

## **The Value of Your Relationships**

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Relationship Over Religion: Matthew 5:21-24

- Relationship is more important to God than the offering you prepared to bring Him
- Leave your offering and go be reconciled
- Be restored in your relationship first
- Then come and offer your sacrifice to God
- Jesus is pointing out heart issues & their dangers
- Impacts your relationship with God & with the other person
- Go make it right, be a peacemaker
- Humble yourself and ask for forgiveness, make restitution and be restored

Anger Issues

Ephesians 4:26-27

- Anger is not a sin
- Holding onto anger gives the devil an opening to work
- Acting in anger is a sin
- Don't let the sun go down: work through it but don't be consumed

Ephesians 4:29

- Your words matter
- Watch what you say to others and how you say it
- Let your words be helpful, encouraging, intended to lift up

Ephesians 4:30

- Don't grieve the Holy Spirit

Ephesians 4:31-32

- Be intentional and get rid of....
- Be intentional and be kind, tender, gentle
- Forgive as you have been forgiven
- Choose not to be offended, but to let go, to give the benefit of the doubt

Matthew 5: you have a responsibility to pursue reconciliation when you have done wrong

Ephesians 4: you have a responsibility to ensure reconciliation when you have been wronged

Let God Handle It: Romans 12:17-21

- No revenge
- Live at peace instead
- Let God handle it for you
- Show your enemy kindness, meet their need instead
- Feed them, give them a drink
- Instead of responding in anger, we are to respond in kindness
- Coals: Isaiah 6:6-7 for cleansing and atoning

“Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good”

Ephesians 4:1-6

- Tender humility
- Quiet patience
- Gentleness
- Generous love
- Guard the unity
- Bound in peace



## GOING DEEPER

**DAY 1:** Relationships can be messy and hard. From small inconveniences to major offenses, you are faced daily with how you will respond. Read Romans 12:17-21. What are the instructions given when you experience a wrong? How can you obey God in your response? What are some practical ways of overcoming evil with good? Ask Holy Spirit to help you learn to trust Him more and allow Him to handle wrongs and offenses for you, then release the situation into His hands. Ask Him to handle it for you and empower you to show kindness and walk in forgiveness.

**Day 2:** God values relationships over religion. Jesus taught this truth in Matthew 5:21-24. He peels back the surface and looks into the heart: anger is subject to judgment as well. More than any prepared offering you have to give to God, He desires that you first go out and find the person you hurt or offended, and go make things right. Then you can come back and present your offering to Him. Is there someone you have hurt or wronged that you need to seek out and ask for forgiveness? Have you been avoiding someone as a result? Today is the day to go and make things right. Humble yourself, Ask for forgiveness. Make necessary restitution, Restore your relationship today.

**Day 3:** Read Ephesians 4:26-32. Each person feels anger at times. Anger is a normal emotional response to injustice. When a person feels wronged, anger rises up. When you witness an injustice, anger arises. Being angry is not a sin. However, allowing anger to fester and control your words and actions, is sin. The problem with anger is that the longer you hold onto it, the more likely you will sin as a result. Holding onto anger allows the devil to operate. Instead, Jesus calls you to forgive as He has freely forgiven you. Are you still angry over something? Is there someone you are angry towards? Do you need to choose to forgive? Holy Spirit will help you to forgive. Choose forgiveness now. Don't hold onto your hurt and anger any longer. It's hurting you. It's robbing from you. Forgive.

**Day 4:** You belong to the family of God, the Body of Christ. You are called to live accordingly, to preserve the unity of the family, to make every effort to keep the peace. According to Ephesians 4:1-5, what qualities does this require? Pick one and ask Holy Spirit to empower you to walk in that quality as you go about your day today. Be intentional in expressing the heart of your Father as you interact with those you encounter today.

**Day 5:** Read 1 Peter 3:8-17. Inevitably, you will encounter a difficult personality or situation. Unfortunately, even when you attempt to do what is right, you may still suffer. This is a fact of life, while lived here on Earth. Therefore, God gives us clear and helpful instructions so that you will know what to do when that happens. Take a moment and list the practical advice laid out in this passage. Where do you do well? Where could you grow and improve? Thank God for those things you do well and recognize that it is His Spirit at work in you. Ask for Him to develop within you those areas where you can grow in, as you walk through the inevitable difficulties of life. Remember, He's got you!