

CONNECTIVITY PROBLEMS



STUDY GUIDE

Restoring Connection in Our Relationships

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INTIMACY

**NO SERVICE
LOADING...PLEASE WAIT
UNABLE TO CONNECT TO THE INTERNET
POOR CONNECTION**

These are all frustrating phrases to see on our devices. When we get them, we rush to address the problem and restore connection. But what about when our relational connections fail us? We need strong connection with others more than we need a strong Wi-Fi signal. Yet, many of us have connectivity problems in our relationships that can't be resolved by unplugging and plugging back in.

**People were the most important thing to Jesus
and He loved them well.**



COMMUNICATION



Let's Connect – Telephone

The first person whispers a short phrase to the person next to them. Whisper the phrase around the circle. The last player in the circle says the phrase out loud for everyone to hear. See how close you can get to the original phrase. Play a few rounds to practice your communication skills!

CAN YOU
HEAR ME
NOW?

Unable to Connect

Jenna has been feeling overwhelmed with work and personal obligations, causing her to become increasingly stressed and distant from her husband, Adam. Adam can tell she is stressed. He plans a special weekend getaway for the two of them in Kansas City, hoping to cheer her up. Instead of feeling grateful, Jenna is frustrated. She just wanted to get some rest this weekend, get some stuff done around the house, and not have any obligations or plans.

Jenna: "The last thing I want to do is go on a trip this weekend!"

Adam: "I was trying to help. You never appreciate what I do for you."

Jenna: "I didn't want a trip though. You never listen to me."

Adam: "Yes, I do. I knew you were having a bad week."

Jenna: "You don't understand."

Adam: "Whatever. This is the last time I try to do something thoughtful!"



The couple's conversation quickly escalates into a heated argument, leaving both feeling hurt and misunderstood.

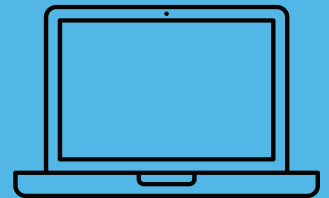
What communication failures happened in this scenario?

"My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry." -James 1:9

How could this wisdom from James have helped Jenna and Adam communicate better?

Ephesians 4:15 says, "We will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ."

What could it look like for Jenna to speak "the truth in love" here? What could it look like for Adam to speak "the truth in love"?

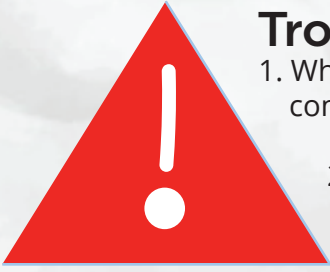


WATCH

Watch this week's video on [YouTube.com/weomaha](https://www.youtube.com/weomaha)

Playlists:
Connectivity Problems
Week 1





Troubleshooting

1. What are some common causes of miscommunication or communication failures between people?
2. What is your biggest struggle with communication? *For example, not listening well, making assumptions, passive aggressive comments, avoiding difficult conversations, not being fully honest, etc.*
3. How have you navigated and resolved a recent miscommunication or failure in communication with someone close to you? What steps did you take to address the issue and rebuild trust in the relationship?

Technical Support Center

“No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thornbushes, or grapes from briars. A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.”

-Luke 6:43-45 NIV



How have you observed a correlation between a person’s spoken words and the state of their heart?

The mouth speaks what the heart is full of.
In what ways can you actively cultivate goodness in your heart in order to speak more good words to others?



Technical Support Center

Read these three different translations of Ephesians 4:29.

Do not let any ***unwholesome*** talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. -Ephesians 4:29 NIV

Don't use ***foul or abusive language***. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them. -Ephesians 4:29 NLT

Let no ***corrupting*** talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. -Ephesians 4:29 ESV

What specific types of words is Paul instructing us to avoid using?
What are some examples of what this sounds like?

What specific types of words is Paul encouraging us to use?
What are some examples of what this sounds like?



Reconnecting

Who is someone you've been struggling to communicate well with?
Could be a family member, friend, coworker, etc.

What is one biblical principle of healthy communication from this study that you will practice in this relationship this week?

**KIND WORDS CAN BE SHORT
AND EASY TO SPEAK; BUT THEIR
ECHOES ARE TRULY ENDLESS.**

-Mother Teresa

A Strong Connection

Pair up with someone in your group and exchange prayer requests for the week.

