



## ○ WORSHIP

### SUGGESTED WORSHIP SONGS:

God is Here, All About You, Your Name, Because of Who You Are, How Great Thou Art

## ○ WELCOME

**I'm Sorry, I Broke It.** What have you broken recently and how did it affect you and others?

## ○ WORD

### MATTHEW 5:23–24

<sup>23</sup> "Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, <sup>24</sup> leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.

We all had a broken relationship with God until we were reconciled with Him through Jesus. Before then, our relationships with others were in vain. If we are pursuing God with all our hearts, and we are passionate about Him, we will surely pursue other people with the same fervor. This is because our vertical and horizontal relationships are connected.

To succeed in keeping our relationships healthy, we must embrace the practice of restoration, starting with our family. The Bible tells us that God has entrusted to us the ministry of reconciliation: if we are in Christ, He will use us in reconciling the world to Him (**2 Corinthians 5:18–19**).

### CAUSES OF RELATIONSHIP BREAKDOWN

#### 1. Self-centeredness

Self-centeredness is thinking of yourself more than others (**Philippians 2:3**). When we start believing that we are more important than other people, we begin to look down at them and treat them differently simply because we think we are better. We will also begin to have a tendency to exaggerate our own righteousness and exaggerate the sinfulness of others. These lead us to be out of touch with who we really are and who they really are (**Matthew 7:23**).

#### 2. Inability to Resolve Conflicts

More often than not, relationships break down because of our inability to resolve conflict. In a conflict, there are always two sides to a coin. When we take sides or jump to conclusions without knowing what the other side is, it can cause relationships to break

down. Mishandling conflict is often caused by misunderstanding and miscommunication.

#### 3. Ill-Will to Bitterness

When we take joy and satisfaction in the demise of others, that is ill will. Ill will is dangerous because it is the seed towards hate and murder. It is like a small acorn wherein the little seeds inside can populate an entire forest. Ill will plays back in our mind the things that others have done to us which we hated. Though it may just be a petty thing, it can lead to bitterness which can affect our health and make us sick.

### HOW DO WE RESTORE RELATIONSHIPS?

#### 1. Repent

As soon as we detect ill will against somebody, bring it to God. Ask God for forgiveness for thinking of ourselves superior than others. Be humble and get right with our vertical relationship with God. Then go to the person who we had conflict with to straighten our horizontal relationship.

#### 2. Forgive

It is not easy to forgive because it has a price tag that somebody has to pay. But we must simply keep on forgiving on a daily basis (**Matthew 18:21–22**). Just as God has forgiven us, so must we forgive others from the heart (**v.32–35**), bearing one another and forgiving each other (**Colossians 3:12–13**). When somebody hurts us, it is difficult to let them off the hook. But in reality, it is us who are on the hook. To be set free of that hook, we must

## WORD (CONT'D)

forgive and choose not to play back in our mind the offense done against us. Instead, we must let God be the avenger and allow His justice to be served (**Romans 12:18–21**).

We will know that we have totally forgiven our offenders when we can truly pray for their good. It is supernatural thing to do which only the Holy Spirit can enable us.

### 3. Lovingly Initiate

Love is an unconditional commitment towards an imperfect person to seek their highest good which often requires sacrifice resulting in God's glory.

As Christians, we must make the move to restore broken relationships. But before doing it, we must first repent and forgive, otherwise, we can

become harsh and it may only end in disaster.

Sometimes, we also need to intervene when we see others destroying their own lives. If we really love the person we will lovingly initiate actions that will keep them from harm.

Sometimes our words or actions can also be damaging to our relationships without us knowing about it. To restore such relationships, we can patiently initiate asking questions without being defensive, find out how our words have hurt them, then take the first move to ask forgiveness.

When we choose to embrace restoration, we will enjoy the fruit of that decision which will result to successful relationships, starting with our own family.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

*(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)*

1. **The Cross.** How are the vertical and horizontal relationships connected according to **Matthew 5:23–24**?
2. **Broken.** What are the causes of your broken relationships? How were you able to restore them?
3. **Go and Be Reconciled.** Do you have a broken relationship that has not been restored yet? How do you intend to make the first move toward reconciliation?

## WORKS

### PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Lifegoals#5:

Succeed in Family Relationships —  
Embrace Restoration

Share with an unbeliever or a group of unbelievers about your broken relationship with God, how you were reconciled with Him and how it improved your relationship with others, using the 3 ideas from the discussion today on how to embrace restoration in relationships.

Share with your small group in your next meeting how it did go.

### WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

#### I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

#### II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of Public Servants and a God-centered Philippines
- Repentance and Salvation

#### III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

#### IV. CCF Facilities

- School and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

#### V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends