

Groups.

Mates, Dates & Marriages

God created us for deep, life-giving relationships—first with Him, then with others. From Father, Son and Holy Spirit perfect unity to Adam's need for companionship in Eden, Scripture shows we are not meant for isolation. Healthy relationships flow from loving God wholeheartedly and loving people genuinely. They require intentional investment, encouragement, kindness, and especially forgiveness, which frees us from offense and keeps grace flowing. Ultimately, every rich connection starts with an intimate relationship with God, who invites us into the fullness of life found in Him and in community.

REFLECTION

Share something that stood out from the Sunday message 'Mates, Dates and Marriages'.

MESSAGE POINTS

One: Love God First and Love Others as Yourself

The foundation of all healthy relationships is rooted in Jesus' teaching that the greatest commandment is to love God with all your heart, soul, and mind, and to love your neighbour as yourself. When we prioritise our relationship with God, it naturally overflows into our relationships with others, shaping them with love, grace, and purpose. God's desire is not for us to live isolated or in mediocre relationships, but to experience rich, authentic, and empowering connections that reflect His heart. As you focus on loving God first, you'll find the strength and wisdom to love others well, making every relationship in your life more meaningful and life-giving.

Matthew 22:37-39 (ESV)

And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself."

Discussion

- **What area of your life needs to be surrendered more fully to God so you can love Him wholeheartedly?**

Think about habits, priorities, or fears that might be competing for your devotion. How could letting go in this area bring you closer to Him?

- **In what ways do you see your love for God directly impacting the way you treat others?**

Consider how your words, patience, generosity, and forgiveness change when your relationship with God is strong. Share a recent example.

- **Who is one person God might be prompting you to reach out to, encourage, or reconcile with this week?**

Pray for God to highlight a name or face. What could you practically do - call, write, serve, or meet - to show His love?

Two: We Are Created for Relationship

Being made in the image of God means we are inherently relational, designed for connection with both God and others. The Trinity itself - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - models' perfect relationship, marked by love, closeness, and delight. God's declaration that it is not good for man to be alone reveals that relationships are essential to a fulfilled life, and that even the best circumstances cannot replace the blessing of genuine connection. Whether with family, friends, or community, investing in relationships brings richness and joy that material things cannot provide.

Genesis 1:26 (ESV)

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

Discussion

- **What does being "made in God's image" teach us about the importance of relationships?**
Think about how the Trinity models unity, love, and mutual delight. How can we reflect those qualities in our own relationships?
- **Why do you think God said, "It is not good for man to be alone" even in the perfection of Eden?**
Consider what this tells us about our spiritual and emotional need for both God's presence and human connection.
- **What relationships in your life could you invest more intentionally in right now?**
Identify one or two people. What specific steps - like spending time, speaking encouragement, or praying for them - could you take this week to strengthen that connection.

Three: Practice Forgiveness Quickly and Often

Forgiveness is not optional for followers of Jesus - it is a command and a key to freedom in every relationship. Holding onto bitterness or resentment traps us but choosing to forgive releases us and others into grace. Jesus modelled ultimate forgiveness on the cross, praying for those who wronged Him, and calls us to do the same. Offense is inevitable, but forgiveness is always a choice and practicing it quickly and often keeps our hearts soft and our relationships healthy. When we forgive as the Lord forgave us, we reflect His love and open ourselves to deeper connection and healing.

Colossians 3:13 (ESV)

Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

Discussion

- **Why do you think forgiveness is described as both a command and a key to freedom in relationships?**
Reflect on how holding onto bitterness affects your heart and relationships. How might choosing forgiveness change that?
- **Jesus forgave even those who wronged Him on the cross - how does His example challenge or encourage you in your own struggles to forgive?**
Think about a time you found it difficult to forgive. What might it look like to follow Jesus' example in that situation?
- **What practical steps can you take to practice forgiveness quickly and often in your relationships?**
Consider specific habits like prayer, honest conversations, or choosing to release offense. How could these help keep your heart soft and relationships healthy?

GROUPS PRAYER POINTS

Pray for each other's personal journey as a disciple and discipleship in our church

- Being in the presence of Jesus, becoming more like Jesus and continuing the work He did.

Pray for the Holy Spirit's presence

- That we would be led, filled and empowered to live surrendered, love God and serve others.

Pray for Decade of Destiny

- **Debt Free on Sims and Stage One** Believe that we could be debt free on the purchase of Sims St and the stage one fit-out costs.
- **Launch Two New LIFE Campuses** That we would pioneer two additional LIFE campuses across Melbourne and continue to make room for more people to discover the wonder of Jesus, find their family and step into all that God leads.
- **LIFE Homes** To have short-, medium- and long-term accommodation navigable to enable emergency support, crisis help and essential care to key areas of vulnerability.
- **Education Services Engaged** It is our vision that we will have multiple pathways that we will be able to bring lasting transformation to our communities through learning and education and reverse the cycle of poverty.
- **Sims Street Revival** God is entrusting us to first and foremost lift up the names of Jesus and see many thousands upon thousands discover His eternal life.

WATCH

Mates, Dates & Marriages

<https://www.youtube.com/@LIFEMelbourne/videos>

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP

Our amazing Kids Team launched the *Bite Sized Bible* this week - and we're so excited to share it with you!

This resource is designed to help families explore God's Word together, one bite at a time. With simple, easy-to-read portions of Scripture, it's a fun and meaningful way to spark faith conversations and build lasting habits of engaging with the Bible as a family.

If you haven't picked one up yet, grab your copy from the Kids Connection desk or just outside the Base Camp room.

We believe this will be such a blessing to families, and we can't wait to hear the stories of how your child connects with God's big story - and how you grow together on the journey.

UPCOMING DATES

August – NEW Sunday Series 'Mates, Dates & Marriages'

15th August – Date Night: For Married & Engaged Couples <https://brushfire.com/life/DateNight2025-Mel/609103>

16th August – Epic Youth Main Event

25th August – Group Leaders Dinner

31st August – Baptisms at Life PM Service