

PROGRESSING TOGETHER



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CHRISTIAN RELATIONSHIPS



So which of these three do you think was a neighbour to him who fell among the thieves?" And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Luke 10:36-37

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CHRISTIAN RELATIONSHIPS

Introduction

The greatest change that has taken place in you now that you have become a Christian is your relationship to God. You are no longer a slave of an all powerful owner - a relationship governed by fear, but a child of a loving father - a relationship based on confidence. *"Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, 'Abba Father'. So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir."* (Gal. 4.6-7)

This basic change affects all our other relationships. We need to discover what attitudes and behavior God expects of us as His children.

In this course we will look at:

Lessons:	
①	Family and Work relationships
②	Relationship to Civil Authorities
③	Relationship to our Possessions
④	Relationship to Unbelievers
⑤	Relationship to other Christians

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CHRISTIAN RELATIONSHIPS

FAMILY and WORK Relationships

Name: _____

Date: _____



Most of our time is spent at home and at work so it is not surprising that tensions often occur in these areas. Our closest relationships are with those in our own family and the Bible gives clear guidelines for us to follow.



We are not responsible for the behavior of others, but we are personally responsible to follow as closely as possible the principles God has given us. This is the only way to enjoy harmonious and happy relationships. But before looking at these principles, we need to remember that Jesus Christ must have the first place in our hearts and lives. Conflicting loyalties often perplex us and make it difficult to make the right choice. Jesus even said that because of Him *"a man's enemies will be those of his own household"* (Mat. 10:36) There are times when even family ties have to be broken because of our love for Jesus. When this is the case, He promises *"a hundred times as much"* in this world and eternal life in the next. (Mat. 19:29)

① Complete this verse from Matthew 10:37:

"Anyone who _____ his father and his mother more than me is not _____.

Anyone who _____ his son or his daughter more than me is not _____."



How do these words of Jesus apply to your life?



Now we will examine God's blue-print for a happy family:



Read Ephesians 5:21 - 6:9 carefully



It is important right off to notice verse 21. What attitude must characterize relationships between Christians?

②

WIVES



What should characterize a wife's attitude toward her husband?

Why is this attitude necessary? What analogy is used?

③ ✍️ **HUSBANDS**

What is the responsibility of the husband?

Who is his model and what did He do for the “*bride*”?

💡 Note that the words of v. 31 are the command given by the Creator when he inaugurated the marriage bond in Genesis. 2:24.

✍️ What steps must the husband take in obeying this command?

④ ✍️ **CHILDREN AND PARENTS**

What are the commands given to children? (Eph. 6:1-3)

...and to parents? (Eph. 6:4)

How does the attitude of each affect the behavior of the other?

What is meant by “training and instruction of the Lord”? (Eph. 6:4)

⑤ ✍️ **WORK RELATIONSHIPS** (Eph. 6:5-9)

💡 The terms “*slaves*” and “*masters*” can also apply to “employees” and “employers” in a modern work situation.

✍️ List the ways in which a Christian should do his work

Are they dependent on work conditions and the boss?

To whom are both slave and master answerable?

What is the importance of this truth for their behavior?

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CHRISTIAN RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships with civil authorities

Name: _____

Date: _____



A Christian is sometimes accused of being a traitor to his country. But one who lives according to the teaching of the Bible is, in fact, a better citizen because he will live honestly and try to obey the civil laws.



Read Romans 13, and 1 Peter 2:13-17 carefully



① Who has ordained civil authorities?

What should be their role in society?



② Why is it necessary to submit to governing authorities? (Romans. 13:1-5)

What does God want to accomplish through our behavior? (1 Peter 2:15)

The Christian is free in Jesus Christ. How should he use this freedom in society?
(1 Peter 2:15-17; Romans 13:11-14)



③ Is it necessary for Christians to pay taxes?

Why? See also Matthew 22:15-22.

④ ✍ According to Romans. 13:8-10, what does God say about being in debt?

What is the debt we all owe and how can we discharge it?

What does *"love is the fulfillment of the law"* mean?

💡 You are no doubt saying to yourself, "But it is not so simple. What if the authorities require us to disobey the laws we find in God's word?" Are we still to submit to these authorities?

We need to remember that the words that we have just read from Peter's letter were written at a time when the governing Roman authorities were evil men who established a cult of the emperor worship and persecuted the Christians to death. But because of leaders' positions, they were still worthy of respect. However, there are two passages that can help us find the answer to our dilemma.

⑤ 📖 **Read Acts 4:1-22 carefully**

Here we have the account of Peter and John who were arrested and imprisoned by the religious authorities.

✍ What were they accused of?

Had they done anything wrong?

