

It is not good for Man to be Alone **(Relationships According to the Bible)**

By Al Felder

“And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him.” (Genesis 2:18)

When God created the first man He determined that it was not good for him to be alone. This man needed a companion, therefore, God created woman. After creating the woman, God commanded both the man and the woman to be fruitful and multiply. Thus, we have the beginning of the human race.

In the 17th Century an English Poet by the name of John Donne coined the phrase, “No man is an island entire of itself.” In other words, man is not an isolated being. God created us to have social interaction with one another. Through this interaction we form relationships.

God did not leave us to fend for ourselves in the relationship process. He has given us a blueprint for relationships in His word. The Bible is a book of relationships. Our relationships are extremely important to God, and He gives us guidelines for our relationships within His word.

As we consider the idea of relationships in the Bible, we must realize the most important relationship of all. God created man for the purpose of having a relationship with Him. *“And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.”* (Genesis 3:8) In this verse we discover two important things about the relationship between God and man.

First, we find that communication existed between them. The passage gives us a beautiful picture of everyday life in the garden. God would come down in the cool of the day, that period between the afternoon and nightfall, and He would walk and talk with man. As we consider this, we have a picture of what God intended for His relationship with man to be. This, unfortunately, did not last.

Second, we find that sin changed this relationship. After Adam and Eve disobeyed God, there was an immediate impact on their relationship with Him. Prior to sin, man eagerly awaited God’s presence. God walked and talked with man daily. Once sin entered into the world it changed this relationship. Now, instead of eagerly awaiting the arrival of God, the man and woman hid in fear.

Sin caused a separation between man and God. *“But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.”* (Isaiah 59:2) Now, because of sin man cannot enjoy a relationship with God. A separation has

been made between man and God. It is a separation that man of his own accord can do nothing to repair.

Thankfully, God did for man what he could not do for himself. *“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”* (John 14:6) God made a way for man to once again have a relationship with Him. Jesus is the way. Only through Jesus can we gain access unto the Father.

In His word, God tells us what we must do in order to be restored unto Him. It starts with faith. *“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”* (Mark 16:16) Without faith, all other actions are meaningless. Faith is a trust or confidence in God’s word. We believe what He says. It is this belief followed by our obedience to God’s commands that restore us to God through Christ.

After faith is produced from the word of God, we must repent. *“I tell you, Nay: but except you repent, you shall all likewise perish.”* (Luke 13:3) Repentance simply means that we turn from sin. Next, we must confess Christ as the Son of God. *“Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.”* (Matthew 10:32) Quite simply, we believe that He is who He says He is. Finally, we are baptized into Christ for the remission of our sins. Notice that Christ said belief and baptism equal salvation. By being baptized, we are baptized into the death of Christ where we contact His blood which cleanses us from our sin. From that point we are raised to walk in newness of life.

It is only after we have reconciled our relationship with God that we can make our other relationships what they need to be. *“²⁰If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? ²¹And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God loves his brother also.”* (1 John 4:20, 21) If we do not love God with all our heart, mind, and soul, it will have an effect on our other relationships. We must put God first, and pursue Him first and foremost. By seeking God first, we learn of Him and His ways through His word, and we take that knowledge and seek to relate to one another in a Christ-like way.

There is no other place in scripture that this teaching is laid out more clearly than in the book of Ephesians. Within the first three chapters of the book we learn of God’s great plan of redemption for mankind. Once we have an understanding of this great plan, and we have obeyed the gospel of Christ, thus becoming beneficiaries of the plan, God begins to instruct us on our relationships with each other.

The remainder of the epistle deals with the relationships that we have with one another. *“¹I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called, ²With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; ³Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”* (Ephesians 4:1-3) Because of our relationship with God, we are to have a particular

manner of life. Day in and day out we as Christians are to live our life a particular way. This manner of life is not a solitary journey. Instead, it is a walk of one believer with others.

Each relationship that we find ourselves in is discussed within this passage of scripture. We find a general discussion of our relationship with one another as members of the body of Christ. Then, we have a more intimate discussion of the relationship between husbands and wives followed by a discussion of the relationship between parents and children and employers and employees. The ultimate goal of this discussion is to help us realize that we are walking on the same road. Our relationships with one another should cause us to grow not only individually, but corporately as well. We are to grow as one body into the fullness of Christ for the glory and honor of God.

At the beginning of these various relationships is a denial of self. The passage from Ephesians calls for us to be humble and meek. We are to have the proper view of ourselves in relation to others, and we are to possess self-control. The enemy of both of these godly traits is pride. Pride is when we are focused only on ourselves. This enemy of relationships can manifest itself in one of two ways.

