

GOD-CENTERED

Part 1 of RELATIONSHIP RESET. James 3:17.
Peter Foxwell. Cornerstone Church. November 6, 2022.

SERIES INTRODUCTION

God made us for relationships.

- To be loved by God - Ephesians 3:14-21.
- To love God - Mark 12:28-32.
- To love each other - Mark 12:28-31.

"Learning to love God and others is to be our highest goal, our greatest aim, our first priority, our deepest aspiration, our strongest ambition, our constant focus, our passionate intention, and the dominant life value of our lives" (Rick Warren in The Relationship Principles of Jesus by Tom Holladay).

Why is the world full of conflict and broken relationships?

- Because of the ongoing impact of sin and Satan.

WORLDLY vs. GODLY WISDOM - JAMES 3:13-18

Worldly wisdom destroys relationships

13 Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom.

14 But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. 15 This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. 16 For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice.

Godly wisdom builds and restores relationships

17 But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. 18 And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

GODLY RELATIONSHIP PRINCIPLE #1: PURITY

The first and most important relationship principle is purity.

James 3:17 (NLT) But the wisdom from above is first of all pure.

Purity is related to holiness - obeying God and rejecting sin.

James 4:8 (ESV) Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

King David committed terrible sins, repented and prayed for purity.

Psalms 51:10 (ESV) Create in me a clean (pure) heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

- That's the prayer of a true believer - a God-centered person of faith.
- We want pure, clean hearts that are 100% devoted to God, his will and ways.

A good synonym for pure is God-centered.

WHAT DOES GOD-CENTERED LOOK LIKE?

God-centered looks like Jesus.

1 Timothy 3:16 (ESV) Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness: He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.

Jesus is the mystery of godliness.

- He was God in flesh - lived, died, rose, exalted.
- He was submitted to God.

Philippians 2:8 (ESV) And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

- He was committed to doing the will of God.

John 4:34 (ESV) Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.

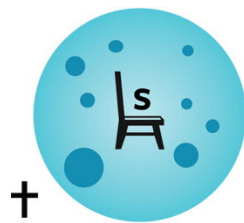
IMAGINE A GOD-CENTERED RELATIONSHIP

What if my friend or spouse was not led by worldly wisdom?

- What if they loved me like Christ loves me - sacrificially, generously, gently.
- What if they didn't yell or use anger or silence to get their own way?
- What if they listened and weren't defensive or manipulative?
- What if they respected me?
- What if they often studied the Bible and applied its teachings to their lives?
- What if they routinely repented of sins and admitted when they were wrong and genuinely apologized to me?
- What if they relied on the Holy Spirit and God's grace to live a new life?
- What if they prayed? What if they trusted the promises of God instead of freaking out OR getting grumpy or drunk or high when life got challenging?

COMMIT TO THE GOD-CENTERED LIFE

Self-Directed Life



- S Self is on the throne
- ✝ Christ is outside the life
- Interests are directed by self, often resulting in discord and frustration

Christ-Directed Life

- Love
- Joy
- Peace
- Patience
- Kindness
- Goodness
- Faithfulness



- Life is Christ-centered
- Empowered by Holy Spirit
- Introduces others to Christ
- Has effective prayer life
- Understands God's Word
- Trusts God
- Obeys God

CORNERSTONE GROUPS - TALK IT OVER

Pick one or more of these questions to discuss this week.

Start Talking. Get the conversation going.

- Tell the group about a positive, healthy relationship experience in your life.

Start Thinking. Review Sunday's teaching.

- Review Sunday's study guide or watch Peter's teaching on YouTube.
- What part of the teaching most impacted your thinking?
- In your opinion, why is purity or God-centeredness the first and most important relationship quality?
- Read: Ephesians 4:25-32; 5:22-33, also: liferelationships.com/blog/6432-proverbs-for-healthy-relationships. Then: Identify the God-centered wisdom for building or restoring healthy relationships.

Start Sharing. Apply Sunday's teaching.

- How can we overcome attitudes or behaviors that hurt our relationships?
- If someone is unwilling to follow godly wisdom in their relationships, what are some constructive, biblical, God-centered ways to respond?

Start Praying. Be bold.

Father, thank you for creating us for relationships. Help us to receive your love and, in turn, to love you and each other. We recognize that the wisdom you give us in the Bible is essential for us to build and restore our relationships. Give us the grace to be 100% submitted and committed to you, your will, and your ways. Forgive us for our failures. Heal, restore, and renew all our relationships. In Jesus' Name. Amen!

Keep Reading. In preparation for next Sunday.

- cru.org/us/en/train-and-grow/10-basic-steps/1-the-christian-adventure.2.html
- pastorrick.com/learning-to-love-difficult-people/
- pastorrick.com/stand-by-the-people-you-love/
- www.desiringgod.org/interviews/how-does-love-cover-a-multitude-of-sins