

Matthew 7:24-27

KNOW IT: There is a difference between the wise and the foolish.

THINK ABOUT IT: Are you building your life on a solid foundation like the wise man?

LIVE IT: What one thing can you do each day to strengthen the foundation you are building your life upon?



Why do you think we know so little about Mary?

The world says that the secret to having great relationships is common interests. Common interests are good, but they are not the key to great relationships. Your interests ten years from now will most likely be very different from your interests today. Throughout our lives our interests are constantly changing and evolving. And if you build a relationship on common interests, if you make common interests the most important thing, and your interests change—the relationship will change. And it will very often fall apart.

Purpose matters. The foundation you choose to build your relationships upon matters. Think about the story from Matthew's Gospel. Jesus said:

“Everyone who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock; and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock. And every one who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand; and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it.” (Matthew 7:24-27)

Fun is great, but it is not enough. Common interests are fabulous, but they are not enough. Building relationships upon fun or common interests is like building a house on sand. Great relationships need common purpose. Building relationships upon the common purpose of helping each other become the-best-version-of-ourselves is like building a house on rock.

If you want to build your relationships on sand, choose your friends based on whether or not they are good-looking, fun, athletic, rich, and popular. If you want to build your relationships on rock, choose friends of good character, who are striving for virtue, who help you become the-best-version-of-yourself, and lead you closer to God.

The more closely we align ourselves with the purpose of anything, the more success we will have. Relationships have a purpose. God gives us relationships to help us become the-best-version-of-ourselves.

The beautiful thing about the purpose of relationships is that it is unchanging. Like the rock that the wise man built his house on, common purpose is a solid foundation to build your relationships upon. Many things may change in your life over the next month, year, or decade, but the purpose of relationships will not.

Are you ready to start building your relationships on a solid foundation?



1. WHO ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE? WHY?

2. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF RELATIONSHIPS?

3. WHAT ARE YOU PRETENDING NOT TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR APPROACH TO RELATIONSHIPS?





The Trinity – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - is the most dynamic relationship, and your relationship with God will have an enormous influence on every other relationship in your life.

Every yearning you have for good things is in some way a yearning for God. Your longing for relationship is a yearning for God. God is relationship. So, no wonder you yearn for relationships so much.

Throughout your life you are going to make lots of relationship decisions. You are already making dozens every day. Are you making good relationship decisions? What can you do to make better relationship decisions? Do you understand how some of the decisions you make today will impact your life in the future?

There is a great Scripture I want to invite you to reflect upon today. When we really think about what it takes to have great relationships, it can be overwhelming. In John's Gospel, Jesus says, "the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything. . ." (John 14:26) The Holy Spirit will teach you everything . . . including how to have great relationships.

Open yourself up to the Holy Spirit's guidance. Try it. Don't take my word for it. At least once a day for the next week, pray to the Holy Spirit and ask him to guide you in a specific situation. Follow your conscience and the guidance of the Holy Spirit and you will notice that you are less anxious and more joyful.

This Catholic stuff really works. It's real. It's true. It's just that most people have never really given it a chance in their life. Give the genius of Catholicism a chance in your life. You will be glad you did.

John 14:26

KNOW IT: God, the ultimate Father, wants to teach you everything you need to know to live a rich and full life.

THINK ABOUT IT: Are you really opening yourself up to the Holy Spirit's guidance?

LIVE IT: Each time you need to make a decision, ask the Holy Spirit to guide you.

Love
REARRANGES
OUR PRIORITIES

D·I·S·C·U·S·S·I·O·N
QUESTIONS

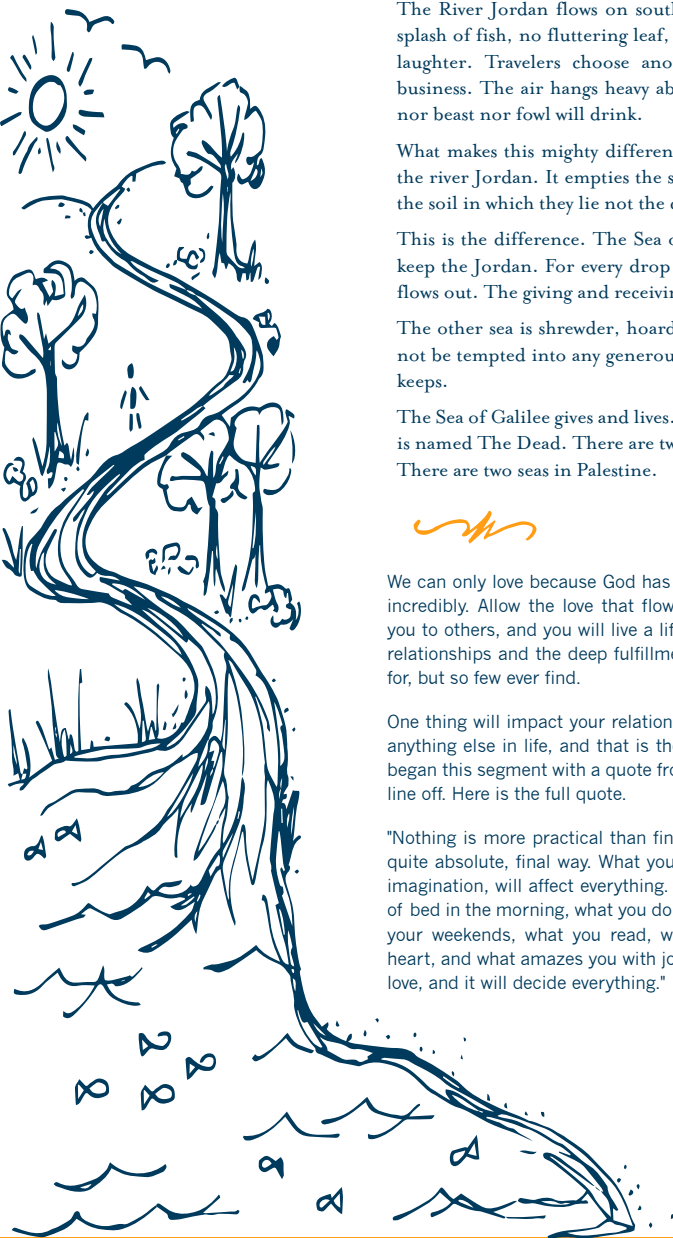
1. WHAT'S THE BEST FRIENDSHIP DECISION YOU HAVE MADE IN THE PAST TWELVE MONTHS?