First, pride can exhibit itself through a sense of superiority. *“The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.”* (Luke 18:11) This man believed that he was the source of all that is good, right and worthy of praise. Such a person believes that only he can accomplish anything worthwhile, and that he should be the recipient of all praise. Such a person is competitive towards others, and even towards God. He wants to be on top.

Second, pride can manifest itself through self-pity. We may not be used to thinking of pride in this manner, but the person who wallows in self-pity desires to be elevated and esteemed. It is still pride; it’s only on the opposite side of the coin. This person believes that he has gotten a raw deal in life and is absorbed with a sense of failure. Such individuals are not concerned with doing things for the glory and honor of God. Instead, self-recognition is the ultimate goal.

In order to have proper relationships within our lives we must be like Christ. *“For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”* (Philippians 1:21) We are to no longer live for ourselves. In Christ, we are to live for God. He is first and foremost in our life. All glory and honor goes to Him and is for Him. Next, we must consider others before ourselves. Instead of looking for what we can get out of relationships we must look for what we can give.

Communication is also a key component in any relationship. *“For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers.”* (1 Peter 3:12) We communicate to God through prayer. In Christ, we have the privilege of approaching the Father and talking to Him. Through prayer we can make known our requests and petitions, confess our sins to God and ask forgiveness, express our worries and concerns, and express our gratitude and adoration to Him.

Communication is important in our relationship with one another. The closer the relationship the more transparent we should be. For example, a husband and wife should be completely transparent with one another. There should be no secrets between them.

When a couple fails to communicate for whatever reason great harm is brought on the relationship. One couple sought counseling due to a lack of communication in their relationship.

The wife bitterly said, "I am absolutely certain that this husband of mine is cheating on me; he's been stealing from his overtime pay. And I want to know what he's been doing with it." She had been holding this in for the last four or five months, ever since she had discovered that it had been going on. As a result she had been growing more and more bitter every day. Turning to the husband, the counselor said, "Where did the money go, did you really take it?" Slowly he reached into his pocket, pulled out his wallet, and dug down into the secret compartment, and replied, "It's all here," as he pulled it out and threw it on the desk. "I've been saving it for our anniversary for a special treat."¹

There was a serious problem with communication in this marriage. The wife was ready to break up the marriage over a misunderstanding. She failed to communicate her concern to her husband that may have arisen as a result of past failures. Their lack of communication with one another led to a lack of trust.

In order to communicate well, we must be able to listen well. *"He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him."* (Proverbs 18:13) If we fail to listen, we can often jump to the wrong conclusions about a matter. If we jump to the wrong conclusions we may say or do the wrong thing.

In order to listen well, we must develop certain habits. When someone is talking to us we must concentrate, and consider carefully what the other person is saying. This also involves not formulating what we are going to say while the other person is talking. Next, we shouldn't seek to interrupt others while they are talking. Finally, when in an important conversation ask for clarification in order to ensure that you have the proper understanding.

Also, in order to communicate well we must understand that communication involves more than just words. Communication involves our tone of voice, body language, and deeds. We could say something and give it different meanings based upon our tone of voice, body language, and deeds. For example, we could say, "Could I talk to you for a second?" When we say it with a smile and a warm tone of voice we give off a completely different meaning verses saying it with added emphasis to the words, and an angry facial expression.

¹ Adams, Jay E. 1972. *Christian Living in the Home*. Phillipsburg, NJ : Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1972. p. 29.

We must also be mindful of our speech in order to communicate well. *“Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another.”* (Ephesians 4:25) We should seek to make sure that our speech is honest. There should be no form of deceit in the things that we say. This would include an outright lie, exaggeration, or a half truth.

As we continue to read, further instruction is given to us regarding our communication with one another. *“²⁹Let no corrupt communication proceed from out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. ³¹Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: ³²And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.”* (Ephesians 4:29, 31, 32) In this passage we find the type of words we are not to use as well as the type of words that we are to use. Our words should not be sharp or harsh, or seek to injure someone. Instead our speech should be courteous, compassionate, and forgiving.

In conclusion, our relationships can make us stronger and bring us closer to God when we follow His teachings. *“⁹Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labor. ¹⁰For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. ¹¹Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? ¹²And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.”* (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12) The closer the relationship, the more opportunity it allows for us to grow and become more Christ-like. Whether it is the husband-wife, parent-child, employer-employee, or our relationship with each other as members of the body of Christ, each relationship was designed by God for the purpose of helping us to become stronger and serve Him more faithfully. The ultimate goal of any relationship should not be to make people the way that we want, but to encourage them to become more like Christ.