do say that Jesus is God and follow after him, we don't have an option. Our mission and relationships are tied together.

That's why it's so important that we have healthy relationships. That's why it's so important that we don't stand for things like gossip. That's why it's so important we address situations as they come—so we can have healthy and loving relationships. This is going to be how the world knows who Jesus is.

That kind of leads us to the first question we've got: How do I handle conflict in a healthy way?

And this is a reasonable question because if you know anything about people and loving people, it's only a matter of time before conflict arises. People are messy. We're not the best. A situation is going to come and there is going to be conflict. So what do we do when that comes?

What I want to do is point to a short illustration that Jesus shows. He uses this one key factor that would completely change all of our relationships if we would start applying it today. Go ahead and take a look at this story Jesus tells, and then I'll explain what is going on here.

Jesus says in Matthew 5:23, "If you are presenting a sacrifice at the altar in the Temple and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, leave your sacrifice there at the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God."

So what is going on here? Jesus is giving this teaching about what should happen when there is a conflict. And the word and this big thing he puts in there is this idea of urgency in handling it. And it's amplified by the situation he gives us.

He says: If you are in line at the Temple. It's important to know some context here. If you are in line at that Temple chances are you would have traveled a long distance from towns and cities away. You would have been standing in a very long line. And this wasn't any line. This was your chance to go before God, to take your sacrifice to him. But Jesus says: Even in that moment, drop everything and go and handle the conflict right now and right away.

Now, I'm going to speak for myself and maybe it applies to you, but that's very different than I oftentimes address conflict. If anything it's not urgent. It is the opposite. I wait. I downplay it and hope that it goes away, instead of completely going after it.

And I've seen enough mean things posted by other people. In running away from conflict, running away from problems, I've seen enough. If I see one more post like, "I'm done, I can't do it anymore. I'm just going to be a mermaid." Carol you can't be a mermaid. It's not in the cards. You've got to get back in here and we have to deal with these problems and situations.

Or these guys, "I'm done with it. I'm moving out. I'm living off the grid and I'm going to build a log cabin. I'm not dealing with people anymore, I'm done with it." Well, Stephen, you can't even change a tire so the thought of you going out and building a log cabin is just ridiculous. Get back in here. We need to handle these situations.

And the big thing Jesus says is to handle them quickly. They should be of top priority. Because it's not true, time does not heal all wounds. Add time to a wound and you get infection, you get problems, you get things built on top of it. You need to address the wound, go after it and handle the situation.

But as we're called to handle it, as we're called to go after the conflict, we're also called to go about it in a very specific way. We're supposed to be urgent, but that doesn't mean we come in hot. That doesn't mean we come in without grace.

The Bible talks about this a lot. It will kind of take two things that seem very different and put them together and they work perfectly. Like I want you to act fast, I want you to be urgent. But I also want you to go in with gentleness.

And a big one that it uses when talking about conflict is I want you to go in truth. I want you to go and address the situation, but I also want you to go in grace. And we need to have both of those when we are approaching a situation.

I love the way A.B. put it, it was like four years ago and our lead pastor was working through this and talking about stuff, "Give me truth without grace, and I can't hear you. Give me grace without truth, and it won't change me."

This is gold here. If we can take those things as we go into a relationship. When we know something is not right, something is not sitting right with us and we know there is a problem between us and someone else, we address it quickly and go in grace and truth. Think of it before you go into a situation. Write it down and say it out loud.

Ask the questions, "Is this all truth? Am I coming in too hot? Do I have any room for empathy or grace? Am I going to be able to lead them to something?" Or maybe you're on the other side. "Is this all grace? Am I really getting to the conflict, the point of why I want to have this conversation?" Because we should be able to beautifully marry those things together—an

urgency with grace and truth. And I think if we can apply those three things that will be a great start, and a great conversation starter for all of our relationships to be handled in a healthy way.

So that's the first question that came through. The second question, and it's a big one, came through more than any other question: Should a believer date/marry an unbeliever?

This is one that comes through all the time. I've sat down with a lot of people and talked to people on staff. This is a big one that is not going away. So maybe if you've heard that question or you've seen it, you were thinking, "I've got to say, that question is not for me," I would just say, "Give it time."

This question is one that is going to be looking at all of us at one time or another. It's going to come from a friend, a brother, son, daughter, nephew, or cousin. This question is coming. So let's talk about it.

Should a Christian date someone who does not share the same beliefs? It's a great question. And I talk with people about this question all the time. There are usually a few justifiers as to why they are doing it. A big one is, "I'm doing it—I'm in this relationship because I think Jesus is using me to get them to God."

