

BAD BLOOD

PART 1: The Empathy Lens

INTRODUCTION

Bad blood can infect any relationship. And the quality of our lives is only as good as the quality of our relationships. Lack of peace about a relationship robs you of peace in your own life. But you can have peace *about* a relationship even without peace *in* the relationship. Happiness comes from peace with God, peace with yourself, and peace with others.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Talk about a relationship that makes your life better. What are some things about that relationship that you value and appreciate?
2. When has one of your relationships gone from good to bad in the blink of an eye? How did you respond?
3. During the message, *empathy* was described as “feeling what the other person feels.” What are some obstacles we face to being empathetic toward others? Why do we resist that level of connection?
4. Read Romans 12:17-19. What are some of the negatives you contribute to difficult relationships in your life? What do you need to do to live at peace with others?
5. Is it difficult for you to believe that when it comes to bad blood your life will be better if you follow Jesus by taking the long walk of empathy? Why or why not?
6. Think about a difficult relationship in your life. What can you do this week to view the problem from the other person’s perspective and take a step toward him or her? How can this group support you?

MOVING FORWARD

Empathy is first aid for bad blood. In difficult relationships, empathy can be the key to beginning a conversation that leads to health and peace. When you empathize with someone, you see things you wouldn’t have seen. Your anger turns to compassion. Your hurt begins to heal. You live out the kind of radical love to which Jesus called us.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

Romans 12:18