

Deeper Study Guide

Series: Family Matters

Study: *Relationships Matter to God II*

Scripture: Romans 12.4-5 (NKJV)

Teacher: Pastor Keith

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Objective: to understand the value God places on our relationships and commit to reflecting Christ in how we treat one another in our relationships.

‘God is **relational** - God *created* us to have an *interactive* relationship with Him, so we can **know** Him *personally*, to **experience** His presence *daily*, and **partner** with Him *faithfully* in what **He is doing in the world.**’

God is **love**! At the *center* of God’s relationship with us is His love - a selfless *love* that seeks our *ultimate good* and *shapes* our lives according to His purpose and design.

WORD: 1 John 4.8. God is love. (NLT)

Our Ministry: God calls *every believer* to the ministry of reconciling **sinners** (offenders) to Himself through Jesus Christ. **WORD:** 2 Corinthians 5.18-19 At the center of our relationships is God’s love, which motivates us to selflessly love one another and pursue reconciliation whenever offenses occur. **WORD:** 1 John 4.11

Core idea: God is **relational** and His **love** is at the center of our relationship with Him. We cannot separate our love for God from how we love one another. Even in conflict, we are called to reflect His love and pursue reconciliation whenever possible.

Why relationships matter to God: because He connects us through the body of Christ to belong to one another, no one walks alone, and we share responsibility for one another’s spiritual growth and care according to His divine purpose.

Core idea: God has **connected** us to *belong* to one another in a **mutual** relationship in Christ, sharing responsibility for one another’s spiritual growth and care as we fulfill God’s purpose together.

Points:

1. Our church relationships – How we *relate* to one another

a) _____ relationship – In Christ, we *belong to one another* in **covenant** relationship through His **body** and **blood**. **WORD:** 1 Corinthians 10.16-17

We *mutually* commit to **promote** (uphold), **protect** (cover), and **prosper** (bless) our church family.

b) _____ relationship – In Christ, we treat one another as He personally treats us, with **love**, **truth**, and **grace**. **WORD:** John 13.34-35

Our relationships within Christ’s Body matter because they are **gifts** from God, given so we can walk alongside one another, and never walk *alone* through any **season** of life.

Our Formation: We are in **covenant** with **Christ** and **one another**, committed to *belonging* to one another through His **body** and **blood**, and reflecting Him and His **love** through our **Christ-centered** relationships.

2. Our _____ relationship in Christ – In Christ, we **internalize** His Word, allowing His truth to **replace** our faulty thoughts and His **mind govern** how we think, behave, and respond to our life circumstances. **WORD:** 1 Corinthians 2.16

Our Formation: We are committed to a relationship with Jesus Christ that is *life-changing* by **internalizing** His Word, until His **truth** replaces our **incorrect** thinking and His **mind governs** how we think, and respond to life's circumstances.

3. Our _____ of reconciliation – In Christ, every believer is **entrusted** with the **ministry** of reconciliation, sharing the **message** of God's love, and forgiveness and the reconciliation of sinners (offenders) to God through Jesus Christ.

Application: Ministry of Reconciliation:

- a) _____ forgiveness – an [individual] decision to release an offense and choose not to bring it back up or hold it against the person again.
- b) _____ the relationship – a [mutual] decision that takes *both people* to decide to reconcile with one another.

'Mutual forgiveness means you are willing to reconcile the relationship. It does not mean pretending nothing happened, nothing needs to change, and automatically the relationship is restored to its previous level of trust or closeness.

- c) _____ the relationship – Forgiveness opens the door to restore the relationship but sometimes there needs to be repentance, restitution (taking responsibility, repairing, correcting), and rebuilding trust through changed behavior and accountability.

Let God crush it! WORD: Jeremiah 18.4. But the jar he was making did not turn out as he had hoped, so he **crushed it** into a **lump of clay** and again and **started over**. (NLT)

Building a new relationship identity:

WORD: 2 Corinthians 5.17. Therefore, if anyone is **in Christ**, the **new creation** has come: The **old** has gone, the **new** is here! (NIV)

1. _____ the past behind – your past does not define the relationship
2. _____ from what happened – identify what needs to change
3. _____ your new identity – relate to a new identity guided by 'in Christ'

Principles for building: establish a new relational identity by **leaving** the past behind, **learning** from what happened, and changing the ways you relate to one another, so you can move forward and **live** out a healthier Christ-centered relationship.