

## **The Need for a Bible Study on Relationships**

- **All of us are in relationships.**
  - by birth
  - by association
  - by choice
  
- **All of us can use some help.**
  - You need help.
  - You can help someone.
  - we are sinners; other ppl are sinners; day to day issues; serious problems
  
- **Relationships are foundational to Christianity.**
  - You can't be a Christian and live in a dysfunctional relationship without trying to do something about it.
  - If you have a problem, you have to do something about it.
  - You are to be proactively treating other people well.

*1 John 3:10 In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother. 14 We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother<sup>cl</sup> abides in death.*

*1 John 4:7-8 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup> He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.*

- The Bible has a lot to say about relationships.
  - over 30 “one another” passages
  - some are one sentence; others lists; 10 main categories, kinds of attitudes and actions
  - deserves and demands our study, attention, submission, transformation
  - one church made it into a verb – “one anothering”

If so many instructions, areas – where do I start?

- ILL** – suspenders hold it all together
- scarf – “ties” it all together

**Where “One Anothering” Begins**  
**Colossians 3:14**

Read v. 14; note context – “one anothers”; v. 12 – “put on”; v. 14 – “above all these things” – epi – upon – sash – ties & holds it all together; “bond of perfection” – holds it all together so it is and remains complete

**Where do I start?**

- **Think about your own experience.**  
“as the elect of God, holy and beloved”
  - in a way that fits who you are as a Christian
  - also – in a way that reflects your own experience  
  - Chosen by Him
  - Set apart by Him
  - Loved by Him
  
- **Decide what kind of person you will be.**  
“put on”
  - pretend?**ILL** – “What am I going to wear today?” – choose for yourself
  - context – put on . . . .
  - when ppl see you, it is obvious what you are “wearing”
    - “Wow, nice shirt/earrings”
    - “Wow, he’s really patient today/ she’s really thoughtful today”
  
- **Understand love.**  
*Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.*  
1 John 4:11

**What is this love?**

- **Free Acceptance of One Another**  
*Romans 14:13 Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother’s way.*

*Romans 15:7 Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us,<sup>[a]</sup> to the glory of God.*

**ILL** – cleaning up fireworks trash after NYE; thinking, don’t want neighbors to think we are trashing the neighborhood; do not want to be disliked

- how much of what we do as Christians is like that – worried about what other ppl will think

**EX** – ppl who leave work and come straight to church; worried about how they are dressed

**EX** – new person in church

- don't know the dress code yet

We judge ppl by appearance, actions, associations.

- we make others earn our acceptance; God freely accepts us!

*Deut. 7:7-8 The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; but because the LORD loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.*

- **Costly Involvement with One Another**

John 13:14-15, 34-35

Galatians 5:13 – by love serve one another

Galatians 6:2 - bear one another's burdens

Ephesians 4:2 – forbear (bearing with) one another in love

James 5:16 – pray for one another

1 Peter 4:9 – show hospitality to one another without grumbling

Hebrews 10:25 – not forsaking assembling together; exhorting one another

1 Corinthians 6:7 – going to law w/ one another vs. taking a loss

- this is going to cost you; it cost Jesus to love you; you will lose some things when you do this

- listen to someone's problems; give money to a needy family; take time to give someone a ride; the mental anguish of working through a conflict; releasing someone from an obligation or offence

*By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. 1 John 3:16-18*

- **Steadfast Loyalty to One Another**

Romans 8:35-39 - what does it take to separate you from someone?

Romans 12:9-21 – even through hurts, offences, disappointments

God's relationship with His ppl

- **Relentless Pursuit of One Another**

1 Peter 1:22 – love one another with a pure heart fervently

1 Thessalonians 3:12 – increase and abound in love to one another

Ephesians 4:32 – even as God for Christ's sake (in Christ) has forgiven you

**TRANS** – This doesn't happen naturally, quickly, automatically

**How can I cultivate it?**

- **Study and emulate Christ.**

*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.* John 13:34

- not just WWJD but how has Jesus treated me?

- read the gospels with this intent

- **Make it a prayer project.**

*And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you . . .* 1 Thessalonians 3:12

- daily prayer; family devotions; SS prayer requests

- as long as you're healthy, wealthy, and wise – think you're ok; spiritually sick with selfishness, apathy, superiority, judgmentalism, gossip, bitterness, unforgiveness, conflict and silence between Chr bros and siss, family members, husbands and wives

- **Habitually listen to the Spirit.**

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love . . .* Galatians 5:22

- in the Word; yielded; sensitive

- this series – come with intent to listen to what God says to you about your relationships, intent on not solving problem, fixing other person, but changing, becoming a more loving person