💡 You can read of two similar stories in the Old Testament in Daniel chapters 3 and 6 where Daniel and his friends take position for God at the risk of their lives and against the orders of the King.

📖 **Read 1 Tim 2:1-4**

✍ What does this passage encourage us to do for kings and why?

💡 Take some time now to pray for the leaders of your country.

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CHRISTIAN RELATIONSHIPS

Relationship to material possessions

Name: _____

Date: _____



The biggest preoccupation of most people is that of financial and material wealth. It may surprise you to find that the Bible has a great deal to say on this subject and that our attitude towards it can greatly affect our Christian walk and witness.



Read Matthew 6:19-34, and 19:16-30 carefully



① Why should we store up treasures in heaven rather than on earth?

Give an example of a treasure we can store up in heaven.



② Why is it impossible to serve God and money (mammon) at the same time?

What prevented the rich young ruler from following Jesus?

Why do you think it is so difficult for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of God?



③ What does Jesus promise to those who are prepared to leave wealth aside in order to follow Him?

- ④ ✍️ We all have legitimate material needs and it is so easy to be anxious about meeting them. In Matthew 6:25-34, what reasons does Jesus give for not worrying?

Who, according to Jesus, searches for material things?

Who can claim the promise “*all these things will be given you*”?



Read 1 Timothy 6:6-10 carefully

- ⑤ ✍️ For what reasons should we be on our guard against the love of money?

Analyze your priorities in regard to material wealth. What attitudes must you change?



King David said: “*Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours*”. (1 Chronicles. 29:11) All that we have is a gift from Him to be used for His glory.

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CHRISTIAN RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships with UNBELIEVERS

Name: _____

Date: _____



Another thing that will happen, now that you have a new relationship with God, is that your relationship with your friends will change as well. Your interests and desires have changed so radically that some of the places you used to frequent, and some of the topics of conversation that once absorbed you, no longer hold the same appeal. Your friends too will have difficulty understanding your new interest in God's Word and God's people. You will begin to feel more at home with other Christians, and this is normal because you are members of the same family. What then, should your relationship to unbelievers be? Should you break off with them? The Bible counsels us as well in this area by showing us a good approach.



Read 2 Corinthians 6:14-18 carefully



① In Corinth, there was a serious problem of idol worship. Paul certainly did not want the Christians participating with the unbelievers. A “yoke” is a wooden frame placed across the shoulders of two animals, linking them together. To be “under the same yoke” meant to have a close relationship and common purpose. Why is it not a good thing for a believer to be “*yoked together*” with an unbeliever?



In the context of impure practices, what command and what promise does God give us?



While the Bible is clear in commanding us not to be joined together with unbelievers, this does not mean that we have no contact and no responsibility towards those all around us who do not know Christ



Read Matthew 5:13-16 carefully




② For what purpose are salt and light used?

Why do you think that Jesus used these two illustrations to refer to the presence of Christians in the world?




Read Luke 10:25-37 carefully

- ③  Who is your neighbor and how should you treat him?




Read Luke 6:27-38 carefully

- ④  How should we behave towards those who turn against us because of our faith in Christ?

If someone treats us unfairly do we have the right to treat him in the same way?

Which verse in this paragraph summarizes its teaching?

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- ⑤  What characteristics of our Father should His children display (verses 35-36)?



Spend some time now in prayer for your unbelieving friends.

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CHRISTIAN RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships with other CHRISTIANS

Name: _____

Date: _____



In his first letter, John speaks of the joy of fellowship with those who know and love our Lord Jesus, and we have experienced this warmth and unity within the “family”. It is one of the precious gifts that we have received and is, in a small way, a foretaste of heaven. But perhaps it has surprised you to discover that sometimes this fellowship is not always joyful - those we thought were children of God can still be difficult to get along with. And, if we are honest, we have to admit that we're not perfect either!

The Epistles of the New Testament give a great deal of practical counsel concerning the interaction between the different members of God's family.



Read Colossians 3:1-17 carefully

- ① According to verses 5 to 9 what behavior is no longer permissible for those who have been “raised with Christ”?

Can you find three verbs that refer to a deliberate rejection of the former way of life?

- ② Having taken off the old self, we are told to put on the new self. With what “garments” are we told to “clothe ourselves”? (10-14)

- ③ List all the “one another” commands found in verses 3-17.
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④ ✍️ How are we to act toward someone who has hurt or offended us?

Why?

⑤ ✍️ According to verses 15-17 how can we encourage and stimulate one another as members of one body (or one family)?

What should be the source of our wisdom and the inspiration for our songs of praise?

What must characterize all that we do and say?

 Is there someone who has offended you? Have you forgiven him? If you always have a grudge to bear, go find a seasoned Christian in whom you have confidence and ask for his help.