Practice effective communication this week by reaching out to your partner sometime this week to let them know you're praying for them and follow up on this prayer request.

_____ 's Prayer Requests:



COMMUNICATE

like Jesus

Each day reflect on the following questions:

What do you notice about how Jesus communicates in each of these situations?

What is one application from Jesus' example that we could apply in our lives?

Day 1:

Matthew 13:1-13

Day 2:

John 4:1-30

Day 3:

Matthew 16:5-12

Day 4:

Matthew 12:33-37

Day 5:

Luke 24:13-34

CONFLICT

**VIRUS
DETECTED
IN THE
SYSTEM**

Let's Connect – The Great Debate

Pick one person to be the representative for each side. The two debaters have two minutes each to make a case for their side. Have the group vote on the most convincing argument.

- Huskers Football or Another Football Team? (debater picks their team!)
- Movie Theater or Movie at Home?
- Live Sporting Event or Live Concert?

Unable to Connect

Scott and Ted have been good friends for years, but recently can't stop bickering about politics. They disagree on just about every issue. No matter where the conversation starts, it always seems to end with arguing and demeaning one another. They miss spending time and talking with their friend, but it has become too hard to be in the same room together. Feelings have been hurt and words have wounded. Their arguments have affected their family and friends. They're not sure if the friendship will ever be restored.

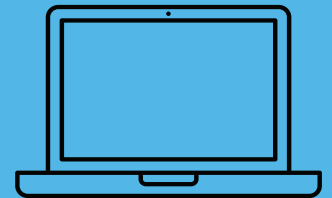
The Book of Proverbs gives us a lot of wisdom about dealing with conflict.

How could each of the following Proverbs help Scott and Ted repair their friendship?

*"A hot-tempered person stirs up conflict, but the one who is patient calms a quarrel."
-Proverbs 15:18*

*"Without wood, a fire goes out; without a gossip, a quarrel dies down."
-Proverbs 26:20*

*"Where there is strife, there is pride, but wisdom is found in those who take advice."
-Proverbs 13:10*



WATCH

Watch this week's video on [YouTube.com/weomaha](https://www.youtube.com/weomaha)

Playlists:
Connectivity Problems
Week 2





Troubleshooting

1. When it comes to conflict, would you label yourself avoidant, accommodating, or aggressive? Why? How does this affect how you handle conflict?
2. Conflict is a natural part of relationships, but our actions can determine whether it is constructive or destructive. What causes conflict to become destructive?
3. How can conflict be constructive and healthy? What strategies or practices have helped you navigate and resolve conflict in a healthy way?

Technical Support Center

Jesus dealt with plenty of conflict.

Read Matthew 22:15-22. How does Jesus handle this conflict? How can we apply Jesus' approach to conflict resolution in this story to our own experiences of conflict?

Read Mark 9:33-37. How does Jesus resolve the argument between the disciples? In what ways does pride contribute to and exacerbate conflicts? How can we practice humility in our disagreements and conflicts?

Read Mark 8:11-13. Sometimes Jesus engaged in conflict, but in this story Jesus leaves the situation. Why do you think Jesus decided to walk away from this conflict instead of engaging? When is the appropriate moment to disengage or remove oneself from a conflict?



Technical Support Center

Don't hit back; discover beauty in everyone. If you've got it in you, get along with everybody. Don't insist on getting even; that's not for you to do. "I'll do the judging," says God. "I'll take care of it."

Our Scriptures tell us that if you see your enemy hungry, go buy that person lunch, or if he's thirsty, get him a drink. Your generosity will surprise him with goodness. Don't let evil get the best of you; get the best of evil by doing good.

-Romans 12:17-21 MSG

What aspect of this teaching from Paul is challenging or difficult for you?

Don't let evil get the best of you; get the best of evil by doing good.

How have you seen or personally experienced this principle in action?

Reconnecting

Who is someone you are currently in conflict with? Could be a family member, friend, coworker, etc. What is the root cause of the conflict?



What is one biblical principle of healthy conflict from this study that you will practice in this relationship this week?

**TRUE UNITY IS NOT THE ABSENCE OF
CONFLICT, BUT THE PRESENCE OF
LOVE AND GRACE IN THE MIDST OF IT.**

-Tim Keller

A Strong Connection

Pair up with someone in your group and exchange prayer requests for a conflict you are experiencing right now.

