

BUILDING BETTER RELATIONSHIPS

The Bible is a book about relationships, some with God directly involved, some without. Every story, illustration, and character gives insight into POWER relations.

IMPORTANCE

1. Life and death are in relationships-joy or sorrow, fulfillment or emptiness, peace or war...

Our relationship to God is reflected in our relations with our brother

- A. Cain and Abel-Gen 4, I John 3:12
- B. Ruth and Naomi-Thy people shall be my people, thy God my God
- C. Bible Test-Matthew 5:21-24, leave your gift at the altar and be reconciled

2. Relationship- a mutual sharing of life between two or more individuals, common events, experiences. As children, siblings share physical, emotional, mental, spiritual relations, the same home, parents.

A *POWER relationship* is built on sound principles, is maintained on healthy interaction, and provides happiness and satisfaction to the participants.

3. We are compelled to relate to members of society, to our family, and to members of the Kingdom of God.

Gender relationships- male to male, to female

Rank and position-socioeconomic, employment, student

Age-relate to elders, children, to peers

Spouse, to family members, to in-laws

Spiritual relations-Brothers, Sisters, Gifted, Leaders in church, Administration

Government rulers, authorities, elected officials

Relate to our own conscience-every man has the most intimate relation to himself.

{C.S. Lewis- a prankster sent a message to the 12 most prominent, affluent men in town that read: "All in discovered, flee at once". Within 24 hours all 12 had taken a vacation and left town!}

4. Three things are necessary for a healthy fulfilling relationship.

1. Love for people that arises from the love of God. Romans 5:5, 1Cor 13

The most enduring, "never faileth", the last to die, in parent-child, in spouses.

2. Respect for people. What they are, what they stand for, differences, character, virtues.

3. Trust of people. When we first meet people we begin to form trust. It is the most fragile, an unfaithful man is like a broken tooth or a foot out of joint.

[Billy Graham in town for a crusade sought the Post Office, asked a boy on the street where it was. Then invited the lad to attend the big crusade and hear me tell the people how to be saved and to get to heaven". "I don't think I'll come." Why not? "You don't even know how to get to the Post Office."]

When relationships fail or breakdown it is because one or more of these three break down. Therefore we must work to build up and keep these intact. Golden rule [Matt 7:12] is proactive. It helps if people like you, have a charming personality, show concern for needs, feelings, treat men with dignity, smile, be friendly, courteous.

LOOK AT LOVE

To build relationships the Bible way it is the Golden rule and the family of kids sired by love will look alike.

- “Love one another” Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. 1 Jn 4:7-8.
- Be devoted to one another. Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. Rom 12:16-17
- Concern for one another-body members look after and have same care one for another: 1 Cor 12:25- That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.
- Kind to one another- Eph. 4:32. And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.
- Comfort one another 1Thes 4:18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.
Criticism never comforts
- Serve one another-Gal 5:13-For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

LOOK AT TRUST In order to build relationships, trust one another

- Submit to one another. Eph 5:21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.
- Confess sin to one another. James 5:16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.
- Live in harmony...Rom 12:16-18 Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. Recompense to

no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

- Do not lie... Col 3:14-speak the truth in love.

LOOK AT RESPECT and its twin Honor to build relationships.

- Accept one another: Rom 15:7 Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.
- Encourage one another: 1Thes 5:11-13 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do. 12 And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; 13 And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.
- Build up one another: Rom 14:19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.
- Honor one another: Romans 12:10
- Wash feet-humble yourself John 13:14

HOW? These-love, trust, and respect, are manifest in relationships when we try to:

Include people in conversation and work, not cut off, spurn or exclude them

Seek and value their advice and opinion... "What do you think about..."

Have genuine concern and care for their welfare and interest.

Give them the right to decide, follow their own course, hold opinions unlike our own, to follow their own conscience.

Share love, give gifts; "You can give without loving but you cannot love without giving".

Be friendly, cordial, sensitive, discerning needs of others. The young need emotional support, adults need physical health, middle aged need these and also mental health.

