

FUCJCA
Christian Education



Wednesday, April 9, 2025 – 7::30-9:30pm

FOCUS SCRIPTURES:

Romans 15:5; Cossians 3:13; James 1:19;
1st Peter 4:8

Objectives of the Lesson

1. Discuss the functions relationships serve, identifying the characteristics that distinguish one relationship from another.
2. learn the behavior among acquaintanceships, friendships, and romantic relationship
3. Observe from biblical references relational effects
4. To help individuals to improve their relationship struggles

WHAT IS A RELATIONSHIP, AND WHY DO WE NEED THEM

The term relationship refers to a wide array of social connections that to varying degrees meet Our interpersonal needs. When we speak of interpersonal relationships (we are concerned with the relationships we share with our parents, significant other, siblings, friends, employer or employees, physician, and instructors, among others. Other words that can be used for relationship are, rapport, liaisons, correlations, contacts, affair, dealings, associations, links, bonds, link, nexus.

The kind of interpersonal communication we use when relating with another person reflects the nature, importance, and effectiveness of that particular relationship in Our life.

The expectations we have for a relationship depend on its nature as well as on the specific needs we want it to fulfill. For example, we likely have different relational expectations for a doctor, a coworker, a friend, a lover, and a family member. As a result, we probably use different rules to guide our behavior in relating to each of them, and we measure each relationship's effectiveness according to somewhat different criteria that we establish based on our goals for the particular relationship.

Our goals for a relationship reflect the kind of interaction we expect to share. When interacting with a physician, for example, Our goals are more than likely different from those we have when interacting with a friend. Our expectations for a work relationship are probably different from those for a romantic relationship. Despite this, however, we might see certain commonalities in the way we approach others and communicate during Our interactions.

Relationships help meet personal needs and goals. Perhaps we are lonely and seek an outlet from our isolation. Maybe we feel a need to release pent-up tensions, discuss our interests, or share concerns and feelings. Perhaps we want to change another's beliefs or attitudes. Or maybe we aspire to learn more about ourselves. Whatever our personal reasons for reaching out to another human being, the desire to interact with and develop meaningful relationships lives in us all, helping to define our humanness. We need interpersonal contact to survive.

RELATIONSHIPS PRESERVE HAPPINESS AND HEALTH

There is a correlation (connection) between happiness and relationship effectiveness. There is also a scientific correlation (link) between happiness and how long we live.

According Holding MFT Relationship Statistics, those who report feeling happy live up to 35 percent longer than those who do not feel happy.

Unhappiness, can be caused by problems such as depression, marital conflict, family violence, and job dissatisfaction, sometimes results from a lack of relational attention and poorly handled relationship problems.

However, family, friends, and associates, can function as social support and help us get through the stresses and challenges of life events.

Not only do relationships help preserve our mental well-being, but they also affect us physically. People involved in problematic relationships experience more medical problems than do those with better-functioning relationships

The incidence of heart attacks and traffic accident injuries is higher among people whose relationships are failing than it is among those whose relationships are thriving.

Mortality rates, in fact, are higher for those whose social support systems are lacking, who do not feel part of a group or a family, or do not feel that they “fit in” somewhere.

Persons with terminal illnesses tend to die sooner if they have only a small group of friends rather than a large array of family members and friends on whom they can rely for support.

Widowed men who do not remarry have higher mortality rates than those who do.

The resilience of women also declines after a spouse’s death. The immune systems of widows are weaker than those of their married counterparts. Lonely people die sooner and wenger. This is more of a problem for men than for women because men usually have fewer close friendships.

RELATIONSHIPS PREVENT ISOLATION

All of us need person-to-person contact. When cut off from others, we suffer. Even our dreams reflect our desire to end loneliness and feelings of isolation or estrangement. For example, hermits (loners) are prone to hallucinating (be delirious) that other people are present and speaking to them, the bereaved are apt to imagine their dead loved ones are there with them, and those who are incarcerated dream about meeting their family members, friends, and other people on the outside.

When our social surroundings fail to reflect our wishes, we try to manufacture situations that do reflect them, even if only subconsciously. Humans have the need to belong.

WHY DO WE NEED OTHERS

What happens to those who feel cut off from others? Feelings of isolation increase the risk of death. Lonely people die wenger. By being in relationships, we combat loneliness and experience belonging. Relationships provide us with a sense of inclusion. **When they are lacking, we are often left with a sense of doom.**

UNDERSTAND THE NATURE OF FRIENDSHIP AND ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

People in healthy relationships enjoy the following:

- They look forward to being together because they enjoy each other’s company.
- They accept each other as they are, are free to be themselves, and make few, if any, demands on the other person to change.

