

# Great Relationships

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## Putting Others First

Through the Bible, God teaches us how to have great relationships. Of course, it's not about changing others, but about changing ourselves to become better family members, friends or life partners. We have to learn to think of others as being more important than ourselves.

## Principles for Great Relationships

### Luke 6:31 (NIV)

- (31) Do to others as you would have them do to you.

How should we act towards others?

### Philippians 2:3-4 (NIV)

- (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.

How can these verses help you to have good relationships?

## Being a Great Family Member

God promises a blessed life for those who honor their parents (Ephesians 6:1-3)

### Ephesians 6:1-3 (NIV)

- (1) Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.
- (2) "Honor your father and mother"—which is the first commandment with a promise—
- (3) "so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."

### Proverbs 23:22-25 (NIV)

- (22) Listen to your father, who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old.
- (23) Buy the truth and do not sell it— wisdom, instruction and insight as well.
- (24) The father of a righteous child has great joy; a man who fathers a wise son rejoices in him.
- (25) May your father and mother rejoice; may she who gave you birth be joyful!

What can we do to make our parents happy?

## Being a Great Friend

What can we learn from these Proverbs about being a great friend?

### Proverbs 16:28 (NIV)

- (28) A perverse person stirs up conflict, and a gossip separates close friends.

### Proverbs 17:9 (NIV)

- (9) Whoever would foster love covers over an offense, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends.

### Proverbs 17:17 (NIV)

- (17) A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for a time of adversity.

### Proverbs 18:24 (NIV)

- (24) One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

### Proverbs 27:9 (NIV)

| (9) Perfume and incense bring joy to the heart, and the pleasantness of a friend springs from their heartfelt advice.

#### **Proverbs 27:17 (NIV)**

| (17) As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

#### **1 Corinthians 15:33 (NIV)**

| (33) Do not be misled: “Bad company corrupts good character.”

What can we learn from this verse about choosing friends, and about being a good friend?

## **Becoming a Great Life Partner**

#### **Ephesians 5:21-33 (NIV)**

- (21) Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.
- (22) Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord.
- (23) For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.
- (24) Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.
- (25) Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her
- (26) to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word,
- (27) and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.
- (28) In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.
- (29) After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church —
- (30) for we are members of his body.
- (31) “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”
- (32) This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church.
- (33) However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

What kind of characteristics do we need to be a great husband or wife?

#### **1 Timothy 5:1-2 (NIV)**

- (1) Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers,
- (2) older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity.

How should we treat other men and women that are not our partner?

## **Ask a Friend**

Can you share a story about something you have done to fix a family relationship?

Do you have a story about something you did to improve a friendship?

Do you have any other questions about relationships?

## **Application**

What can you do to improve the relationships you have?

What can you do this week to be a good friend?

How can we make new friends?

What can you do to prepare to be a good life partner?

HOMEWORK: Try some of the things from the application section and report back on these to the group next week.

## **Prayer Model**

Dear God, I thank You that You want me to have great relationships and that in the Bible You have shown me how to have them. I commit all of my relationships to You.

## **Key Verse**

#### **Philippians 2:3-4 (NIV)**

| “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.”