Reach out to your partner sometime this week to let them know you're praying for them and follow up on this prayer request.



_____ 's Prayer Requests:

HANDLE CONFLICT

like Jesus

Each day reflect on the following questions:

How does Jesus handle conflict in each of these situations?

What is one application from Jesus' example that we could apply in our lives?

Day 1:

Luke 4:1-13

Day 2:

Matthew 12:1-8

Day 3:

Luke 11:37-54

Day 4:

Luke 14:1-14

Day 5:

Luke 22:47-53

FORGIVENESS

**REBOOT
REQUIRED
TO
INSTALL
NEW
UPDATES**



Let's Connect – Let it Go?

Discuss the following situations.

Would you easily let it go or would you need an apology from this person?

1. Microwaved fish in the work kitchen
2. Hit your car with their car door in the parking lot
3. Missed your birthday
4. Dropped your phone and cracked the screen
5. Borrowed something and lost it
6. Threw away something you wanted to save
7. Said your favorite athlete/team/musician was bad
8. Stopped for coffee/snack before meeting you and forgot to ask if you wanted anything
9. Posted a picture on social media where they look good, but you look bad
10. Bailed on plans at the last second

Unable to Connect

Brad and Elaine have two teenage sons. One needs a car and one needs college tuition. Brad and Elaine have committed to a tighter budget to pull it off, but Brad really wanted this new golf club. He decided to buy it without telling Elaine, but she found out. Brad apologized and Elaine said she forgave him, but she is still struggling with anger and bitterness. Brad is frustrated that Elaine says she's forgiven him, but still holds it against him. He doesn't know what else he can do to make it up to her and restore trust.



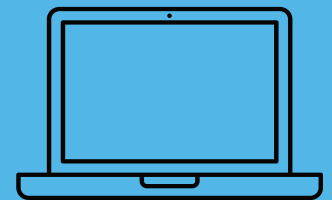
Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?" "No, not seven times," Jesus replied, "but seventy times seven!"

- Matthew 18:21-22 NLT

Why do you think Jesus responds to Peter's questions this way? What is it teaching us about forgiveness?

In Luke 17:5, the disciples respond to Jesus' teaching about forgiveness by saying, "Show us how to increase our faith!"

They recognized that forgiveness is hard. How can strengthening our faith help us to genuinely forgive others?



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Playlists:
Connectivity Problems
Week 3





Troubleshooting

1. Which is harder for you – forgiving others for hurting you or accepting forgiveness for yourself when you mess up?
2. How does it affect you when you're unable to forgive someone?
3. What practices have helped you find genuine forgiveness and restore a relationship after someone has deeply hurt you?

Technical Support Center

"For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins."

-Matthew 6:14-15 NIV

Why do you think Jesus connects the forgiveness we offer to others and the forgiveness we receive from God?

In what ways can holding onto unforgiveness toward others hinder our own relationship with God?

Why do you think God cares so deeply about us forgiving others?

"When you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins."

-Mark 11:25 NIV



"Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

-Luke 6:37-38 NIV



Technical Support Center

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

-1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NIV

What does Paul's definition of love teach us about forgiveness?

Reconnecting

Who is someone you've been struggling to forgive? What is making forgiveness difficult?

What is one biblical principle of forgiveness from this study that you will practice in this relationship this week?

A Strong Connection

Pair up with someone in your group and pray for a relationship where you need to extend forgiveness or receive forgiveness.

A PRAYER TO FORGIVE

God,

Only you understand how much I've been hurt by this person.

I don't want to carry the pain for another second. I don't want to be a bitter person.

But I need your grace and the power of the cross to release my hurt and to forgive those who've hurt me.

Make today a turning point in our relationship. Today I'm turning to you, and I'm choosing to forgive the way you have forgiven me.

Every time the memory comes back, I'll forgive that person again until the pain is gone.

Heal my heart with your grace.

Amen.

A PRAYER TO BE FORGIVEN

God,

I need to experience Your forgiveness. You know all the ways I've hurt others, and I'm so sorry for my sins.

Jesus, thank You for dying for me. Help me accept Your grace and forgiveness,

I need it daily.