And I would say, "For sure, I think God could use you to get them to Jesus." From what I've seen that is usually God's plan A. That's how he gets people closer to himself.

What I would ask though is: Is there anything specific about the relationship piece that is helping in this equation or can it just be a friendship from the beginning and then you can tell them about Jesus. If it builds into something more, then it can. Or, can you take a step back and move into a friendship. Those are some great questions I would ask in a conversation. Those are big ones.

I would say the biggest one though is this. When I sit down with someone who says, "We talked about it and I let him know where I stand, I let him know my faith is important. I'm cool with it, he's cool with it." I'd say, "Cool. I'm glad everybody is cool with it."

But what I would say is, "Cool doesn't stay cool for long because what is cool is fine when it's yours, when it's your money and you're sending some of your money to the church. That's fine. Or when it's your time and you're saying, 'I'm spending this night at group and going to church on Sunday.'" That's fine. It's your time.

But when it moves from yours to ours, when it's not just your money but our money, what do you plan on doing with it? And when it's not just your time, but our time together—we're in a relationship and are married it becomes, "Why are you going there again? Do you really need to do that? Tell me again why you go every single Sunday? Is it really that big of a deal?" And

then when you have kids more pressure gets added to it. "I don't know if I believe they should be raised going there."

So cool stops being cool really quick. And in marriage things that are cool don't last. It's only things both people are willing to fight for like crazy. Those are the things that last.

And just at a very practical level, think about how unfair it is if you are in a relationship with someone who doesn't believe what you believe. What you are doing is asking them to be okay with the fact that nine times out of 10 a decision you make is going to be filtered through something they don't even believe in.

Think about the tension that is going to be there because seeing everything through one lens, like seeing everything through the lens of Jesus, that's a very unique way to see things. Most people make decisions based on different criteria. Like, I make these decisions about my family because of this. I make these decisions about work because of this. I make these decisions about my finances because of this.

It's a perfect setup for a huge headache. I want you to think about it like this. How many euchre fans do we have in the room today? Any euchre fans? I apologize to anyone who may just have moved here from out of town or you are watching online. From what I've seen, euchre is pretty much an Indiana, mid-west, game.

But here is what euchre is. Euchre is a game you play with couples and what you are trying to do is get as many books, win as many hands as possible. The way you do this is you have the highest card, and the highest card wins.

Now what makes euchre challenging is the fact that in every hand trump changes. So the high card on the table changes every single hand. It could be clubs, spades, hearts, or diamonds. You have to pay attention and that changes the strategy of how you are going to approach the game.

That's very different than a game like spades. In a game like spades, it doesn't matter whose hand it is, who dealt, what is going on. I know a spade is a spade and the spade is the highest card that I'm going to be able to play and it is acknowledged by everyone as the highest card.

Now think about your relationships through that context. Think about how if you are going into this situation and they are approaching it saying, "This is the high card for finances, this is the high card for work, and this is the high card for family." And you keep holding up this Jesus card like, "No, this is the trump card. This is the highest card there is." Think about how frustrating it would be. It would be like two people playing two different games.

But now imagine it's not a game, but your life. And it's every decision and every day. Think of the tension that is going to be built up. Think of how hard it is going to be to have a healthy relationship.

Usually what happens is one of two things. I'm going to speak from a Christian perspective here. Either, as a Christian, you're going to begin to hide who you are—you'll realize that Jesus isn't the high card that can be put down, it's not even a card that is acknowledged so you stop playing it. What you do is move Jesus out of the center of your life, out to the margins, and you keep that person who you are in a relationship with as the center. You begin to adopt new filters and reasons you make decisions. That's one that doesn't lead to a healthy relationship between you and Jesus.

Or second, you say, "You know what? I'm going to stand firm. I don't care what game you are playing. I don't care why you make the decisions you do. God's authority is my final authority. He did everything for me. I'm going to do and live in a way that is honoring to him. Jesus all day, I'm playing this card."

That sounds awesome and great for you and Jesus, but what it does to that person you are in a relationship with is it pushes him out into the margins. And now you don't have a close relationship with him. How could you? Because every time you're making a decision he can't understand where you are coming from. So you lose empathy and in that gap you build up resentment and pain.

Like I said, neither one usually ends with a healthy relationship.

Some of you know my story. I was not a Christian until I met a girl I was dating and she brought me here for the first time. It worked out, obviously. I'm here. I believe in Jesus, I promise. But even with that, even in that relationship where Jesus was brought up from the very beginning, it still added some extra tension. It still added some extra conversations that made things more complicated.

