

Three priorities for healthy relationships

Matthew 5:21-26

life runs on the rails of relationships

- family is all about relationships
- industry is about relationships
- ministry is all about relationships

Recent survey of Americans concluded that 75% agreed that they were dissatisfied with their friendships.

There is a Spanish story of a Father and son who were estranged. The Son ran away and the Father set out to find him. He looked everywhere only to be disappointed. Finally, in a last desperate effort to find his son, he ran an ad in the Madrid newspaper. The ad said: "Dear Paco, meet me in front of this newspaper office at noon on Saturday. All is forgiven. I love you. Your Father.. On Saturday, 800 Pacos gathered in front of the newspaper office.

When Jesus Christ saves you He makes you distinctive - He makes the way that you relate to others different.

God gave the law for healthy relationships

The religious leaders of Jesus' day distorted the law and instead of relationships becoming healthy they became more strained.

Jesus explained the law, corrected the errors, and was the prince of peace as He called a new generation to follow Him and become peacemakers

Three priorities

1. Perspective of Reverence

all concerned about murder - I have never done anything like Cain did to Abel -

murder is more than physical killing - Jesus said that being angry without a cause, when you get mad at someone and you use a term of derision and insult them - Racca means empty head derived from the Aramaic, moros is where we get our word fool from

kids call it haters - and if you have spent any time on social media then you have seen it -

This past week huge story was Kurt Schilling congratulating his daughter on his twitter page for her scholarship to play - these haters began to say threats and things that were sexually charged - Kurt Schilling did not put up with it - Jesus said that would be in danger

danger of the judgment

Matthew 12:36-37: "But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give

account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

Judgment

God does not like a perverse mouth

Proverbs 8:13: “The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverse mouth I hate.”

Proverbs 14:27: “The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, to turn *one* away from the snares of death.”

“We fear men so much because we fear God so little.” William Gurnall

God knows the damage of the tongue

the tongue can start a war

Proverbs 18:21: “Death and life *are* in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.”

Proverbs 16:27: “An ungodly man diggeth up evil: and in his lips *there is* as a burning fire.”

Ungodly is literally a son of Belial. He is a lost man, under the sway of the enemy. Matthew Henry commentated on this verse: “They *dig up evil*; they take a great deal of pains to find out something or other on which to ground a slander, or which may give some colour to it. If none appear above ground, rather than want it they will dig for it, by diving into what is secret, or looking a great way back, or by evil suspicions and surmises, and forced innuendos.” James possibly alludes to this proverb in 3:6 when he calls the tongue a fire.

James compares the tongue to a bit, a rudder, and a match

James 3:2-5: “For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. ³ Indeed, we put bits in horses’ mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. ⁴ Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. ⁵ Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles!”

Reverence for God should drive you to care about how you treat others

James 3:8-9: “But no man can tame the tongue. *It is* an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹ With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God.”

Proverbs 21:23: “Whoever guards his mouth and tongue keeps his soul from troubles.”

2. Passion for Relationships

scribes had interpreted the law to be externally focused - worship comes before relationships

there should be a healthy balance between the two - beautiful worship comes from healthy relationships

leave your gift at the alter - bloody animal that you are separating the kidneys, the fatty lobe - this goes to the priest

you had to be a butcher to follow the jewish law carefully - leave your gift your freewill offering at the alter and go look up your brother -

Leviticus 19:17-18: “You shall not hate your brother in your heart. You shall surely rebuke your neighbor, and not bear sin because of him.¹⁸ You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I *am* the LORD.”

Matthew 11:25-26: “And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.²⁶ But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses.”

illusion to Cain and Abel - Abel would bring a sacrifice but be envious of Cain - this would replay itself in the NT with Ananias and Sapphira - they were jealous of Barnabas

in danger of the judgment - envy is also a type of murder

some of the meanest people that I have ever known have been passionate for public worship

-Pharisees make more of the worship service than their relationships - they will quickly sacrifice relationships pver the worship service

care more about a haircut than a relationship

care more about dress than relationship

care more about the music than the people

3. Priority of Reconciliation

with your brother or with your adversary

appealing to the law is necessary sometimes -

value a relationship so much that you want to keep it
you want to resotre it

restoration of a house - because the house has such unique value; history; means so ,uch to me

Galatians 6:1-3: “Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who *are* spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.”

Paul, Philemon and Onesimus

Conclusion

Can God save a murderer?