befriend
create belonging in an age of judgment, isolation, and fear

Participants’ Handouts
Session 1 Handout: A Case for Befriending

Session Big Idea
In order for Christians to have deep friendships, we must first learn to befriend ourselves by realizing our identity in Christ.

Things to Look for in the Video

What’s wrong with how we typically view friendship?

What are the three types of “lesser” friendships Scott describes? How does he define them?

How is our identity in Christ related to our friendships?

Bible Study Notes: 2 Corinthians 5:14–21

Personal Reflection & Application

What would it look like to fully embrace your identity in Christ? What would be different about your life?

What’s one practical way you could pursue God in one of your friendships? How could you put that into practice this week?

Deeper Walk
Select at least one activity below to complete before next week.

Read: Read chapters 1–2 of Scott Sauls’s book *Befriend*. As you read, consider what it means to befriend yourself and others.

Pray: Praise God for saving you from sin and death this week. Take a few minutes each morning to thank Him for making you a new creation.

Write: On a sheet of paper, write a list of some of the lies you believe about yourself. Write a truth from Scripture to counter each lie and carry that list with you this week. Psalm 139, 1 John 1–5, and Romans 8 are great places to start.

Sing: Choose a worship song or two that reflects your new identity in Christ. Play those songs on your commute or while you get ready in the morning as a reminder of who you are in Him.

Memorize: Pick one verse (2 Corinthians 5:17, for example) from this session and memorize it this week.
Session 2 Handout:
Befriend the God Who Embraces You

Session Big Idea
In order to have meaningful friendships as Christians, we should first befriend God.

Things to Look for in the Video
Why does our relationship with God matter to our friendships?

What is God's attitude towards us?

What's the difference between striving to be like Jesus and being with Jesus?

Personal Reflection & Application
Looking forward to this week, how could you practice abiding in Christ? What's one practical step you could take to being with God and enjoying His love?

Who could you love with God's love this week? Practically speaking, what could that look like?

Deeper Walk
Select at least one activity below to complete before next week.

Read: Read chapter 3, 4, and 21 in Scott Saul's book Befriend. As you read, consider what God might be telling you about loving others with His love.

Pray: Take a few minutes this week to talk to God about your relationship with Him. Lay down any expectations you impose on yourself, confess sin, and ask Him to fill you with His love as you go about your week.

Abide: Spend a few minutes each morning thinking about how God has expressed His love to you through Jesus. Consider writing down your thoughts as you spend time with Him.

Memorize: Commit 1 John 4:19 to memory this week. Recite the verse to yourself throughout the day to remind you why we're to love others.

Love: Choose one person in your life to intentionally love this week. Do one loving action for them and pray for them. Ask God to express His love through you to this person.

Bible Study Notes: 1 John 4:7–21
Notes
Session Big Idea
When we recognize, confess, and repent from our sin, we are able to develop deep friendships and seek reconciliation.

Things to Look for in the Video

How does sin affect our relationships?

Is reconciliation possible? How?

Bible Study Notes: 1 John 1:5–10; Matthew 7:1–5

Personal Reflection & Application

What’s difficult for you about God bringing your sin to light? How does it feel to know you’ll be met with His grace and forgiveness?

How could you apply the principles about sin from these passages to your life this week?

Deeper Walk

Select at least one activity below to complete before next week.

Read: Read chapters 5–8 of Scott Sauls’s book *Befriend*. As you read, ask God to expose ways you might be sinning against Him and your friends.

Pray: Take five minutes to pray for God to reveal your sin this week. Ask Him for the strength to confess your sin and thank Him for forgiving you.

Remind: Write out one of the passages from this session (1 John 1:5–10 or Matthew 7:1–5) on a 3x5 notecard and place it somewhere you’ll see it often. Use it as a reminder of the principles from this session.

Ask: If a situation arises this week where you know you’ve hurt someone else, ask them for forgiveness. If appropriate, consider sharing with the person why admitting to sin is important to you.

