

Building Godly Relationships

Week 1: Building Godly *Relationships*

- I. Why we must be relational people
 - a. God is a relational God
 - b. We were created relational beings
 - c. We will only grow as Christians through relationships
 - i. First and foremost we must be properly related to God. 2 Cor 3:12-18
 - ii. Secondly, we must grow in our relationships with others
 1. We are not Spirit-controlled if we are not functioning properly in our relationships Gal 5:19-23
 2. We cannot obey many of the commands of Scripture if we do not have relationships with others.
 - iii. Thirdly, we need each other to help us grow.
 1. We are called to stir each other up to love and good works (Heb 10:24-25)
 2. We are commanded to build each other up (1 Thess 5:11)
 3. Our communication with each other can be a means of God ministering grace, which is necessary for us to grow (Eph 4:29)
 4. God placed us in the church in order to build each other up (1 Cor 12; Eph 4:16;
- II. What is the foundation for our relationships

Exp: We tend to relate to people with whom we share things in common.

 - Those who work with us
 - Those who live in our neighborhood
 - Those who have similar hobbies/interests
 - a. United in Adam
 - i. United in him biologically (Gen 3:20; 5:1ff)
 - ii. United in him theologically
 1. In the image of God (Gen 1:27; 5:1-2)
 2. In sin (Rom 5:12ff)
 3. This is the cause of many of our relational problems. It comes from sinful hearts.
 - a. Greed—we use others for our material gain
 - b. Fear—fear of what we do not know or understand

- c. Covetousness—longing for what others have
 - d. Hatred—anger and ill will towards others
 - e. Pride—thinking we are superior in some way
 - f. Apathy—not caring about the issues others face
 - iii. When we go into a room, we gravitate towards those like us
 - b. United in Christ
 - i. We have a greater union in Christ (Rom 5:12ff)
 - ii. This is a new identity (2 Cor 5:17; Gal 2:20; Col 3:3-10)
 - iii. Where is this new unity to be displayed? In the church (in this age) (Col 3:11; Gal 3:26-28; Eph 2:11-22)
- III. Conclusion
- a. We are relational people, so we must have godly relationships in the church
 - b. We can have relationships with everyone in the church, because we are all made in God's image, are all fallen sinners, and are all made new in Christ
 - c. We should seek to emphasize our shared characteristics in our relationships in the church

Week 2: Building **Godly** Relationships

- I. Introduction/Review
 - a. There are two very wrong mindsets to have
 - i. To think that you don't need any relationships and not care whether or not you have them—to be independent.
 - ii. To feel a deep need for personal relationships and to think it's the responsibility of others to meet your needs—to be dependent
 - b. The right mindset to have
 - i. To learn more and more your need for relationships with others and more and more your responsibility to provide relationships for others—to be interdependent.
- II. Guiding Principle for Relationships: Love
 - a. Importance of Love
 - i. It is the core of God's commands Matt 22:34-40; Rom 13:8-10
 - ii. It is the distinguishing mark of a believer Jn 13:34-35
 - iii. It is evidence that we are born again 1 Jn 2:9-11; 3:14-15; 4:7-12, 19-21
 - b. Essence of love
 - i. 1 Jn 4:10
 - ii. 1 Jn 3:16 (17-18)
 - iii. Jn 15:12-13
 - iv. Essence of love: Love is self-sacrificial action for others, regardless of their worth, that genuinely seeks the good of others even at the greatest cost to yourself.
 - c. Characteristics of Love (1 Cor 13)
 - i. Love is patient/suffers long
 - ii. Love is kind
 - iii. Does not envy
 - iv. Does not boast
 - v. Is not proud
 - vi. Is not rude
 - vii. Is not self-seeking
 - viii. Is not easily angered
 - ix. Keeps no record of wrongs
 - x. Does not delight in evil
 - xi. Rejoices with truth
 - xii. Always protects (puts up with everything)
 - xiii. Always perseveres

- xiv. Always trusts
- xv. Always hopes
- d. Possibility of Love
 - i. Regeneration
 - ii. Faith 1 Cor 13:7
 - 1. Heb 10:32-36
 - 2. Rom 12:19
- e. Concluding thoughts
 - i. We must die to ourselves
 - ii. We must think through our motivation to interact with others
 - 1. Are we seeking to meet a need so that we will be recognized or that others will feel indebted to us, or out of concern for the well-being of the other person?
 - 2. Are we seeking to deal with a sin because it bothers us or hurt us, or because it offended God and is hurting the individual sinning?
 - 3. Are we seeking to speak God's truth in order to make ourselves look better or make the person feel guilty, or because we want to minister God's grace to benefit the other person?

