



Wise As-Week 3
“Avoiding Relational Suicide” – Jim Burgen
April 25, 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

Romans 5:20, Romans 6:1-2, Proverbs 11:22, Proverbs 31:10-11, Proverbs 21:19, Hebrews 10:25, Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

// Message Summary

This week, Jim encourages us to seek after God’s plan regarding relationships before we encounter the storms of life. God’s instructions are equivalent to a man building his house upon a steady foundation (a rock) versus building a house upon shifty, unstable ground (sand). Each house, because we live in a fallen world, will experience storms and challenges. However, the house that will be found standing is the one that has a steady foundation. One of those firm foundational principles is the value of God-led relationships. Jim challenges us to put aside our pride, seek after, and if necessary, restore meaningful relationships. We have all made flawed choices in regard to choosing who we associate with and have experienced the impact of those relationships. We also have been the friend who was not the best because of a particular season of our life. Jim challenges us to avoid “relational suicide now, rather than picking up the wreckage of your life later...” by asking ourselves several questions, of which you will see below.

// Biblical Context

The main theme of the book of Hebrews is *proving that Jesus’ work on the cross was the final act for people to be reconnected back to God*. All throughout the book the author uses examples from the Old Testament such as saying Jesus is greater than Moses (Chapter 3), putting Jesus in the place of the High Priest (4:14-5:10), and in Chapter 10 the author clarifies that Jesus is one sacrifice for all people. That is why in 10:25 the author is so adamant about meeting together so that they can remember what Jesus did on the cross, and what it means for them right now. The word the author uses to describe meeting together is *ἐπισυναγωγή* {episunagoge (ep-ee-soon-ag-o-gay)} which means gathering in one place closer to a Group size rather than the larger church.

// Community Questions

1. Build a house of cards with your Group. Use a minimum of 10 cards (you can use more if needed). Each group member must place one card on the house. Try it twice before you give up!
2. Tell a story about a time when you built something with a partner that had low stakes? (Ex. Anything from IKEA with your roommates, Legos with your kids on Christmas day, a bookshelf with your spouse etc.) How did you work well together or how did you not work well together?

// Discussion Questions

1. In his talk, Jim used one of the most intimate types of relationships as an example of our relationships in a general. These are people who you share your most valuable aspects of life with. Who has been the most impactful person in your life? And why or in what way?
2. Jim mentions discretion and discernment in relationships. Meaning that we are to be careful with our relationship choices.
 - a. Share a time where you (without calling names) chose your relationships (Business, personal, etc.) without discretion or proper discernment.
 - b. How has that choice impacted your life, present relationships and possible future relationships? Why?
3. Read Hebrews 10:24-25
 - a. What are some ways to “spur one another on toward love and good deeds”?
 - b. Why do you think some of the people had stopped meeting?
4. Read Ecclesiastes 4:9-10
 - a. Why do you think the author used the example of falling?
 - b. How do two people figure out how to work well together?
5. What does “From now on” look like for you? What choices is God challenging you to make? (Let these questions be your guide in answering this: Does it agree with God? Does it agree with what is good? Does it warrant good for both you and your partner?)

// Challenge

This week your Group will work through the two-arrow illustration from Jim’s talk. Have your Group split up into two or three people if the Group is larger. *Note: You will need some pens and paper for each person.

Each person will draw an arrow and write down the direction of **their** life. Then draw a second arrow for the other main person in their life. The pictures should fit one of these descriptions: Are you going in the same direction? Are you drifting apart? Are you going in opposite directions? Are you head-to-head? Have each person talk about the meaning behind their personal drawing of the arrows.

Have the group talk through what happened in that relationship to get where they are? What would be the first thing that needs to change in YOU to rebuild the relationship if it needs rebuilding?