

Week One

BOTTOM LINE

Our future is most shaped by those closest to us.

GOAL OF THE GROUP

We experience life in community with others, but how often do we pause and take inventory of how those relationships are affecting our lives? What does it look like to choose our friendships wisely? The goal of this week is to consider the types of relationships we have now and how we can grow in the ones that propel us forward.

SCRIPTURE

Proverbs 13:20; 1 Kings 12:3-11, 16, 19

David had a son named Solomon who became king. Solomon was very wise, brilliant king and led the kingdom to a comfortable and prosperous time. There was peace and stability under his leadership, and many people loved him. Solomon had a son named Rehoboam that came into a peaceful and prosperous time of the kingdom, but Solomon had set up a system where many were in heavily burdened labor with high expectations for growth. By the time Solomon had died, there was civil unrest and a group of people who looked for the government, and specifically, its next leader to relieve some of that burden.

THINK ABOUT

“Show me your closest friends and I will show you your future.”

~ Author Unknown

**Walk with the wise and become wise,
for a companion of fools suffers harm.**

Proverbs 13:20 (NIV)



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Share: Defining moments of your life are often connected to a conversation, an experience, or a decision you made with friends.
 - Share a quick story about a moment where your friends were with you in a defining moment? (maybe they encouraged you to ask your eventual wife out on a date, dialogued about a new job, or gave you terrible advice – those can be fun stories to share)
- Discuss: When we look at our friendships they often fall into three concentric circles.
 - The first (outer) circle is our “friend’s circle”. It is the all-encompassing circle. If you use social media, how many friends do you have on Facebook?
 - The second circle is “my people.” How many people do you consider a friend you connect with more often?
 - The most inner circle we call our “2 AM Relationships.” How many people would you feel comfortable calling at 2 AM if you were in a crisis and needed wisdom and encouragement?
- Read: Consider the context listed above and then read 1 Kings 12:3-11, 16, 19.
 - What was the difference between the wisdom that the Elders (wise) offered Rehoboam versus what Rehoboam’s friends gave?
 - How does the influence of Rehoboam’s inner circle impact his leadership, legacy and decision making?
 - What do you think about the concern of the elders vs. the desires of his friends?
- Discuss: One of the themes of this week is “Our future is most shaped by those closest to us.” Consider how this theme ties to the story we just read.
 - How does this statement impact our lives?
 - How are you being shaped right now by people you are close to? How are they shaping you for a positive impact? How are they hindering you?
- Share: Was there a time when you listened to the people in your inner circle, and they changed your mind for the better? How about a time when it was for the worst?
 - What did you learn from those two different situations?
 - What are the characteristics of those that you would call your 2 AM that would allow them to have that type of influence in your life?

TRY THIS

a. If you are currently in a small group, ask this question to everyone – How can I be an encouragement to you in this next season of your life? How can I pray for you? How can I help you with something that you find yourself frustrated or defeated by? Let's practice what it looks like to be a 2 AM friend and learn how to grow in our relationships together.

b. If you are reading this discussion guide more like a devotion and not in a group setting – Try out a group at Kensington. Our groups exist to help people experience transformation in their relationship with Jesus with others! We want you to be in a setting where you are encouraged, safe and can ask questions. Sometimes the biggest step of courage is that first one to check out a group. Don't be afraid to visit a couple of groups that may interest you. We want you to find a community that encourages you and where you feel connected! Go to www.kensingtonchurch.org/groups to browse a few of the possibilities.