

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF OUR RELATIONSHIP

Our relationship with other Christians defines what we really are –

You CAN'T love God and not love you brother - 1 John 4:20-21 - 20 If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, **cannot love God**, whom he has not seen. 21 And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God **must** also love his brother.

You Can't be a Christian and hate your brother - 1 John 2:9-11 - 9 Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates his brother is still in the darkness. 10 Whoever loves his brother lives in the light, and there is nothing in him to make him stumble. 11 But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness; he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded him.

Part of our evidence if we are Christians or not is IF we love our brothers –

1 John 3:10 **THIS IS HOW WE KNOW who the children of God are** and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother.

1 John 3:14-15 - 14 We know that we have passed from death to life, BECAUSE we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death. 15 Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him.

Stop saying "we love" if we are not truly loving - 1 John 3:16-18 - 16 **This is how we know what love is:** Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. 17 If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, HOW CAN THE LOVE OF GOD BE IN HIM? 18 Dear children, **LET US NOT LOVE WITH WORDS OR TONGUE BUT WITH ACTIONS AND IN TRUTH**.

Know the elements of TRUE LOVE - 1 Cor 13:4-7 - 4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5 It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

Our love of other Christians is not just proof to us that we belong to Christ, it also shows the world we belong to Christ. - John 13:34-35 - 34 "A new command I give you: Love one another. AS I HAVE LOVED YOU, so you MUST love one another. 35 **BY THIS ALL MEN WILL KNOW** that you are my disciples, **IF you love one another**."

God put in place a process to deal with conflicts between Christians - Matt 18:15-17 - 15 "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. IF HE LISTENS TO YOU, you have won your brother over. 16 But **IF HE WILL NOT LISTEN, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses'**. 17 **If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector**.

We must understand the thing that hinders our relationship is us - James 4:1 - What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from YOUR DESIRES that battle within you?

***You might have done something to hurt me or you may be a difficult person, but when I ALLOW you or what you did to make me not love you IT'S MY FAULT**

***When rebuking or correcting one-another make sure it's based on God's standards and not based on you.**

Unless we're perfect, (And we know we're not perfect) how we are to others will come back to haunt us. - Matt 7:1-2 - "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. 2 For in the same way you judge others, you WILL be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

Loving our brother doesn't mean accepting the bad, it means helping them to fix it - Luke 17:3-4-3 So watch yourselves. "If your brother sins, REBUKE HIM, and if he repents, forgive him. 4 If he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times comes back to you and says, 'I repent,' forgive him."

The process we need to follow to have the loving relationship with the body

Simply put, BE A Christian - Col 3:12-14 - 12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. 13 **Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another**. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

*** Bear** - anechomai (an-ekh'-om-ah-ee put up with: (bear with, endure, forbear, suffer, tolerate).

Do absolutely nothing based on what you want or how you see it and always take others into consideration - Phil 2:3-4 - 3 **DO NOTHING** out of **selfish ambition** or **vain conceit**, but **IN HUMILITY** consider others better than yourselves. 4 Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

- **Do not allow the relationship with self, neglect the relationship with your brother**

Only base things on God - John 7:24 Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgment."

- **How you see it and how you act must be supported by the Bible**

Sincerely and consciously check yourself first before checking others - Matt 7:3-5 - 3 "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? 4 How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? 5 **You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye**, and **THEN YOU WILL SEE CLEARLY** to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

- **In order to truly help others to see we have to first see**
- **Consider any criticism and advise you receive from others and instead of defending yourself get to know yourself.**

Do not be the cause of your brother stumbling - Rom 14:13 Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way.

- **Instead of me defending my rights, I must carefully & consciously make sure I'm not a stumbling block**

Sexual relations with someone that is not your spouse will be punished by God -1 Thess 4:3-7 - 3 **It is God's will that you should be sanctified**; that you should avoid sexual immorality; 4 that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, 5 **not in** passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God; 6 and that **IN THIS MATTER no one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him**. **THE LORD WILL PUNISH MEN FOR ALL SUCH SINS**, as we have already told you and warned you. 7 For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life.

- **Sex is sacred and must only be done the way God says or we will have to answer to God**

A major part of our relationship is knowing when to disconnect

We are to disconnect from a brother that is ACCEPTABLY living in sin - 1 Cor 5:9-13 - 9 I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people— 10 **NOT AT ALL MEANING THE PEOPLE OF THIS WORLD** who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. 11 But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone WHO CALLS HIMSELF A BROTHER but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. **With such a man do not even eat**. 12 What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? 13 God will judge those outside. "Expel the wicked man from among you."

We are to disconnect from a brother that is living wrong OR doing NOTHING - 2 Thess 3:6 In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to **KEEP AWAY FROM** every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us.

Those living in accepted disobedience, we are to disconnect, but not treat as enemies - 2 Thess 3:14-15 - 14 If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of him. **DO NOT ASSOCIATE WITH HIM**, in order that he may feel ashamed. 15 Yet **DO NOT REGARD HIM AS AN ENEMY**, but **WARN HIM AS A BROTHER**.

- **Disassociation is not a human punishment; it is a God ordained ministry to brothers headed in the wrong direction**