



Big Idea

We have to slay the fear of intimacy and be willing to take the risk in order to have authentic relationships. We've all experienced times of being hurt by someone that we trusted. The enemy wants to use that pain to cause us to fear the risk of intimacy again. One tool the enemy uses is distance, to isolate and keep us from growing closer to God and others. We have to take a prayerful relational risk to get an intimate relational return. You'll never get the best out of your relationships without a risk. It's a risk worth taking. Before you risk, you must find security, acceptance and intimacy in Christ alone. We must love the Lord with all our heart, soul and mind first. Once you're intimately connected with him, you can love your neighbor as yourself.

2 Corinthians 4:2 (MSG)

We refuse to wear masks and play games. We don't maneuver and manipulate behind the scenes... Rather, we keep everything we do and say out in the open...

We often are afraid of intimacy because we don't handle conflict correctly. Here are some examples of incorrect ways to handle conflict:

- **Dominate** it by demanding your way or trying to control.
- We can't **ignore** conflict, that causes the issue to grow roots.
- **Whine** about it, if your upset then everybody else should be upset about it too.
- **Wave the white flag**, surrender and don't voice your thoughts. "Peace" at any price.
- **End it** by quitting on each other.

We recover from the fear of intimacy by taking prayerful relational risk. It's scary to take risk, but even scarier not to risk. For God hasn't given you a spirit of fear, but of love and power and a sound mind. Your acceptance comes from God, not people. It's risky to open up and invest in others, but even more of a risk to not have real relationships.

Discussion Questions

- What stood out to you in the message?
- Do you find it difficult to take relational risks and develop authentic friendships?
- Share an example when you didn't deal with conflict correctly; (dominate it, ignore, whine, surrender or quit and walk away.)
 - How did it impact the relationship?
 - If you could deal with that conflict differently, what would you do?
- Talk about some steps you can take to build meaningful relationships?
- Have you found security, acceptance and intimacy in Christ?

Next Steps

How can we pray for you this week? Write down each person's prayer request and make it a point to pray for them and text them with an encouraging word at some point this week.

Pray

Pray against the fear of relational intimacy.

Ask God to bring authentic friendships in your life.

Pray for the Legacy Vision campaign, divine provision and favor.