Treat them as responsible persons in charge of their own life.

Consider things that damage relationships

If love respect and trust are essential, whatever affects these three will affect the relationship.

Neglect of stressful fractures in relationships fail to remedy or do nothing to maintain a good relationship. Marriages collapse, children stray from teachers, Churches drift from their shepherd.

"Don't dos" never build a positive relationship; ie what a husband does not do, never goes to the pub, never carouses, never wastes his money, is passive.

The golden rule says buy roses, candy, dinner, gifts, shower with love.

Eight Things that Wound Love will wound a healthy relationship

1. Cruelty-inflicting pain on another person, physical, mental, emotional hurts, bruises.

2. Dislike-antithesis of love [love attracts], a feeling of distaste or repugnance toward another person or when we persist in doing and saying what we know they dislike.
3. Rejection-spurning or refusing an offer or request for intimacy, not Hollywood version of intimacy. The person turned down affects his sense of ego, well being, cause to dread and fear getting close to another emotionally.
4. Withdrawal-coldness, a form of rejection, deliberate and intentional, as in a quest for power or a defensive attitude, or a threat.
5. Ingratitude-it is hard for a generous giver, those who willingly share to bear this rejection. Rom 1:21 ignored God, neither were thankful; a mark of selfishness, may lead to an unwillingness to feel anything.
6. Neglect-The sin of omission, neglect of God's heritage, spouse, saints who could have done something. Kills love by disappointment, a slow starvation, care-less, inattentive, indifferent, negligent. All that love requires to flourish, neglect refuses to give. Material and spiritual welfare of elderly, children, and helpless. Neglect of developing their skills and correcting attitudes, a form of toleration.
7. Envy-ill will at the success of others, their popularity, or privileges. It is not jealousy, that wants another persons position, possession, or place. Envy plots the death of another, it destroys what it cannot own so that no one has it. Love delights in the well being and success of others.
8. Meanness-it is difficult to love a mean person, not just stinginess, tight fistedness with money, but mean of spirit, hateful, spiteful vindictive.

Nine Things that Breach Trust will destroy a healthy relationship

If LOVE ruggedly endures longer than anything else in a relationship [1 Cor.], TRUST is the most fragile, it goes first. It is the most difficult to restore when lost, if ever it can be. A conditional trust results, at best.

1. Breach of confidence- [Prov. 16:28] A whisperer separates very friends.
2. Unfaithfulness (disloyal)- breaks the vows of sworn relationships or covenant obligation. The marriage covenant, the covenant of spiritual sons of God [1 Jn 3].
3. Betrayal-abandon our promise to do or be something, our work means nothing. Jesus is not slack concerning his promises, He demands that our Yea=yea, nay=nay.
4. Dishonesty- be addicted to Truth, court oath "is to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but truth so help you God?" Steal, [Eph 4:28] be deceitful, withhold truth, obscure full truth-wear a hypocrit shoe.
5. Unreliable- inconsistent, not dependable, care-less thoughtless. "Trust requires that I can predict the other persons responsiveness and behavior with accuracy" If in cannot it is tentative, like moodiness, and unpredictable, not to be relied upon.
6. Moral weakness- the fatal flaw to trust, is the backbone to stand under pressure and opposition. Moral resolve rests in what we are, let no one say character is not important to relationship!
7. Lack of self confidence-How can anyone be sure of you if you are not sure of yourself as a leader, a pastor, a father? This is really a lack of confidence in God. In a day of my self-[over] confidence, I got a memo from God....

Memo from God

I am God. Today I will be handling all of your problems. Please remember that I do not need your help. If life happens to deliver a situation to you that you cannot handle, do not attempt to resolve it. Kindly put it in the SFGTD (something for God to do) box. It will be addressed in My time, not yours.

Once the matter is placed into the box, do not hold on to it or remove it. Holding on or removal will delay the resolution of your problem. If it is a situation that you think you are capable of handling, please consult me in prayer to be sure that it is the proper resolution.

