



Group Leader Guide
“Storyline: Strategic Relationships” – Jim Burgen
March 21, 2021

Group Creed

We come together as a Group with the goal of Spiritual Formation; encouraging one another to become the same kind of person that Jesus is, so that we can live out every part of our lives inside of His Kingdom.

// Bible References

Matthew 5:37, Mark 14:7 and Matthew 16:13-23

// Storyline Recap

- **Compelling Vision:** The “why” in why you exist and the most important purpose for the life that God has given you.
- **Relentless Conviction:** I will hang onto and believe what God has said and promised about me is true.
- **Courageous Action:** Taking action. Doing new and different things so that you can experience a better, more abundant life. Fighting for the most important parts of your God-given vision.
- **Anointed Authority:** Acting on what Jesus has commanded instead of pursuing our own agendas.
- **Confident Humility:** Confidence in our value to God allowing us to humbly and obediently perform the lowest or greatest task.

// Message Summary

Jim’s message this weekend centers around our need to be strategic in all our relationships; putting God first, family next, followed by friends. Whether a “good” or “bad” relationship, each holds the possibility of pulling us away from fulfilling our Compelling Vision—what God has called us to do.

Jesus was very clear and strategic about his relationships. He kept his Compelling Vision first: dying on the cross for our sins, and he intentionally invested in his disciples—the ones who would carry on his mission. If anything got in the way of those strategic relationships, Jesus dealt with it—quickly. Sometimes that looked unloving or harsh, like the way he dealt with Peter (Matthew 16:13-23) and his hosts at a party (Mark 14:7). Jesus was unwaveringly strategic with his relationships in order to give us salvation.

In the end, we must be strategic in our relationships for the sake of fulfilling our Compelling Vision. If not, we will get pulled off-course and then have to deal with the consequences.

// Biblical Context

"Let Your Yes Be Yes..."

In Matthew 5:37, Jesus addresses some of the underlying principles of certain Old Testament laws. There are some cases in which a person could obey the letter of the law but still be guilty of breaking the principle. The Pharisees (religious bullies) and teachers were experts at keeping the letter of the law, but Jesus warns his followers that unless their righteousness surpassed that of the Pharisees and teachers of the law, they will never enter the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5:20). This statement would have shocked his followers because the Pharisees (and the teachers) were revered as paragons of obedience. Jesus points out that "technical" obedience is not enough if the spirit of the law is broken.

Peter: The Rock

In Matthew 16:18, Jesus appears to use a play on words. "You are Peter (petros) and on this rock (petra) I will build my church." Since Peter's name means "rock," and Jesus is going to build his church on a rock - it appears that Jesus is linking the two together. In the end, God really used Peter in the foundation of the church. Peter was the first to proclaim "The Gospel" on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-47). Peter was also the first to take the Gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 10:1-48). In a sense, Peter was the rock "foundation" of the church.

// Community Questions

1. What is your favorite movie or book and why?
2. Which characters do you relate to the most?

// Discussion Questions

1. In his message, Jim shared that all relationships bring an element of risk. Do you agree, and if so, where have you found this to be true?
2. Jim said good and bad relationships can be characterized with these words:
 - a. Good: trust, commitment, respect, vulnerability and ongoing honest communication.
 - b. Bad: distrust, inconsistent, disrespectful, dishonesty and manipulation.Can you share some of the good and bad relationships you've had and the end results?

3. Read Matthew 16:13-23 and Mark 14:1-20 as a group.
 - a. What stands out to you the most?
 - b. Is there anything confusing or troubling about these stories?
 - c. What do you think about the way Jesus responds to Peter in Matthew 16:17-20 vs. the way he responds to him in Matthew 16:23, and the way Jesus responds in Mark 14:7?
 - d. Where do you see Jesus being “strategic” in his relationships in these stories that kept him on task?
4. Jim also said, “Don’t try to get from anyone or anything what you can only get from God.” Where (if ever) have you found this to be true?

// Challenge

Take some intentional time this week to re-read the Bible verses from this week’s message, then pray—asking God to show you which relationships in your life you need to be strategic about.

// References

www.gotquestions.org