

A. **THE POTENTIAL OF GOOD INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

Good, loving, edifying relationships are possible but they do take time.

Galatians 5:22-23 (NASB)

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

Ephesians 4:32 (NASB)

And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

James 3:1 7-18 (NASB)

But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

B. **THE PROBLEMS OF GOOD INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

1. **THE SOCIOLOGICAL FACTORS**

- a. mobility—people are moving and as a result, there are no deep relationships.
- b. ecumenicity—denominational tags mean less and less.
- c. occupational diversity—occupations used to be farming, and now everybody's work seems to be different.
- d. isolationism—"I want to be by myself with my family."
- e. spectatoritis—we are a nation of non-involved watchers.
- f. the "throw away" syndrome—we are suffering from "over choice." Relationships are like a box of Kleenex. You use it, wad it up, and pitch it.
- g. "gearing up" syndrome—it's planning for next week, next month, and next year—focusing on activities instead of relationships.

2. THE SCRIPTURAL FACTOR

The big culprit in interpersonal relationships is the problem of sin. We see evidence of this in:

- a. Genesis 3
- b. Galatians 5:19-21
- c. James 3:13-16
- d. Ephesians 4:25-29

Sin brings a breakdown in relationships.

C. THE PATTERN—SCRIPTURAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR RELATIONSHIPS

In these 37 responsibilities for one another we find the pattern for good and godly relationships.

1. Oneness

Philippians 2:2

Make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.

2. Fellowship

Acts 2:42

And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

3. **Consolation**

Colossians 4: 11

and also Jesus who is called Justus; these are the only fellow workers for the kingdom of God who are from the circumcision; and they have proved to be an encouragement to me.

4. **Example**

Philippians 3:17

Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us.

5. **Commitment**

2 Corinthians 7:3

I do not speak to condemn you; for I have said before that you are in our hearts to die together and to live together.

6. **Eating**

Acts 2:46

And day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart.

7. **Respect**

Romans 15:20

And thus I aspired to preach the gospel, not where Christ was already named, that I might not build upon another man's foundation;

8. Motivating

Hebrews 10:24

and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,

9. Sympathetic

1 Peter 3:8

To sum up, let all be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit.

10. Greet

Philippians 4:21

Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren who are with me greet you.

11. Sharing

Acts 2:45

and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need .

12. Teaching

Colossians 3:16

Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

13. Assembly

Hebrews 10:25

not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.

14. Confession

James 5:16

Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

15. Comfort

2 Corinthians 1:4

who comforts us in all our affliction so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

16. Welcome

Galatians 2:9

and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we might go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.

17. Hospitality

Romans 12:13

contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.

18. Kind

Ephesians 4:32

And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

19. Forgiveness

Matthew 5:23-24

If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.

20. Love

1 John 4:11

Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

21. Giving

Philippians 4:14-15

Nevertheless, you have done well to share with me in my affliction. And you yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone;

22. Communicating

Ephesians 5:19

speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;

23. Exhorting

Ephesians 4:1 5

but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ,

24. Admonishing

2 Thessalonians 3:14-15

And if anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of that man and do not associate with him, so that he may be put to shame. And yet do not regard him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

25. Submissive

Ephesians 5:21

and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.

26. Caring

1 Corinthians 12:26

And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.

27. Refreshing

Romans 15:32

so that I may come to you in joy by the will of God and find refreshing rest in your company.

28. Functioning

Ephesians 4:16

from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

29. Touching

1 Corinthians 16:20

All the brethren greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

30. Responsibility

Galatians 6:2

Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ.

31. Encouragement

Romans 1:12

that is, that I may be encouraged together with you while among you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine.

32. Edifying

1 Corinthians 14:26

What is the outcome then, brethren? When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.

33. Removing

1 Corinthians 5:13

But those who are outside, God judges. Remove the wicked man from among yourselves.

34. Restoring

Galatians 6:1

Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted.

35. Striving Together

Philippians 1:27

Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ; so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

36. Honesty

Ephesians 4:25

Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth, each one of you, with his neighbor, for we are members of one another.

37. Confronting

Matthew 18:15-17

And if your brother sins, go and reprove him in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed. And if he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax-gatherer.

The Mind

I. The Battle of the Mind

Isaiah 55:8-9 (NIV)

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the Lord. “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Mark 7:20-23 (NASB)

And He was saying, “That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man.”

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 (NASB)

And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Romans 7:23 (NASB)

but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members.

Romans 1:28 (NASB)

And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper,

Romans 8:7 (NASB)

because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so;

Romans 11:34 (NASB)

For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor?

Titus 1:15 (NASB)

To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled.

Mark 5:15 (NASB)

And they came to Jesus and observed the man who had been demon- possessed sitting down, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had had the “legion”; and they became frightened.

II. Scriptures for the Mind

Isaiah 26:3 (NIV)

You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you.

Matthew 22:37 (NASB)

And He said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.”

Colossians 3:2 (NASB)

Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

III. **Transforming the Mind**

Philippians 2:5 (NASB)

Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,

Ephesians 4:23 (NASB)

and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind,

2 Corinthians 13:11 (NASB)

Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

Philippians 4:8 (NASB)

Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.

1 Corinthians 2:16 (NASB)

For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he should instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ.

IV. **Right Thinking**

2 Corinthians 10:5 (NASB)

We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,

1 Peter 1:13 (NASB)

Therefore, gird your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Romans 12:2, 16 (NASB)

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.

Lamentations 3:21 (NIV)

Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope:

Acts 17:11 (NASB)

Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so.

Ephesians 3:20 (NASB)

Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,

Psalm 19:12-14 (NLT)

How can I know all the sins lurking in my heart?
Cleanse me from these hidden faults.
Keep your servant from deliberate sins!
Don't let them control me.
Then I will be free of guilt
and innocent of great sin.
May the words of my mouth
and the meditation of my heart be pleasing to you,
O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

D. THE PROCESS

The process involved in being in a position to develop good Christ-like relationships is to recognize our patterns of thinking, feeling and acting.

What you are thinking will determine how you are feeling (emotionally) and acting (conduct).