I remember having a conversation with her like a month in, and I was trying to understand how big of a deal faith was. I got Jesus, but didn't understand how big it was. I said, "If I stop going to church or if I didn't believe in Jesus, would you date me?"

I remember her saying, "No, I wouldn't date you. I would be your friend. I would be there for you, but I wouldn't be in that kind of a relationship with you."

I said, "Wow."

I remember a few months in she left to go on a trip and it was going to be the first time I was going to church by myself. I was wrestling through questions like, "Am I going to go to church by myself? I've never done that before. What does that look like? Is this thing really real for me?" It just adds a lot of pressure.

I know my story is not just for me. There are a lot of people in this room who would say you were brought by someone else, you started in a relationship with someone else, and now you

have come to know Jesus. What I am not saying is that God can't work in any and every circumstance. What I'm not saying is that God can't reach you right where you are.

But what I am saying is that, as Christians, as people who are following Jesus, we're not trying to put God to the test. We're not trying to make it a really tough circumstance for him to come in and save the day. But we're trying to setup clear boundaries. We're trying to set this thing up so we can have healthy relationships, not throw up "Hail Mary" passes to God and hope and pray he shows up. We can do some work on the front end.

I also want to say that if you are here and that is you, that you're working through a relationship and maybe you've noticed for a while now that things aren't working right, you're feeling some of the tension of not being able to relate to him or her, and you just feel God calling on you to say, "This isn't the time for this relationship," if that is you, please don't leave here and hit someone with a cold text or just do a drive-by and say, "Hey, you don't believe what I believe so bye. See ya." That is not a way to handle a relationship with grace and truth. That is a cold response that is not going to lead anyone to Jesus.

But instead, sit down and talk with them practically, not necessarily even spiritually, because you can't use something they don't believe in. Get practical with it. Explain what we were just talking about. "If nine times out of ten I'm going to make a decision based on this and you don't believe in it, I feel like that is going to add a lot of tension to our relationship. I don't think this is going to end well for us. What do you think?" And have a conversation, ask questions. It will really set you up for what is coming next.

What if I'm already married to someone who doesn't believe? Some of you are in the room and you are saying, "Man, that's not my position either. I'm not just dating someone, I'm married. I'm married to someone who doesn't believe what I believe."

I know there are people in the room who got here different ways. For some of you, when you both got together you were Christians, but along the way one of you walked away. For others of you, you were both not Christians and when you got into it you realized and found Jesus, but he or she never did. And you are living with some of those tensions. You're dealing with some of that pain right now. And it may be a really difficult spot.

I want to point to the Bible really quick because it looks right at this and addresses this issue. Take a look with me, and then we'll kind of break it down from there. This is in 1 Corinthians, 12. "If a fellow believer has a wife who is not a believer and she is willing to continue living with him, he must not leave her. And if a believing woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to continue living with her, she must not leave him.

"For the believing wife brings holiness to her marriage, and the believing husband brings holiness to his marriage. Otherwise, your children would not be holy, but now they are holy. (But if the husband or wife who isn't a believer insists on leaving, let them go. In such

cases the believing husband or wife is no longer bound to the other, for God has called you to live in peace.)”

Here it is. And if this is the situation you are in right now, hear these words. “Don’t you wives realize that your husbands might be saved because of you? And don’t you husbands realize that your wives might be saved because of you?”

So if you’re in that situation right now, and you know the tension, and maybe you’re in this place where you say, “I am done trying. I am done inviting them to church. I’m done talking about Jesus. It doesn’t go anywhere, and falls on deaf ears.” I just want you to hear these words—don’t you realize? Don’t you realize that that could be the conversation? Don’t you realize that could be the prayer? Don’t you realize that could be the invitation that goes to getting them back to Jesus?

And even in this situation where it may seem dark, I want you to know that you may not have ever been closer to the heart of God. This is how God treats us, approaches us, even when we turn away and even when we don’t believe in him. He is right there every single step of the way, hoping and praying we would turn around and meet him.

So if you are in that room, you are in that place right now, don’t give up hope. This next conversation, this next prayer, the way you live, the way you love, the way you talk about Jesus could be the thing that changes everything for him or her. God’s not done working on them or in their story.

And for others of us in the room, you’ve kind of moved past that and now you are in a spot where you’re divorced, the marriage is over and maybe it has been for a while. Maybe you’re approaching that and about to sign the papers. I just want you to know we are here for you. Out of time, I won’t be able to get to this one this week, but this is one of those complicated issues that might be better for a conversation.

