If you gave homework to your group last week to extend kindness or compassion to someone in their life ask the group to share how that went.

**ICEBREAKER:** Can you think of a time when you expected one thing and got something totally different? Like when your meal came, or in a relationship, or at an event, or a concert….

**READ:** Deuteronomy 30:15-16
15 “Now listen! Today I am giving you a choice between life and death, between prosperity and disaster. 16 For I command you this day to love the Lord your God and to keep his commands, decrees, and regulations by walking in his ways. If you do this, you will live and multiply, and the Lord your God will bless you and the land you are about to enter and occupy.

**QUESTION:** How has our culture defined being “blessed?”
Material things, family, friends, events, accomplishments

**QUESTION:** How would you say you have defined being “blessed” over the years? In other words: I was so blessed because ____________.

**QUESTION:** Who did Jesus describe as being blessed that is counter-intuitive to this? Those who mourn, the poor…

**SUMMARY:** Our happiness will not come from comparing or competing. We cannot expect the culture around us to be our benchmark for happiness. Competing with our culture will destroy your relationships. Comparing yourself to our culture will also destroy your relationships.

**QUESTION:** What is a transactional relationship?
If I do this, then they should do that. If I sacrifice this, then they should…

**QUESTION:** If you have been in a transactional relationship before, what was that like?

**QUESTION:** What does a transactional relationship typically lead to?
Pressure, manipulation

**READ:** John 15:13 (Jesus says)
"Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for his friends"
QUESTION: How does this unconditional sacrifice get confused? We put conditions on it. We think God owes us or we owe God. We do this to each other as well. We sacrifice for the sake of **ourselves**.

QUESTION: How have you been tempted to think people owe you, or that God owes you? When have you thought (or said) “Don’t you know how much I’ve done?” Give some examples of when you have felt that way and how you have been tempted to sacrifice for your own benefit.

QUESTION: Flip it. Have you ever had someone say to you “After all I’ve done for you”? Maybe a parent? What did that feel like?

SUMMARY: Healthy relationships don’t have transactional expectations.

QUESTION: What is the context of Deuteronomy 30:15-16? God is moving His people into the promised land. There was a clear destination. It ended up being a much slower process than you would expect. It would not have been described as efficient.

QUESTION: Give some examples of how we are tempted to demand efficiency: Looking down on other people who work differently from us, pushing our kid’s growth emotionally or spiritually, our advancement at work, treating people who serve us disrespectfully, relationships with our friends, our spouses’ styles of decision-making or working.

QUESTION: What gets you in a hurry in your relationship with God or your expectations of Him? Give examples. We want Him to “fix” things or people now so we can get on with our life. His timing.

SUMMARY: No healthy relationship is based on efficiency. We need the grace to slow down and the truth to stay on course.

QUESTION: In what relationship right now do you need to offer grace over efficiency? To slow down and as Josh said “Sit in traffic?” What would that look like?

QUESTION: In what relationship do you need to speak truth in instead of going in circles avoiding or sending passive messages hoping they will get it?

TAKE PRAYER REQUESTS THIS WEEK