

## Summer Lovin' – Part 1 Deepening Our Relationships

One of the teachers of religious law was standing there listening to the debate. He realized that Jesus had answered well, so he asked, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" Jesus replied, "The most important commandment is this: 'Listen, O Israel! The Lord our God is the one and only Lord. **And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.**' The second is equally important: '**Love your neighbor as yourself.**' No other commandment is greater than these." The teacher of religious law replied, "Well said, Teacher. You have spoken the truth by saying that there is only one God and no other. And I know it is important to love him with all my heart and all my understanding and all my strength, and to love my neighbor as myself. **This is more important than to offer all of the burnt offerings and sacrifices required in the law.**" Realizing how much the man understood, Jesus said to him, "**You are not far from the Kingdom of God.**" And after that, no one dared to ask him any more questions. **Mark 12:28-34 (NLT)**

### Biblical Relationship Statements

- **Relationships are life's greatest reward and life's greatest challenge.**

*And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you.* **1 Thessalonians 3:12 (NKJV)**

*Therefore **comfort each other and edify one another**, just as you also are doing.* **1 Thessalonians 5:11 (NKJV)**

- **We have to learn to relate to others.**

*You must teach people to have genuine love, as well as a good conscience and true faith.* **1 Timothy 1:5 (CEV)**

- **People do not relate the same way.**

*Respect everyone, and love your Christian brothers and sisters. Fear God, and respect the king.* **1 Peter 2:17 (NLT)**

- **Relationships need constant care and attention.**

*Most important of all, **continue to show deep love for each other**, for love covers a multitude of sins.* **1 Peter 4:8 (NLT)**

- **Relationships need mutual commitment.**

*Finally, **all of you should be of one mind**. Sympathize with each other. Love each other as brothers and sisters. Be tenderhearted, and keep a humble attitude.* **1 Peter 3:8 (NLT)**

- **God expects us to relate well to one another.**

*If it is possible, **as far as it depends on you**, live at peace with everyone.*

**Romans 12:18 (NIV)**

*Instead, **be kind and merciful, and forgive others, just as God forgave you** because of Christ.* **Ephesians 4:32 (CEV)**

*Respect your father and mother. And love others as much as you love yourself.* **Matthew 19:19 (CEV)**

- **Great relationships takes enormous amounts of care, confrontation and character.**
- **Great relationships takes work and deliberate investment of time and emotional energy.**
- **Shallow relationships skimp on purposeful investment and Godly principles.**

*"You're familiar with the old written law, 'Love your friend,' and its unwritten companion, 'Hate your enemy.' I'm challenging that. I'm telling you to love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst. **When someone gives you a hard time, respond with the energies of prayer, for then you are working out of your true selves, your God-created selves.** This is what God does. He gives his best—the sun to warm and the rain to nourish—to everyone, regardless: the good and bad, the nice and nasty. If all you do is love the lovable, do you expect a bonus? Anybody can do that. If you simply say hello to those who greet you, do you expect a medal? Any run-of-the-mill sinner does that. **"In a word, what I'm saying is, Grow up.** You're kingdom subjects. Now live like it. Live out your God-created identity. Live generously and graciously toward others, the way God lives toward you."* **Matthew 5:43-48 (MSG)**

### Jesus Gives Us The Key To Relating Well:

- **You have to be mature to build healthy relationships – v48 "Grow up!"**
- **You can tolerate and awful lot in life when your relationship with the people around you are healthy, growing and Christ honoring.**

*Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from His love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!*  
*Philippians 2:1-8 (NIV)*

**Principle: Although circumstances can be extremely challenging, nothing test our character, resolve and maturity as much as, difficult relationships!**

#### **Maturity In Relationships Mean:**

- **Having the same mindset as Christ Jesus - v5**
- **Not using my privilege and position as an advantage over others - v6**
- **Taking a secondary position by considering others before myself - v7(a)**
- **Seeing serving others as part of my Christ like identity - v7(b)**
- **Being willing to humble myself even though the cost is great - v8**

*Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—**continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose. Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, “children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.” Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in vain.***  
*Philippians 2:12-16 (NIV)*