Because I do not sleep nor do I slumber, there is no need for you to lose any sleep. Rest my child. If you need to contact me, I am only a prayer away.

Be happy with what you have: Should you find it hard to get to sleep tonight, just remember the homeless family who has no bed to lie in.

Should you find yourself stuck in traffic, don't despair: There are people in this world for whom driving is an unheard of privilege.

Should you have a bad day at work, think of the man who has been out of work for years.

Should you despair over a relationship gone bad, think of the person who has never known what it's like to love and be loved in return.

Should you grieve the passing of another weekend, think of the woman in dire straits, working twelve hours a day, seven days a week to feed her kids.

Should your car break down, leaving you miles away from assistance, think of the paraplegic who would love the opportunity to take that walk.

Should you notice a new gray hair in the mirror, think of the cancer patient in chemo who wishes she had hair to examine.

Should you find yourself at a loss and pondering what is life all about, asking, "What is my purpose?", be thankful. There are those who didn't live long enough to get the opportunity.

Should you find yourself the victim of other people's bitterness, ignorance, smallness or insecurities, remember: things could be worse. You could be like them!

8.

Five Things that will damage Respect or keep people from respecting us.

Here it is the little foxes that spoil the vine that would produce the fruit.

How do we rebuild respect?

1. Not trustworthy-we are frequently seen as inadequate, incompetent, a failure.
2. Irresponsible-not punctual, no follow through with doing what you say.
3. Selfishness-motivated by personal gain, not the cause or Kingdom, 'what's in it for me'
4. Self indulgence or self pity-feeling sorry for ourselves, excusing, rationalizing, or justifying ourselves.
5. Moral failure- cannot stand faithful under pressure, disloyal, unpatriotic, break promises and offer excuses, unfair, unjust, dishonest.

Ways to build POWER RELATIONSHIPS that are sound and healthy.

Especially needful for leaders, teachers and pastors,

1. Build your relationships with courtesy remembering the LOVE-TRUST-RESPECT essentials. Practice polite behavior, act or express care, concern for others feelings, as a human being, loved by God, for whom Christ died, who can be touched healed, saved.

“Practice courtesy, you never know when it might become popular again.”

“Nothing is more becoming to a great man than courtesy and forbearance”-Cicero

“Life is not so short but that there is always enough time for courtesy.”

“Never underestimate the power of simple courtesy: your courtesy might not be remembered and returned, but discourtesy will”.

2. Sense the greatest discourtesy and dishonor then do the opposites. This can be used in POWER relationships

NEVER and ALWAYS OF POWER RELATIONSHIPS:

- ...use people for your own cause, for selfish reasons. ... ALWAYS...
“Keep me from people whoever they be unless I can help them or they can help me”.
- ...criticize, nag, or find fault with what people do help them do better, explain.
“Don’t criticize your spouse’s judgement, look who s/he chose to marry”.
- ...embarrass or make a mockery of them.consider their feelings
- ...ignore or disregard, devalue their person or family....respect value them
- ...be discourteous in speech or behavior, that which is mean and hurtful is also harmful.
- ...expose a weakness publicly, reprimand or chasten before peers..... Praise in public, correct in private.
- ...treat as incompetent or unable to perform as well as another.....make a fair comparison between individuals.
- ...talk down to someone as a low person “You know better than that” Knowing is only one part of KNOWING—FEELING—BEING—DOING complex that determines a persons behavior. [LOGOS— PATHOS —()—ETHOS] Cognitive, affective, and effective.

3. Start with a Power Relationship with God

Exodus 20:1-17

The Decalog is built on LAWS OF SOUND RELATIONSHIPS that empower. Honor thy father and mother is not a mere suggestion! Exodus 20:

1. Thou shalt have no other Gods before me
2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image
3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
4. Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy.
5. Honor thy father and thy mother.
6. Thou shalt not kill.
7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
8. Thou shalt not steal.

9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
10. Thou shalt not covet.

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