**Table Talk**

**Sermon Series: Shallow - Commitment**

**February 21, 2021**

**Introduction (8 min)**

Table Talk Groups (45 minute study) begin by watching the video and sharing the story below, then open up the discussion with the questions provided.

Southside Home (35 minute study) can skip to “Starting the Discussion” as a follow up to the worship experience.

**Table Talk Video: Shallow - Commitment**

My wife and I have had the privilege of making wonderful friends over the years in all the different states and cites we have ministered in. We have also had a few specific friendships that puzzled and at times hurt us over the years. Ashley in particular has had a couple of friendships where she worked hard to get to know someone and invest in their life. About the time she began to feel very close to that person, they bailed entirely on the relationship.

It is really hard not to take that kind of abandonment personally. After it happened a couple of times we took a deeper dive and looked at those relationships and what we knew about those friends. A pattern emerged that helped us to realize an important truth about friendships. Some people have been hurt by friendships enough times that as soon a relationship begins to get deep or require real commitment in being honest about who they are, they bail. They don’t want to reveal that much about themselves in fear they will be mistreated or the relationship mishandled.

It was very liberating to realize that doesn’t have to change our commitment. Just because these people had pulled away didn’t mean we couldn’t intentionally reach out to them and show them kindness and concern. We could still love like Jesus whether the other person pulled away or not.

If someone is pulling away from you, don’t get angry. Don’t push them away in return. Stay committed to representing the love of Jesus to them.

- Pastor Reggie Phillips

**Prayer (2 minutes)**

Father God, you created us for relationships. Open our eyes during this time to see ways we can live more like you in those relationships. Commitment is hard, but we trust the relationships you have for us are worth the work. We pray in Jesus’ name, amen.

**Starting the Discussion (3 minutes)**

1. Do you care for someone who is pulling away from you right now and how have you responded to them?

**Unfolding the Biblical Story (24 minutes)**

**Invite someone to read Ephesians 4:1**

1. How does God’s calling set the direction for how we live in relationships?
2. Have you responded to anyone in a less than worthy manner recently and caused strain in a relationship?

**Read Ephesians 4:2**

1. How might biblical humility and gentleness strengthen commitment in relationships?
2. How is it possible to “bear with one another in love” without living in humility and gentleness?

**Read Ephesians 4:3**

1. Unity isn’t something eternal we impose on people, it is an invitation to walk together towards a common goal with common purpose. What common goal and purpose do the people of God share that can unite us?

**Invite someone to read 1 Peter 5:5**

1. Is how you are living in relationships inviting the favor of God or his opposition?

**Read Matthew 11:29**

1. Are relationships draining you or a source of joy to your life?
2. If you were to live more like Jesus than you are right now, how might you treat the people close to you differently?
3. What is one step you can take today to deepen the commitment of one of your relationships?

**Prayer (2 minutes)**

Jesus, we want to be more like you. More than that, we want you to live in and through us, speaking life into every relationship. Help us to live committed to one another that we might reflect the same love and commitment that you have blessed us with. We ask in Jesus’ name, amen.

**Wrapping Up (2 minutes)**

See if anyone has lingering questions or insights to share from your time of study and prayer. Summarize the group discussion as a reminder of what you learned together.

**Scripture Challenge (4 minutes)**

This week try to memorizing Matthew 11:29. Use any of the following tools to help you: write it out, repeat it a few times as a group, set it to music, or draw an image that incorporates the words.