

# I CAN RELATE

***PHILIPPIANS 2:5 NIV***  
*'IN YOUR RELATIONSHIPS  
WITH ONE ANOTHER, HAVE  
THE SAME MINDSET AS  
CHRIST JESUS'*

## A Devotional Discussion Collective

Biblical wisdom for real connections into Christlike relationships

# What Is This Series About?

At the heart of the I Can Relate series is a call to approach every relationship in our lives; friendships, marriages, families, and parenting, with the mindset of Christ. **God IS community.**

As **Philippians 2:5** (NIV) encourages us, *“In your relationships, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus.”*

His mindset, marked by humility, love, sacrifice, truth, and grace is the lens through which we’ll explore God’s design for healthy, gospel-shaped relationships. Relationships can be deeply personal and incredibly complex. Our church family includes people in every season: single, married, widowed, divorced, those longing for children, estranged from family, or thriving in community.

That’s why this series isn’t about offering one-size-fits-all advice. It’s about anchoring our relationships in the truth of Scripture, which speaks to everyone. Through biblical teaching, personal stories, and honest conversation, we’ll confront the brokenness that often surrounds relationships, while holding fast to the hope of Jesus our Great Reconciler.

Whether you feel full or empty in this area, our prayer is that through the Word and the Spirit, you’ll find both comfort and clarity, and come away equipped to relate to others the way Jesus does: with wisdom, compassion, and purpose.

# Collective SIX / Forgiveness & Reconciliation

## INTRODUCTION

Conflict is part of life and part of love. Whether it's a misunderstanding between friends, tension in a marriage, or long-standing hurt in a family, we've all experienced the pain of broken connection. But while the world often tells us to cancel, avoid, or blame, Jesus offers us another way: reconciliation.

This week, we're asking: *How do we respond to conflict in a Christlike way?*

Philippians 2:5 calls us to have the same mindset as Christ in our relationships - a mindset of humility, self-sacrifice, truth, and forgiveness.

As we dig into Scripture, we'll uncover a redemptive pattern: God doesn't ignore conflict. He enters into it to bring peace. Through the power of the Gospel, we are not only reconciled to God, but also called to be ministers of reconciliation in our own lives.

# CONNECT GROUP STUDY

## KEY SCRIPTURES

- **Romans 12:18** (NLT) - *“Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone.”*
- **Matthew 18:15-17** (NLT) - *“If another believer sins against you, go privately and point out the offense. If the other person listens and confesses it, you have won that person back. But if you are unsuccessful, take one or two others with you and go back again, so that everything you say may be confirmed by two or three witnesses. If the person still refuses to listen, take your case to the church. Then if he or she won’t accept the church’s decision, treat that person as a pagan or a corrupt tax collector.”*
- **Philippians 2:3-5** (NLT) - *“Don’t be selfish; don’t try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don’t look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had.”*
- **Matthew 6:14-15** (NLT) - *“If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.”*

## DISCOVERY

Jesus didn’t just tell us to love others - He showed us how, even when it was difficult. He confronted sin, forgave betrayal, restored the broken, and reconciled enemies through the cross. And He calls us to follow Him in doing the same.

Conflict can be uncomfortable, but it can also be sacred ground for growth, healing, and deeper connection. Avoiding it often leads to resentment, while facing it with the heart of Christ creates space for restoration.

This doesn’t mean every relationship will be easy or even fully restored, but it does mean we can choose to live at peace - as far as it depends on us, anchored in the grace we’ve received.

## DISCUSSION

### Starting Questions:

- What emotions come up for you when you think about conflict?
- Have you ever experienced reconciliation after a painful disagreement? What made it possible?
- Why do you think Jesus cared so much about how we treat each other, especially in moments of tension?

### Exploring Questions:

- How does Jesus instruct us to handle relational conflict?
- What do these verses show us about posture and attitude in difficult conversations?
- Why is it important to address conflict, not just avoid it?
- What happens when we stay silent too long?

**Matthew 6:14-15** (NLT) - *“If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.”*

This is confronting scripture.

Forgiveness is something you can do on your own, in your heart, through God’s grace. It’s choosing to release someone from the debt of what they did to you - not pretending it didn’t hurt, but deciding not to hold it against them.

Forgiveness is about your freedom, your healing, and your obedience to God. It’s not based on whether the other person apologises or changes.

Reconciliation, on the other hand, is about restoring the relationship - and that takes two. It requires honesty, repentance, accountability, and often time. While forgiveness is a command, reconciliation is an invitation - one that reflects the Gospel when both parties are willing to walk in humility and truth.

So, forgiveness is a decision; reconciliation is a journey. You can forgive without reconciling, but you cannot truly reconcile without first forgiving.

*Forgiving someone can feel impossibly hard, especially when the hurt is real, but Jesus gently calls us to it, not as a burden, but as a pathway to freedom and restored fellowship with the Father.*

- Do both forgiveness and reconciliation require the same thing?
- How do humility and the Holy Spirit work together in bringing peace?

**Action Questions:**

- Is there a relationship in your life where you've avoided conflict rather than addressing it in love? What's one step you can take this week to move toward reconciliation?
- How can you prepare your heart, spiritually and emotionally, for a hard conversation?
- In what ways can you reflect the mindset of Christ in a current or past conflict?

**DEVOTION**

**Let's take a moment to reflect:**

- Are there any relationships in your life marked by tension, bitterness, or silence?
- Are there apologies you've been putting off?
- Is there forgiveness you've been withholding, even from yourself?

**Let's Pray Together:**

"Jesus, thank You for making peace between us and God. Thank You for not giving up on us. Help us to carry that same spirit into our own relationships. Where we've been hurt, bring healing. Where we've been proud, bring humility. Where there's distance, give us courage to move toward restoration. Teach us to love like You do, even when it's hard. Amen."

**PERSONAL REFLECTION GUIDE**

**What is God saying to you?**

Take a moment to pause and let God speak to your heart.

**1. Take Time**

Bring yourself to stillness, silence creates space for the Spirit to speak.

**2. Focus on God’s Word**

*“If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.” - Matthew 6:14–15 (NLT)*

**3. Reflect**

God’s forgiveness towards you is complete, undeserved, and freely given.  
Ask Him to help you extend that same grace to others and to yourself.

What is the Holy Spirit highlighting for you?

Is there someone you need to forgive or ask forgiveness from?

How is God inviting you into freedom today?

# A Closing Benediction

May the God who is the source of all relationship;

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - fill your heart with wisdom, your words with grace, and your life with love.

May He bless your conversations, and continue the work He's begun in quiet moments of reflection.

May the truths you've explored take root, and bear fruit in your friendships, your family, and your faith.

**As you go, may you walk humbly, love deeply, forgive freely, and honour boldly.**

May you build homes that reflect heaven, and live lives that draw others to Christ.

And may you always know: You are loved, you are called, and you are never alone.

Amen.