2. HOW DO YOU FEEL GOD IS CALLING YOU TO IMPROVE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUR PARENTS?

3. ARE YOUR FRIENDS HELPING YOU TO BECOME THE-BEST-VERSION-OF-YOURSELF? ARE YOU HELPING THEM TO BECOME THE-BEST-VERSION-OF-THEMSELVES?



AND I LOOK FORWARD TO THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD AND THE LIFE OF THE WORLD TO COME. AMEN.



The River Jordan flows on south into another sea. Here is no splash of fish, no fluttering leaf, no song of birds, no children's laughter. Travelers choose another route, unless on urgent business. The air hangs heavy above its water, and neither man nor beast nor fowl will drink.

What makes this mighty difference in these neighbor seas? Not the river Jordan. It empties the same good water into both. Not the soil in which they lie not the country about.

This is the difference. The Sea of Galilee receives but does not keep the Jordan. For every drop that flows into it another drop flows out. The giving and receiving go on in equal measure.

The other sea is shrewder, hoarding its income jealously. It will not be tempted into any generous impulse. Every drop it gets, it keeps.

The Sea of Galilee gives and lives. This other sea gives nothing. It is named The Dead. There are two kinds of people in the world. There are two seas in Palestine.



We can only love because God has loved us first, and he has loved us incredibly. Allow the love that flows to you from God to flow out of you to others, and you will live a life uncommon – filled with dynamic relationships and the deep fulfillment that all men and women yearn for, but so few ever find.

One thing will impact your relationships with other people more than anything else in life, and that is the way you respond to God's love. I began this segment with a quote from Father Arrupe, but I left the first line off. Here is the full quote.

"Nothing is more practical than finding God, than falling in Love in a quite absolute, final way. What you are in love with, what seizes your imagination, will affect everything. It will decide what will get you out of bed in the morning, what you do with your evenings, how you spend your weekends, what you read, whom you know, what breaks your heart, and what amazes you with joy and gratitude. Fall in love, stay in love, and it will decide everything."



Discussion Questions

1. WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT LOVE IN THIS SESSION?

2. WHO MODELS SELFLESS LOVE IN YOUR LIFE?

3. HOW DOES YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD INFLUENCE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER PEOPLE?



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. IN WHAT WAYS HAVE YOU GONE LOOKING FOR LOVE IN THE WRONG PLACES?

2. WHO DO YOU KNOW WHO HAS A GREAT MARRIAGE? WHAT DO YOU ADMIRE ABOUT THEIR MARRIAGE?

3. WHAT VIRTUE DO YOU THINK IS MOST IMPORTANT TO HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS?



“THE BEGINNING OF LOVE IS THE WILL TO LET THOSE WE LOVE BE PERFECTLY THEMSELVES. THE RESOLUTION NOT TO TWIST THEM TO FIT OUR OWN IMAGE. IF IN LOVING THEM WE DO NOT LOVE WHAT THEY ARE, BUT ONLY THEIR POTENTIAL LIKENESS TO OURSELVES, THEN WE DO NOT LOVE THEM: WE ONLY LOVE THE REFLECTION OF OURSELVES WE FIND IN THEM.”

– THOMAS MERTON

6.5 DECISION point

When all is said and done, life is not about what street you live on or what school you went to or what type of car you drive; it's not about whether or not you made the football team or what position you played. Life is not about what grades you got in school or what job you had. It's not about how much money you have or how much money you make, or whether or not you vacation in all the right places and wear overpriced clothes with expensive labels on them. Life is about love. It's about whom you love and whom you hurt. It's about how you love yourself and hurt yourself. It's about how you love and hurt those people closest to you. It's about how you love or hurt the other pilgrims who cross your path as you make your journey through this life. Life is about love.

One day we will stand before God, and perhaps the questions he will ask us are: How well did you love? Who or what did you lay down your life for?

Love is a choice, not a feeling. Every day you make hundreds of choices—and every choice is a choice for love or against love. So choose wisely . . . because whom and what you choose to love will determine just about everything.

Love
IS A
CHOICE
[NOT A FEELING]

Journal Questions

1. WHO OR WHAT ARE YOU WILLING TO LAY DOWN YOUR LIFE FOR?

2. WHO LOVES YOU IN THE WAY GOD ENVISIONS LOVE?

3. HOW IS GOD CALLING YOU TO LOVE YOURSELF DIFFERENTLY SO THAT YOU CAN LOVE OTHERS MORE FULLY?

