



Expository Counseling Training Center

Understanding the Nature of Relationships (Part 2)

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1. God made provision for the sin of mankind and created a new family that is to function under God accordingly.

God has made provision for sin through the person and work of Jesus Christ. Everyone who embraces the person and work of Jesus Christ by faith will be delivered from sin so that he or she can live in and reflect the true community of love with God accordingly. As a result of putting faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ, one becomes a new person connected to a new family of spiritual origin. As a result of putting faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ, one is now a part of a family that is designed to accomplish the will of God.

(John 3:16, 2 Corinthians 5:17, 1 Corinthians 12:12-14, Ephesians 2:8-10)

2. The new family that is created under God has been given roles and responsibilities to accomplish God's agenda accordingly. These roles and responsibilities can be carried out as a single person, as a married person, as a widow, as a family member, as a church member, as a citizen, as a foreigner, as a co-worker, as one in authority, as one under authority or even as one equal in authority to someone. As a result of the new family one is placed in by faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ, one has the roles and responsibilities of:

A) *A Disciple of Jesus Christ* – A follower of Jesus Christ. In essence, you are to follow God's commands in all aspects of your life. (Matthew 28:19-20, John 8:31-32)

B) *An Ambassador for Jesus Christ* – One who no longer belongs to this world, but to the Kingdom of God. You are to be an instrument in the hand of God whereby, through you presenting the Gospel of Jesus Christ, God may perhaps deliver sinners from their sin into a new and right relationship with Him that will last for eternity.
(2 Corinthians 5:11-21, 1 Corinthians 3:5-9)

C) *A Builder for Jesus Christ* – One who now is a Citizen of God's Kingdom and a part of His Church. You are to spend your life helping other Christians grow to maturity in their character and faith in Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 4:11-16, Colossians 1:28-29)

**3. For this reason we can identify ten major reasons why we need relationships.
Relationship are needed so that:**

- A. We may help each other function in spiritual maturity in all aspects of life to reflect the character of Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 4:11-16)
- B. We may strengthen areas of weakness in each other's lives. (Romans 15:1-3)
- C. We may sharpen each other's perspectives of life to grow in righteousness. (Proverbs 27:17)
- D. We may help each other confess and repent of sin. (Galatians 6:1-2)
- E. We may help each other replace our sin with right living. (Galatians 6:1-2)
- F. We may encourage one another. (1 Thessalonians 5:11)
- G. We may provide support to one another in hard times. (Proverbs 17:17)
- H. We may provide wise counsel to one another as needed. (Proverbs 11:14, 12:15)
- I. We may help one another stay away from people, places, and products that will lead one into sin. (Hebrews 3:12-13, Jude 22-23)
- J. We may guide people into being genuine disciples of Jesus Christ. (Matthew 28:19-20)

4. Relationships were meant to guide us into something bigger than ourselves and greater than our personal agendas. Relationships are to be about koinonia!

- A. "FELLOWSHIP (Gk. *koinōnía*): The communion or common faith, experiences, and expressions shared by the family of believers, as well as the intimate relationship they have with God."¹
- B. "This fellowship is marked by the spiritual oneness effected by baptism and bestowal of the Spirit (Gal. 3:27–28; 1 Cor. 12). It is manifested by the gathered community at the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:17–34) and characterized above all by self-giving love (1 Cor. 13). This fellowship of believers is dependent on—and an expression of—their fellowship with Christ."²
- C. "*Koinonia*, therefore, refers both to a shared sense of identity and a moral *imperative to act toward one another in a manner befitting those who participate together in the one fellowship of Christ."³

¹ Allen C. Myers, *The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 380.

² Paul J. Achtemeier, Harper & Row and Society of Biblical Literature, *Harper's Bible Dictionary* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985), 307.

* It appears elsewhere in the book as a separate entry

³ Stanley J. Grenz and Jay T. Smith, *Pocket Dictionary of Ethics*, The IVP Pocket Reference Series (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 67–68.