- They trust each other and are willing to put themselves in the hands of the other, because each assumes that the other will act in his or her best interest.
- They share a high level of commitment and are willing to help and support each other.
- They respect each other.
- They are willing to share personal information and engage in high levels of self-disclosure; as a result, they are better able to predict each other's behaviors and responses

HOW SHOULD WE NAVIGATE OUR CHRISTIAN WALK IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS

God offers us principles in his Word to know how to navigate the complicated aspects of relationships. The relationships in the Bible are just as varied and difficult as the ones we have today. We will learn many truths by looking through a relationship lens when we read the Bible. In the Bible there are family relationships, friendships, partnerships and even romantic relationships.

- . The ultimate pattern of an excellent, well rounded relationship is the one that God has with the church, that was brought out through Him manifesting in the flesh and dying on the cross to redeem His people from sinful natures.
- The life of Jacob teaches much about family dynamics.
- Ruth had a unique romantic relationship with Boaz.
- David had a legendary friendship with Jonathan.
- Paul, Barnabas, and John Mark had partnerships that were sometimes good and sometimes rocky.

Before we look at specific dynamics of relationships in the bible, let us understand the groundwork of a healthy relationship, regardless of the category in which it falls.

A friend loves at all times. – Proverbs 17:17

A lasting relationship of any kind has this hallmark: love. Friends must love each other through thick and thin for a relationship to last. If we only show love during good times, we can't be the kind of friend God wants us to be. If our friend only loves us when things are going well, then leaves us when things go wrong, we may need to find a new friend who is more devoted. God will help us show devotion and unconditional love as we meditate on verses about friendship.

Forgive Faults. Love prospers when a fault is forgiven, but dwelling on it separates close friends. **Proverbs 17:9**

Any relationship that lasts needs forgiveness. We are all imperfect human beings, and eventually, we will run into misunderstandings even with those we love. We will hurt others, and others will hurt us, but if we can forgive a fault, love can be restored. However, dwelling on wrongs and refusing to let them go causes angry division and painful separation. We may have been hurt in our relationships, or we may have been the one to hurt others. Forgiveness is the best way to open a new path in a hurting relationship.

Avoid Arguments - An offended friend is harder to win back than a fortified city. Arguments separate friends like a gate locked with bars. – Proverbs 18:19

People tend to handle conflict in predictable patterns. Some people withdraw, others explode whilst some people let their feelings leak out through passive aggression. None of these methods strengthen relationships. Rather, they tear relationships apart and set both parties in a self-designed prison. We will inevitably run into disagreements, but we can choose not to argue. By handling differences with respect and a cool head, we can preserve Our relationships.

Betrayal Hurts - Even my best friend, the one I trusted completely, the one who shared my food, has turned against me. – Psalm 41:19

If we have ever been betrayed by someone close to us, we understand the unique pain David describes in this verse. It hurts when we share Our life with someone and then they reject or betray us. Betrayal may take the form of disloyalty, disclosing information shared in the relationship, or simply neglecting to care for the relationship. This relationship problem can turn into bitterness if not handled properly.

Serve One Another For we have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use Our freedom to satisfy Our sinful nature. Instead, use Our freedom to serve one another in love. – Galatians 5:13

All believers are free because Jesus set us free from sin and death. But we are not allowed to use our freedom to mistreat others. God calls us to have servant hearts in our relationships. We are to give selflessly, always considering the other person's needs before our own. We can follow Jesus' example in serving one another.

Love As Jesus Did - So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. – John 13:34

Jesus set the bar high for us because he wants the best for us. Remember that on the night before his death, he washed all the disciples' feet, even the feet of Judas, who betrayed him. God will empower us to show this kind of love in Our relationships. He will help us love even when it is hard.

No Pretenses Allowed - Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. – Romans 12:9

God has called us to be authentic in all our dealings. We can fake feelings, but others know deep down when we are pretending to love them. To really love others, we must remove Our mask and take risks. Love can be costly, but lasting connections are only made when we risk Our heart. God will help us courageously love others without hiding behind masks.

Lay Down Your Life - Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. – John 15:13

Great love requires sacrifice. You don't have to literally die for someone else to prove your love for them. However, you may need to die to **yourself many times in your relationships to make improvements**. Putting others first usually requires a sacrifice on your part. You may need to give up time, energy or personal preferences for someone else's benefit. When you do this, you love others the way Jesus did. It's the highest form of love with the most potential for rewarding relationships.

In the next lesson we will study the relationships in the Bible in order to understand their causes and detriments of a bad relationship versus the rewards of a good relationship.

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