



Discussion Guide

Date: 4/26/2026

Sermon Title: How can I find meaningful relationships online?

Scripture: Colossians 3:12-17

This discussion guide is a layout to be used with a group or class. We have included opening and closing prayers to start and end your group. The guide may be used for personal or family reflection as well.

OPENING PRAYER

Gracious and loving God, you created us for relationship. With you and with one another. As we gather today, open our hearts and minds to your Spirit. Help us to listen well, speak with kindness, and grow together in love. Teach us what it means to put on compassion, kindness, humility, and patience in our relationships. Guide us as we reflect on how we connect with one another in a digital world. May our time together draw us closer to you and to each other. Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

OPENING QUESTIONS: (Choose one to start with)

1. What is one meaningful relationship in your life that has shaped your faith?
2. Have you ever formed a meaningful relationship online? What made it meaningful?

DIGGING INTO THE SCRIPTURE:

Read Colossians 3:12-17 (NRSV). Additional translations may be helpful for you and your group.

Observing the Text:

1. What words or phrases stand out to you in this passage?
2. What characteristics does Paul encourage believers to "put on"?
3. Why do you think Paul uses the language of "clothing" (putting on) to describe Christian relationships?
4. What role does forgiveness play in meaningful relationships according to this passage?
5. What does Paul say should rule in our hearts? (v. 15)
6. How does gratitude shape our relationships? Where do you see that in this passage?
7. What does it mean to let "the word of Christ dwell in you richly" in community?

Going deeper:

8. What do you think Paul means by "bear with one another"? Why is this important in relationships?
9. How does this passage challenge the way we relate to others online?
10. Which quality listed in verses 12–14 do you find most difficult? Why?
11. How does love function as the "bond of perfection" in relationships?
12. What would it look like for our online interactions to reflect Colossians 3:12–17?

Applying to Technology & Relationships:

13. What are some benefits of online relationships?

14. What are some limitations or challenges of relationships formed primarily online?
15. How can we practice compassion, kindness, humility, and patience in digital communication?
16. Have you ever experienced misunderstanding or conflict online? How might Colossians 3 guide us in those situations?
17. What role does physical presence play in meaningful Christian relationships?
18. How can technology enhance rather than replace meaningful relationships?
19. What practices can help us cultivate deeper relationships in a digital world?

Supporting Scripture Discussion:

John 13:34–35; Hebrews 10:24–25; Acts 2:42–47; Romans 12:9–18; Ephesians 4:15–16; 1 John 4:7–12; Galatians 6:2

Methodist Theology & Liturgy Connections:

Means of Grace; In Wesleyan theology, relationships help us grow through the Means of Grace, including Prayer, Scripture, Holy Communion, Christian conferencing (holy conversation), and Fellowship

Discussion Questions:

1. Which of these practices help deepen relationships?
2. How can technology help us engage in these practices?

SERMON QUESTIONS:

1. In Pastor Allison’s sermon she mentioned that we might hesitate to put a Jesus bumper sticker on our car but not hesitate to put "Christian" in our social media bio. Do your online posts and comments align with your faith identity? Why or why not?
2. Allison talked about how religion life was separate from your other life during the first century. In what ways do we treat online spaces differently from physical spaces, and how might remembering that 'online is real life' change our behavior?
3. Christianity was unique in the early church time from all the other religious and philosophies because the ultimate virtue was love. In what ways does prioritizing love over likes require us to 'swim upstream' against the dominant culture of internet engagement?
4. The sermon contrasted online values (inflammatory, shocking, adding a villain) with Christian values (compassion, kindness, love). What specific changes might you need to make in how you engage online?

REFLECTION:

1. Think about your last week online. Were there moments when you forgot that "online is real life"? What happened?
2. How do you currently use social media or other online spaces? What is your purpose when you log on?
3. What is one way you can use technology to encourage someone? How can we create real, meaningful relationships in online spaces while still maintaining healthy boundaries?
4. How can we balance the desire to reach more people with our message of faith while maintaining the values of humility and meekness that may not attract large followings?
5. What would it look like to "let the peace of Christ order and control" your presence on social media, in comment sections, or in online gaming communities?



6. What is one way you can move from surface-level relationships to deeper connections? What would it look like for our online communities to reflect the early Christian communities that transformed the Roman Empire through radical love and countercultural values?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Loving God, thank you for creating us for community. Thank you for the gift of relationships that encourage, challenge, and strengthen our faith. Help us to put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Guide us as we seek meaningful relationships both online and in person. May our conversations reflect your love. May our relationships reflect your grace. And may our lives together point others to Christ. We go now in peace, strengthened by your Spirit and united in your love. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

WAYS TO RESPOND:

Choose ONE of the following practices to focus on this week:

1. The Memory Verse Practice: Before opening social media or other online spaces, read Colossians 3:14: "Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony." (Consider taking a screenshot and making it your phone wallpaper.)
2. The Pause Before Posting: Before posting, commenting, or sharing anything online, ask yourself:
3. Does this demonstrate compassion, kindness, or love? Would I say this to someone's face? Does this build up or tear down?
4. The Name Practice: Just like calling a grocery clerk by their name, intentionally use people's names in online interactions to remember there's a real person behind the profile.
5. The Audit: Review your last 10 posts or comments. Do they reflect the values listed in Colossians 3? What patterns do you notice?
6. The Connection Challenge: Instead of just scrolling, reach out to three people online this week with genuine encouragement or prayer.

GO FURTHER WITH MORE THAN SUNDAY PODCAST:

This season explores the intersection of faith and technology and asks what it might look like to stay human in an increasingly digital world. fumcr.com/morethansunday The new season launches a new episode each Wednesday and continues weekly through May 6.