Confess: Consider confessing a sin this week. Whether that looks like writing it down in a journal or telling a spouse or trusted friend, choose to bring a sin into the light this week.
Session Big Idea

Christians should recognize and fight against fear and prejudice in order to befriend others.

Things to Look for in the Video

How does prejudice damage relationships?

How did Jesus act towards others? What do His actions say about how we should treat others?

Bible Study Notes: Acts 10:9–16, 28–35; Galatians 2:11–14

Notes

Personal Reflection & Application

What could be one step of obedience you could do this week in response to the teaching in this session?

Deeper Walk

Select at least one activity below to complete before next week.

Read: Read chapters 9, 13, and 14 of Scott Sauls’s book Befriend. As you read, consider the biases you might have against the groups talked about in each chapter.

Pray: Spend time in prayer this week about fear and prejudice. Ask God to reveal any sin in your heart and ask for Him to provide the next practical step of obedience.

Discuss: Sit down with a friend you know has been a victim of someone else’s prejudice. Ask them how the situation made them feel and pray for them.

Study: Read all of Galatians 2 this week and take note of how the gospel radically changed how Jews and Gentiles related to each other. Consider ways you could live out the gospel truth in your life this week.

Research: Maybe this session sparked your interest in racial, social, or political prejudice. Take time this week to research the issue that interests you and pray for practical opportunities to use what you learn to further the gospel.
Session Big Idea

By seeking to understand people we don’t easily get along with, we can begin to form deeper connections with people and better friendships.

Things to Look for in the Video

What does Scott mean when he says we should “seek to understand” others?

What does it mean that everyone in our lives is fighting a “hidden battle”?

What bond do Christians share? How should that affect our friendships with Christians?

Bible Study Notes: John 1:14; Hebrews 4:14–16; Romans 12:1–21

Notes

Personal Reflection

Which command from the Romans passage would you like to see lived out in your life? How could you implement that truth this week?

Using the principles from this passage, what could you do this week to seek to understand one brother or sister in Christ?

Deeper Walk

Select at least one activity below to complete before next week.

Read: Read chapters 15–18 in Scott Sauls’s book Befriend. As you read, consider how Scott’s perspective helps you understand the people he writes about.

Pray: If there’s another Christian in your life you don’t understand, pray for them this week. Pray for that person’s spiritual walk, family, job, etc.

Reflect: Reflect on a friendship you’ve had with someone. Write down three ways they’ve personified the Romans 12 passage from this session. Thank them this week.

Study: Take 30 minutes to study Romans 12 further. Write down one way you could sacrificially love someone this week and put it into action.

Listen: Listen to a worship song about Jesus’s sacrificial love. Reflect on what it might mean to love someone else in the same way.
Session Big Idea
In order to befriend someone, we must live out the love of Christ in all relationships.

Things to Look for in the Video
What does Scott mean when he calls some friends “underdogs”?

What kind of love should we extend to others? How can we practically love those in our lives?

Bible Study Notes: John 13:34–35; Acts 4:32–37; Acts 3:1–10

Personal Reflection
What does it look like to extend love toward other Christians and outsiders?

What are some practical ways you could get involved in meeting the needs of those in your church?

Deeper Walk
Select at least one activity below to complete before next week.

Read: Read chapters 11, 12, 19, and 20 of Scott Sauls’s book Befriend. As you read, consider what it might look like for you to extend love to the people described in these chapters.

Pray: Pray for your local church every day this week. Ask God to strengthen its leaders and bring unity between members. Pray your church would be a light to those who don’t yet know Him.

Befriend: Ask God to bring one person into your life you could befriend. Practice the principles discussed in this study as you get to know that person.

Reflect: Write down three things you’ve learned or been convicted by through this series. Pray throughout the week for God to show you how to put each of those things into practice.

Illustrate: Pick one verse covered in this series or in Scott’s book Befriend and write it out in a creative way. Draw a picture and overlay it with the verse or use calligraphy. Display your work in a prominent place to remind you of what God’s taught you through this study.