

FROM BITTER TO BETTER

Anthony Campbell, Minister

You shall not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord” Leviticus 19:18. Child of God, if you want to honor God, you must learn how to have healthy relationships with others.

When they are going well, they are the source of great joy. When they are not going well, they are the source of great pain. I am talking about relationships. Whether you realize it or not, your life is comprised of various types of interactions and connections with other human beings. Whether it's with your spouse, children, family, co-workers or even your brothers and sisters-in-Christ, relationships are a huge part of your life; and, how you handle those relationships can either make you (and your life) better or bitter.

God created us as social creatures. We are designed to interact with other human beings in order to fulfill His purpose and plan. When we read scripture, it is clear that relationships are essential for us to carry out God's will. If you do not know how to relate to others, how can you ever expect to introduce others to Christ? Can you expect to have healthy marriages and families if you do not know how to get along with the people in those relationships with you? The church can never glorify God if we are unable to exemplify the love that Jesus prayed for his disciples to have.

So, if you think that you can get through life and please God by staying to yourself and doing your own thing, you are sadly mistaken. Your relationships (how you relate to others) will even play a part in your judgment. (See Matthew 25:31-46; Luke 10:27-28)

God expects you to love others as you love yourself. Therefore, it is of great importance that you consider how you are relating to the people around you. Do you have “ill-feelings” or bitterness toward someone? Have you been mean or unkind to a co-worker or family member? Have the roots of prejudice caused you to not associate with certain people that you could possibly lead to Christ? If you answered “Yes” to any of these questions, then you know you've got some issues that you must overcome.

Over the next few weeks, in my sermons and articles, I will be providing lessons designed to help you to build and maintain healthy relationships that glorify God and make you better not bitter. However, in order for God's word to be effective, you need to start by examining yourself. If there are relationships in your life you know are not what God wants them to be, go to Him in prayer. Start with yourself.

Ask God to help you to do what you need to do in order to overcome your weaknesses that may be hurting your relationships.

WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Today, sit down and reflect on the various relationships you have in your life (ie. With your spouse, children, co-workers, church, etc.). Identify the relationships that you need the most help with and bring that/those relationship(s) to God in your daily prayers.