

Digging Deeper: Relationships. Elements

We are people made for relationship. Our God is a relational God, and we are made in his image (Gen 1:27). However, since the Fall (Gen 3), sin affects all relationships—our relationship with God and our relationships with others. Our God desires ongoing relationship with us, and so he sent his son, Jesus, to be our Savior and Lord, reconciling us to himself (John 3:16-17; 2 Cor 5:21; Rom 3:10-12; 21-26; Rom 5:1-11; Rom 10:9-13). As we walk with God and grow in Christ, all areas of our life, including our relationships with others, are redeemed. This is often a slow process, and it can be hard, but it gives us many opportunities to practice the gospel. We do not earn our salvation but growing in Christ does require effort on our part (Eph 2:8-10; Col 3:1-17; 2 Pet 5-11; Rom 6:12-13).

We are to love God, with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. This is the first and greatest commandment. We are also to love our neighbour as ourselves. Jesus said that all the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments (Matt 22:37-40; Mark 12:28-31; Deut 6:5; Lev 19:18). Living this out is impossible without God, but abiding in Christ, with God's grace, this becomes more and more true in our lives.

1 Thessalonians 4:1-12 speaks into living a life that pleases God. What is highlighted for you? What does it have to do with relationships? What do you notice about what they are to do more and more? (vv 1, 10)

Pastor Steve pointed us to the book of Proverbs, and our need to find and walk in wisdom. James 3:13-18 also speaks of wisdom; wisdom that is not from above, and wisdom that is from above. What do you notice regarding the two? What do each result in? What do they have to do with our relationships?

In Colossians 3:1-17 what differences do you notice between the old self and the new self, especially in relationship to others?

Ephesians 4:17-32 also speaks of putting off our old self and to put on the new self (4:22-24) and speaks towards how one is to live in relationship with God and others. What do you notice? What is highlighted for you? (Paul continues to write about what it looks like to being imitators of God and walking in love in Eph 5-6:9.)

Take time to talk to the Lord about what has been 'highlighted' for you / what 'stands out' for you / what 'sticks' for you. What might the Lord be inviting you to be, know, understand, feel, or even do? Listen carefully, and in his grace, follow.