



Relating

Sunday, March 3, 2024

Blurb: The book of James presents us with practical tips on ... **building healthy relationships** ...

Big Idea: “*Treating others the way we would like to be treated.*”

- In Bible used in the sense of relating an event. But many verses regarding our relationship with others.
- Relating - participle.
- Part of verb. Doesn't stand alone. Needs helping verb – am relating/was relating/will be relating.
- Continuous. Past, Present, future. Ongoing action.
- Fits with meaning.
- Joins. Connection b/n
- Has something to do with 2 or more people (groups).
- Make or show connection between
- Associate, link, correlate, have rapport with get on (well) with, respond to, sympathize with.
- Positive word.

- Different kinds/levels of relating according to closeness of relationship – spouses, parent to child and vice versa, to close friends or casual contact or work colleague.
- But same basic principles.
- “No man is an island.”

1. Relating to Jesus

- Relating to Jesus is our **foundation** for **building** healthy relationships.
- All other relationships stem from this.
- Need to spend time with Him – a principle for all relationships.

Matthew 22:37-38 (NIV)

Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment.”

Philippians 3:8 (TLB)

“Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the priceless gain of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. I have put aside all else, counting it worth less than nothing, in order that I can have Christ.”

- We can’t build healthy relationships without Him. We need the indwelling Holy Spirit to guide and purify all relationships.

2. Love your neighbour as yourself.

James 2:8 *If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, “Love your neighbour as yourself,” you are doing right.*

a. Have a genuine love and concern for people.

Basic attitude of relating to others – love and acceptance.

b. As you love yourself.

Not proud, but accepting who we are.

We love/accept others equally, on the same level as we love/accept ourselves. Not higher or better, not under, feeling unworthy.

This leads to how we treat people ...

How we relate to others stems from the first two points – from a heart of love and acceptance to God and for people.

Not based on what they do, but who they are.

3. Don't show favouritism.

Now to Key Text:

James 2:1-7

Favouritism Forbidden

"... believers ... must not show favouritism. ² Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. ³ If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, "Here's a good seat for you," but say to the poor man, "You stand there" or "Sit on the floor by my feet," ⁴ have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

⁵ ... Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him? ⁶ But you have dishonoured the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? ⁷ Are they not the ones who are blaspheming the noble name of him to whom you belong?"

Romans 2:11: For God does not show favouritism.

Here: 2 ideas:

Not giving priority to influential people.

Not degrading the “down and out”

❖ Favouritism can happen many all areas of life.

Eg. Families – parents not to favour one child above others or pick on one more than the others. Each should know they are equally loved.

Likewise in school and work settings. We’ve heard of “teacher’s pet” – experienced it or seen it. Feelings of jealousy/unworthiness

Can be awkward when dealing with people with a difficult personality, dressed dirtily/shabbily, etc. outcasts of society.

❖ 2 sides: trying to curry the favour of rich and influential or ignoring the “unlovely”

Introducing the “Kingdom Culture” – all equal because in it by grace

Level pegging.

- Motive important – not trying to gain favour because of a person’s position.
- Not looking down on people.
- Also not feeling unworthy.

4. Do nothing out of selfish ambition.

Philippians 2:3-4

³ *Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, ⁴ not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.*

➤ It goes on to describe Jesus' humility – our example

5. Don't judge each other.

James 2:11-12

"Brothers and sisters, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them speaks against the law and judges it. ... who are you to judge your neighbour?"

- Don't try to remove the speck of dirt from your neighbour's eye, when there's a plank in your own.
- When pointing the finger at others, 3 are pointing back to you.

6. Accept and Encourage Each Other

1 Thessalonians 5:11 *"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing."*

1 Thessalonians 5:10, 15 (MSG): *"Speak encouraging words to one another. Build up hope so you'll all be together in this, no one left out, no one left behind."*

"Look for the best in each other, and always do your best to bring it out."

Romans 15:7

"Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God."

7. Treat others as you would like to be treated.

Proverbs 17:9 (tlb)

“Love forgets mistakes; nagging about them parts the best of friends.”

Colossians 3:13 (NIV)

“Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.”

“Mercy triumphs over judgement.” James 2:13b

- Cover mistakes – remembering you make mistakes too.
- Value good friends
- Be sensitive to needs of the other person. Thinking of MY needs. Others – shy, sensitive to light, noise ...
- Listen equally ...

Conclusion

Above points apply to relating generally, everyday life.
As Christians special aspects of relating, particular only to Christians.

Romans 12:10 (NLT): *“Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honouring each other.”*

John 13:33-35 (NIV)

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

Psalms 133:1-3 (NIV)

“How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity!”

² It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron’s beard, down on the collar of his robe.

³ It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion. For there the Lord bestows his blessing, even life forevermore.”

1 Thessalonians 4:9-10 (MSG)

Regarding life together and getting along with each other, you don’t need me to tell you what to do. You’re God-taught in these matters. Just love one another! You’re already good at it; your friends all over the province of Macedonia are the evidence. Keep it up; get better and better at it.

“... a love uncontaminated by self-interest ...” 1 Timothy 1:5 (MSG)

“Treating others, the way we would like to be treated.”

It’s the way to building healthy relationships.