So if that is you and you are going through this, I just want you to know you’re not alone. We are here for you and we have great resources. We would love to set you up with a counselor to talk through some of the steps. So if that is you, please know we’re here for you. You are not alone.

The last question we are going to tackle, the last question that leads to a subset of questions—don’t get too excited, we’ve got a little bit of time—it’s one that came through and it came through a lot. And the way it was usually phrased was this: What does the Bible say about being single?

In all of the rooms right now, make some noise if you are single. Clap your hands and give a shout. There are lots of us. Let your eyes follow those claps and go, ask for yourself not your friends, and get you a date at the end of this thing. I’m kidding, kind of.

But I do want to say to all the single people in the place that I'm sorry if sometimes it gets weird or awkward for you a lot of times by stuff like I just did where I singled you out for being single. A lot of times in church the conversation can be reduced to that really quickly. As soon as I find out someone is single, it immediately moves to, "I have the perfect person for you," or "Oh, you need to meet my nephew," or my brother, or my second cousin, "He'd be great for you."

At times I'm sure it feels like, "Am I just waiting to get into that relationship? Is that going to be the thing that does it for me?" I just want you to know if you are here and you're single, that's not it. Marriage is not graduating to anything. It is not something you step into and then it changes you. You are perfectly made by God. The marriage piece is not going to add anything to that.

And I think we need to take back what singleness is. Because the way the Bible talks about it, it actually calls it a very specific word: Singleness is a gift.

And I don't know if there is anyone in one of the rooms today who is working through that or struggling with this idea of being single and wondering, "What does it mean?" Or, "How do I approach it?" Singleness is a gift. We're going to read this Scripture really quick here in a second. I want you to know this is coming from someone who was single. This isn't someone from the outside speaking into it and saying singleness is a gift.

Some of the most prominent people in our faith, Jesus being one of them—he was single his whole lifetime—and Paul, someone who planted so many churches and wrote a lot of the Bible that we read, he was single for a lifetime. And he is the one who, looking out and seeing marriages, looking out and seeing everything, looking out and seeing all the work he has done says: Singleness is a gift.

This is the reason why. Go ahead and take a look with me at 1 Corinthians 7:32-33. "I want you to be free from the concerns of this life. An unmarried man can spend his time doing the Lord's work and thinking how to please him. But a married man has to think about his earthly responsibilities and how to please his wife. His interests are divided."

Now this is what Paul is saying here. This is the gift that you have of being single—you can be single-minded in your pursuits. And he says that what you are able to do, being able to go straight after these things, is actually a gift.

Even in a marriage where both people believe in Jesus, it still complicates things. You still have two people, two schedules, two emotions, two passions and everything coming together and they're trying to figure out, "How do I serve God, how do I serve them, how do I serve the people around me?"

Paul says this is actually going to throw them into a set of problems he wouldn't wish for them, and that you don't have to have as a single person. You can be single-minded in your pursuits. You can be direct, agile, and move in ways married people can't.

Now I want to make sure we clear this up. This does not mean because you are single, you're schedule is open. What it is saying is because you are single, you're schedule is yours and you can invest in relationships like other people can't. You can be there faster, and you can be more mobile in these circumstances. That's what it is saying.

It is saying it is a gift to be single. Don't let anyone tell you otherwise, because what singleness isn't is a waiting block. What singleness isn't is you waiting until you're in that relationship and then life starts, like somehow that's when God begins to use you. That's not true. Marriage is not two halves becoming whole. It's two people coming together, but you need to see that you are whole right now.

God made you an image bearer. That is you. Attaching yourself to anything else could never add to that. Jesus has already determined and placed your worth right there. You don't have to wait for anything.

But in this season as you are growing, as you are having conversations, talk about it. Talk about the gift of singleness. Be honest with it. Be open with it. Talk through it with both married and single people. See the gifts and leverage them. Use this season in your life to reach more and more people for God to take more ground for the Kingdom.

I believe that. That could happen if we could get back the gift of singleness and not see it as a stigma, a waiting block, but really as somewhere where God is going to use you like crazy. Open yourself up and leverage yourself to reach more and more people for Jesus. The truth is that the works you're doing now within yourself, growing closer to God, those are incredible things.

Marriage isn't going to be the thing that fixes you. I always get a little tense and a little worried when I am talking to someone and they are like, "I really want to get married. I've struggled for a long time with loneliness. I know if I get married, if I had someone with me, I wouldn't be lonely anymore." I'm just thinking, "Marriage is incredible, but it's not going to be the thing that cures your loneliness."

