

LESSON 17

RELATIONSHIPS

Memorize:

"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."
(Romans 12:18)

INTRODUCTION

As children of God, we should have god relationships with members of our family, friends, and associates. We frequently fail to maintain good relationships, because of our sinful nature, the hurts and scars of past sin and the habits and attitudes we have developed. Paul tells us that we should be "*transformed by the renewing of our minds.*" (**Romans 12:2**) This changes our attitude towards our neighbor, the church, the work place and government.

ATTITUDE TOWARD YOU NEIGHBOR

1. What did Jesus command in **John 15:12**? _____
2. What is the royal law? (**James 2:8**)

3. If we love our neighbor, we will not do what? (**Romans 13:10**)

4. What is the greatest of these: faith, hope, or charity? (**1 Corinthians 13:13**)
_____ (Another word for charity is love.)
5. How should Christians treat one another? (**Ephesians 4:32**)
 - a) _____
 - b) _____
 - c) _____

How should we forgive one another?

6. What happens if we do not forgive others? (**Matthew 6:15**)
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ATTITUDE IN THE CHURCH

1. Christians must be concerned about their relationships with fellow believers. The Bible clearly teaches us how we should treat each other.

What two words describe brethren dwelling in unity? (**Psalm 133:1**) _____
and _____

2. Why shouldn't we judge our brother? (**Romans 14:10**)
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3. **James 3:16** tells us "...where envy and strife is, there is _____
and every _____."

4. How will others know you are a disciple of Christ? (**John 13:35**)
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ATTITUDE IN THE WORK PLACE

1. According to **Deuteronomy 8:18**, who gives us power to get wealth?
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2. Each of us has the desire to excel and to succeed. However, in spite of our best efforts, we still have one other factor to consider. **Psalm 75:6-7** tells us where our promotion really comes from. It comes from _____.

3. Read **Colossians 3:22-24**. This pertains to our employment and our attitude to our employer. Paul says our work should be done _____ as unto the Lord and not to men.

4. Being a Christian is not an excuse to be slothful. **Proverbs 25:19** says, "...an unfaithful man...is like a _____ tooth, and a _____ out of joint."

5. Consider these several characteristics and actions and check the ones you think make a good worker:

_____ Early starter	_____ Witnessing on company time
_____ Clock watcher	_____ Late arrival
_____ Extended lunch breaks	_____ Quitting early

ATTITUDE TOWARD GOVERNMENT

1. Read **Romans 13:1-7**. **Verse 1** tells us we should be "...subject unto the higher powers," because they are ordained (ordered) by whom? _____
If we resist the power, we are resisting the ordinance of God.
2. God has ordained that there be rulers who bear arms; i.e., police, military. They are called "*ministers of God*" to execute wrath upon him that doeth _____.
3. **1 Peter 2:17** tells us to "_____ all men. _____ the brotherhood. _____ God."
4. **1 Timothy 2:1-2** tells us that we should pray for all men that are in authority so "...that we may lead a _____ and _____ life in all _____ and _____."
5. What does Jesus say about paying taxes in **Matthew 22:17-21**?

OUR TONGUE AFFECTS RELATIONSHIPS

Our speech is important in our relationship with other people and we need to consider how our words will affect them before they are spoken. The tongue can either build or destroy.

1. What is in the power of the tongue? _____ (**Proverbs 18:21**)
2. What does **James 1:26** say about a man's religion if he doesn't bridle or control his tongue? _____
3. **Matthew 12:34** says that the mouth speaks about that which is in the _____.
4. What will happen to us for speaking careless words? (**Matthew 12:36**)

HINDRANCES TO GOOD RELATIONSHIPS

Improper attitudes and actions can damage any relationship. These include guilt, blame, anger, self-centeredness, and pride.

A. GUILT

Guilt can result from an improper relationship, attitude, or action. If we have a guilty conscience, it will be difficult to reach out to love others as we should. The Bible teaches us the proper response to guilt.

Fill in the blanks:

1. **Proverbs 28:13** says, "He that _____ his sins shall not prosper: but whoso _____ and _____ them shall have mercy."
2. How is guilt removed? (**1 John 1:9**) _____

B. BLAME AND ANGER

Blame and anger are common responses when we have not dealt with our guilt. Often when we are confronted with our wrong action, we either blame someone else or retaliate with anger because we got caught.

1. When God asked Adam if he ate the fruit of the tree, what was his response? (**Genesis 3:12**) He _____ Eve for giving him a bite of it.
2. Life is not always the way we want it to be. We may experience anger because people or things displease us.

Mark the following true or false:

_____ Anger is a choice.

_____ Anger is always a sin.

_____ Anger may result from unrealistic expectations of someone.

_____ Anger is a strong emotion.

3. How soon should we get rid of our angry feelings? (**Ephesians 4:26**) _____

C. SELF-CENTEREDNESS

1. Naturally we tend to focus on ourselves and our needs, but **Philip. 2:3-4** tells us we should look for the well-being of whom? _____
2. In **Romans 12:10**, Paul describes three attitudes that should govern our relationship with others.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____

D. PRIDE

Pride can frequently get in the way of good relationships.

1. "For I say...to every man that is among you, not to think of _____ more _____ than he ought to think..." (**Romans 12:3**)
2. "Pride goeth before _____ and a haughty spirit before a _____." (**Proverbs 16:18-19**)
3. In **Proverbs 6:16-19**, Solomon lists seven things the LORD hates. List them:
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____
 - 6) _____
 - 7) _____
4. Read **1 Peter 5:5** and fill in the blanks:

"...God resisteth the _____, and giveth grace to the _____."

E. OFFENSES AND FORGIVENESS

1. **Matthew 18:15-17** gives us instruction in the event of a fault or if someone has wronged us. To whom should we go first to discuss the matter?

2. Read **Proverbs 18:19**. What is harder to be won than a strong city?

3. What should we do when we realize that we have offended someone?
(Matthew 5:24) _____

4. How does the Lord respond to a person who will not forgive another?
(Matthew 18:32-35)
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SUMMARY

God frees us from the penalty of sin and then enables us to function in meaningful relationships to help others. As we get to know God better, we understand more what true love is, and that this love should be the motivating force in our relationships.

1 Timothy 1:5 says, “Now *the end of the commandment is charity (love) out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned (genuine)...*”

Since we are no longer empty vessels but rather filled and satisfied, we can reach out and touch others in meaningful ways that will draw them closer to the Lord.

NOTES: QUESTIONS/COMMENTS