

Do the Work | Week 4 - Make the First Move**Message Big Idea**

To restore relationships, we must do the work of initiating.

Scripture

Romans 5:8, Romans 12:9-21

Points to Keep In Mind

1. Throughout this series, we are challenging you to think of one relationship you would like to see restored. Not every relationship can be restored. Sometimes it's not possible or healthy. The goal of this series is not to go back into an abusive or toxic relationship. Rather, we're encouraging everyone to think of one relationship you'd like to see restored.
2. When restoring relationships, we can get stuck thinking the other person needs to change or waiting for them to change. What we can do is realize that restoration begins with us. We have to do the work.
3. The core theological insight for this week is that God made the first move to restore us to a relationship with him. We didn't earn God's initiative; God made the first move to bring restoration. That means that we don't have to wait for someone to earn our initiative; we can make the first move toward restoration.
4. Keep in mind that taking the initiative is not easy. It's hard work, and it takes courage. It might help take the pressure off to remember that the goal of initiating can't be reconciliation. We can hope for reconciliation, but for there to be reconciliation, the other person has to do the work too. And we can't make anyone else do that work. The goal of taking the initiative is knowing you did everything in your power to remove obstacles to restoring the relationship. The goal is to have "no regrets."
5. Moving toward another person involves a heart posture that's willing to serve them with sincere love. It is to be ready to honor another person above yourself. That's not easy because you are humbling yourself and making that first move, and they may reject it. This kind of posture won't happen by accident, so it is an intentional choice to show the other person love.
6. The steps provided in the guide will help the group imagine what it might be like to take the next step in restoring a relationship with someone else. Encourage the group to share, discuss ways you can support one another, and close the group praying for everyone who has identified the "Work" they need to do.

Additional Questions and Resources

1. Where do you see God at work in your life right now?
2. What next steps do you feel called to take in your faith journey?
3. Have you considered getting baptized? communitychristian.org/baptism/
4. For more resources on self-growth and a list of therapists, see: communitychristian.org/mentalhealth