Get rid of the guilt and shame that I've been carrying.

Give me the words to apologize well and help me live out that apology in my actions.

Amen.

FORGIVE like Jesus

Each day reflect on the following questions:

What do you learn about forgiveness from Jesus in each of these situations?
What is one application from Jesus' example that we could apply in our lives?

Day 1:

Luke 7:36-50

Day 2:

John 8:1-11

Day 3:

Luke 15:11-32

Day 4:

Luke 23:32-43

Day 5:

John 21:12-17

INTIMACY

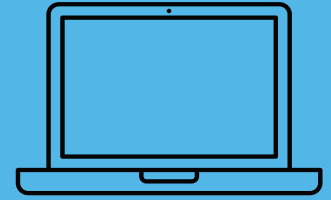
**OUT OF
RANGE
SIGNAL
NOT
FOUND**



Let's Connect – Find Someone Who... Bingo

Find someone in your group who matches each description in the box. Have them initial in the respective boxes that apply to them until you get a Bingo!

Been outside of USA	Oldest child in family	Pets (thumbs up)	Introvert	Doesn't drink coffee
Has read a full book this year	Work from Home is greater than Work in Office	Morning Person	Mountains are better than Beach	Dances at a wedding reception
Favorite season: Spring	Extrovert	Doesn't like ice breaker games	Good at math	Night Owl
Hates being late	Likes spicy food	Broken a bone	Collects something	Pets (thumbs down)
Regularly works out	Beach is better than Mountains	Likes costume parties	Youngest child in family	Loves to cook



WATCH

Watch this week's video on [YouTube.com/weomaha](https://www.youtube.com/weomaha)

Playlists:
Connectivity Problems
Week 4



Unable to Connect

Dave and Judy have been married for 38 years. Their three kids are grown and live out of state. Dave and Judy have their own hobbies and their own friends that keep them busy. They go to dinner every Friday, but mostly talk about their grandkids, the latest Husker game, and the annoying construction on Q St.

Judy has been feeling lonely and wishes their relationship was closer. Dave feels dissatisfied and wants to reimagine what retirement looks like for them. Neither one has told the other one how they feel though. They both feel stuck with their situation and feelings.

What are some possible reasons why Dave and Judy may not be sharing how they really feel?



Troubleshooting

1. How comfortable are you, on a scale of 1 to 10, with being open and honest about your feelings and emotions to other people?
2. Why do we often find it scary or uncomfortable to be vulnerable and have intimate conversations with others?
3. How can we be a friend that encourages and invites people to be vulnerable and authentic with us?
4. How can we cultivate deeper intimacy in our relationships?

Technical Support Center

Jesus went with His disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and He said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. He said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."

-Matthew 26:36-38 NIV

Jesus often prayed alone, but for this painful moment He brought His friends.

Why do you think Jesus wanted them there while He prayed?



Technical Support Center

What this adds up to, then, is this: no more lies, no more pretense. Tell your neighbor the truth. In Christ's body we're all connected to each other, after all. When you lie to others, you end up lying to yourself.
-Ephesians 4:25 MSG

Pretense is the act of creating an outward impression that does not match our inward reality. In what ways do we do this in our relationships? Why do we do this?

What does the scripture mean by, "When you lie to others, you end up lying to yourself"?

How have you personally experienced this to be true?



Reconnecting

Who is someone you would feel comfortable being completely open and honest with?

PRACTICE **EMOTIONAL INTIMACY** THIS WEEK BY ASKING AND ANSWERING THESE THREE QUESTIONS:

1. How are you doing, really?
2. Are you growing closer or farther from God right now? Why?
3. How can I pray for you?

A Strong Connection

Pair up with someone in your group and exchange prayer requests for the week. Practice vulnerability by sharing an honest prayer request for yourself.



_____’s Prayer Requests:

PRACTICE **INTIMACY BY PRAYING OUT LOUD FOR YOUR PARTNER NOW.**

PRACTICE INTIMACY

like Jesus

Each day reflect on the following questions:

How does Jesus practice intimacy, vulnerability and authenticity in each of these situations?

What is one application from Jesus' example that we could apply in our lives?

Day 1:

John 20:24-29

Day 2:

John 13:1-17

Day 3:

Luke 8:43-48

Day 4:

John 11:17-45

Day 5:

Luke 10:38-42



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