Or I'll be talking with someone and they will say, "I'm really looking forward to marriage because I'm just a really selfish person. I'll be honest. I'm selfish, I want what I want, and I can't wait to get married." I'm just like, "Oh yeah?" For sure marriage doesn't cure selfishness. I'm still working through that one.

Marriage doesn't fix anything. But it exposes everything. Marriage maybe does a better job than anything else of opening us up to things we know about: flaws we have, struggles that we have, inadequacies we're working through and flaws we didn't know we had and didn't know were a problem. Marriage exposes everything, it doesn't fix anything.

I love the way Tim Keller talks about it in his book *The Meaning of Marriage*. He says that when he sits down with someone in pre-marital counseling he says to think about it like this. Think

about a beautiful bridge, just the scenic picture of a bridge over a stream. From a distance the bridge looks beautiful, perfect, and great. Nothing your eye can see would tell you any different until you get up close and personal.

If you really got in there and looked down, you could see some structural defects. You could see some flaws on that bridge if you got up close and personal. For most of the people, they couldn't see them.

Now imagine that same bridge is sitting there and a ten-ton Mack truck drives over the bridge. What's going to happen? Well those small hairline fractures, those things you couldn't see before, they would begin to be exposed. And you'd be able to see them better than ever. Did the truck create them? No. They were already there. The truck exposed them, and marriage is a ten-ton Mack truck that will expose everything you've got going on.

But it's even bigger than that. Marriage isn't the only thing that reveals that we have hairline fractures. Marriage isn't the only thing that reveals we're coming up short in a few places, we have flaws. Marriage is a big one, but anytime at all, in any relationship we see in singleness, we will begin to feel that spot where something is not complete, "I'm off just a little bit." Then we begin to look for other things to pull us back together, to put some cement into those cracks. We begin to look at other people and other relationships, or we look to ourselves.

I believe that so many people, they don't necessarily fall out of love but they get crushed by the weight of it. It's when you come underneath someone and you look to someone to truly fulfill you, to take away the pains and struggles.

Or you look to yourself. And you say, "If I could just do a little bit more, if I could be a little better then all of this would go and I would feel fulfilled."

We have to get to this place where we realize that healthy relationships with ourselves and with others, they don't happen until we get to a relationship with Jesus. Until we get to a relationship with Jesus where we say he is enough, nothing else will ever be. I just want to put this question out there. If you are here, I want to ask you this question. Answer it truthfully.

Is Jesus enough?

Do you believe he is sufficient in every single way? Do you believe he is with you every step of the way? Do you believe he is with you in your single life right now? No matter if you are dealing with the question of am I going to die alone? The answer is no. You are going to have Jesus with you every single step of the way, so you will never be alone. Or maybe you're in the situation of, "Is my spouse ever going to come to know Jesus?"

If I am looking at Jesus and know he is sufficient, I know he is not done working. I know he is working with me, he is there every step of the way and I have comfort. He can fulfill me. We have to stop looking around to these other things, hoping and praying that they will do it

because they won't. This is a rat race. It's one that will never end, and it's one we don't have to participate in.

So if you're here today, maybe it's the first time you are asking that question. Is Jesus enough? I want you to know you can start that relationship today. We would love to meet you and talk with you about what it looks like to love and follow Jesus.

For all of us in the room right now, working through different spots in the relationship spectrum, working through singleness, marriage, broken relationships—the whole thing comes to this spot where we see it won't be a marriage that fulfills us, it won't be the gift of singleness, it won't even be if we restore that broken relationship from a long time ago.

It's only going to be when we come to Jesus and say, "Jesus, I believe you are sufficient. I believe you've done it all." If we come to that spot and we have that relationship, that relationship will bleed over into every other relationship. That kind of love will not stay here. That kind of love will be what we showcase to the world. That kind of love will be how the world will come to know who Jesus is. That's why relationships are so powerful, because relationships can change the world. Don't give up where you are, take the love of Jesus everywhere you go.

So what I want to do right now is pray as we go into a time of communion, a time to reflect on what we just heard. I'm going to lead us in a prayer, a prayer that new relationships with Jesus would be started, old ones would be restored, and this world would come to know Jesus by our love.

So pray with me.

God, we thank you for today. We thank you for this kind of love, this big, incredible love that you've laid out there for us to accept. God, I pray that we could latch on to that kind of love, we would accept that love, that we wouldn't look for it anywhere else. That we would let it fulfill us and be sufficient in you.

God, I pray that because of that every relationship would be different. God, I pray that because of that more and more people would come to know you. God, be with us over these next few moments and help us get closer to you. Lead us to you. Help us to ask questions and have conversations with you, Jesus. It's in your perfect name that we pray. Amen.