Week 3: Building **Godly** Relationships

I. Introduction

- a. We began by looking at the necessity of relationships and the foundation for relationships
- b. Last week, we considered the guiding principle in our relationships
- c. This week, we want to consider our responsibilities in relationships

II. Responsibilities

- a. We have different responsibilities in different relationships
 - i. Husbands have the responsibility to love their wives and dwell with them in an understanding way, while wives have the responsibility to submit to their husbands
 - ii. Pastors have a responsibility to shepherd the flock by being examples, while church members have a responsibility to obey their church leaders.
- b. We are going to focus on the responsibilities we have with other believers

III. Prohibitions

- a. Do not hate (Titus 3:3)
- b. Do not lie (Col 3:9-10)
- c. Do not slander (James 4:11)
- d. Do not grumble (James 5:9)
- e. Do not judge one another or cause a brother to sin (Rom 14:13)
- f. Do not provoke or envy one another (Gal 5:26)
- g. Do not bite and devour one another (Gal 5:15)

IV. Exhortations

- a. Serve one another (Galatians 5:13; John 13:14)

- b. Prefer/honor one another (Rom 12:10; Phil 2:3)
- c. Admonish one another (Col 3:16; Rom. 15:14)
- d. Receive/welcome one another (Rom 15:7)
- e. Greet one another (1Cor 16:20)
- f. Bear the burdens of one another (Gal 6:2)
- g. Bear with/put up with one another (Eph 4:2; Col. 3:13)
- h. Forgive one another (Eph 4:32)
- i. Comfort/Encourage one another (1 Thess 4:18)
- j. Edify one another (1 Thess 5:11)
- k. Consider/look out for one another (Heb 10:24)
- l. Exhort one another (Heb 3:13; 10:25)
- m. Live in harmony (Rom 12:16; Romans 14:19)
- n. Submit/Be Humble (Eph 5:21; 1 Pet 5:5)
- o. Care/Be Concerned (1 Cor 12:25-26)
- p. Be hospitable (1 Peter 4:9)
- q. Pray for (James 5:16)

V. Reasons

- a. Safety of Believers (James 5:19-20; Heb. 3:13)
- b. Glory of God (Rom 15:7)

Week 4: **Building** Godly Relationships

Introduction: The gospel is to be at the center of all we do, and is to be at the center of our relationships. The truths of the gospel help us to know what kinds of actions and attitudes to avoid and what kind of actions and attitudes to adopt in building our relationships

I. What the Gospel Moves Us to Reject

a. Pride

Exp: The gospel helps us to realize that we are not any better than others.

b. Fear

Exp: The gospel removes our fear of rejection, because we have already been accepted in Christ.

c. Isolation

Exp: Though the gospel saves individuals, it saves them in community.

d. Selfishness

Exp: The gospel helps us to understand that the world does not revolve around us.

e. Apathy

Exp: The gospel helps us to see the importance of the church and other people, so we cannot be passive.

f. Manipulation

Exp: The gospel helps us to see that we don't need to use others for our own gain. The gospel frees us to commit to others even when it does not benefit us.

g. Critical Spirit

Exp: The gospel helps us to know that we are not accepted by God based on our own doing. Thus, we no longer feel a need to maintain our self-image by cutting others down.

II. What the Gospel Moves Us to Embrace

a. Openness/Vulnerability

Exp: As we understand the extent of our sin and the glory of God's grace, we will see the need to guard ourselves by being open about our struggles.

b. Integrity

Exp: The gospel frees us to be people of integrity—acting with different people in the same way. We do not need to put on fronts or conform to others expectations.

c. Holiness

i. In our interactions

Exp: We will pursue relationships in a way that promotes holiness in ourselves and others. We won't place ourselves or others in temptation, nor will we enjoy sin together.

ii. In others

Exp: We will not allow sin in the lives of others, because we want to see them grow in holiness.

III. Practical Considerations

- a. Friendliness
- b. Interest
- c. Time
- d. Resources