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10: HOW TO HAVE LOVING RELATIONSHIPS WITH EACH OTHER

If Jesus directs us to love God and love others, then loving relationships must be central to Christianity. The following is an attempt to describe how we can develop and maintain loving relationships.

Articles

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Step # 1 – *Eliminate the blocks* that inhibit our ability to have loving relationships. We do this by coming before God in humility and confessing the following issues that are getting in our way:

Confess:

Pride – comparing, competing and arrogantly setting ourselves up as superior to others

Judgment – looking at others, having an opinion and deciding authoritatively, like a judge, that we are right and they are wrong

Criticism – making informed and discriminating judgments that are disapproving and unfavourable about another person

Bitterness/hate/anger – strong displeasure and antagonism against another person; an unforgiving, intense animosity towards another person

Rudeness – offensive, blunt, rough, uncivil and/or uncouth behaviour and language

Boasting – vain and bragging pride about our own deeds, abilities and possessions

Keeping a record of wrongs – storing up memories of another's incidents where there were mistakes, errors and missteps to be used to malign and inflict injury and dishonour

Self-Serving – working for and promoting the interests and benefits of ourselves, rather than of others

Laziness/sloth – disinclined or unwilling to work or engage in activity for others

Jealousy – wanting to hold onto what we have and unwilling to share it with others

Control – exercising direct influence over others through checking, regulating, and the use of power to tell, direct and command

Lack of Self-Control – an inability to manage self and control one's tongue and actions

Malice – having the intention, desire and design to hurt or injure another. It is specific, spiteful ill-will.

Step # 2 – *After confession, invite Jesus into our hearts* that He may infill us with the love we need to love ourselves and others.



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Pray :

- > *to receive Jesus' forgiveness for the above confessions*
- > *to receive Jesus' warm, compassionate, accepting love*
- > *to forgive ourselves and let go of all our negative self-talk and self-criticism*
- > *to focus now on words of truth from Scripture and words of truth directly received from the Lord (consciously being still and listening)*

Step # 3 – Freely Offer To Others:

Grace – unmerited, unearned and undeserved favour as a free gift

Mercy – treatment that is kind, forgiving and compassionate

Forgiveness – letting go of the hurtful action or words

Acceptance – willingly receive another favourably and affirm and acknowledge the other's worth and being

Respect – treat others with consideration and kind regard

Support – uphold, tolerate, bear with, advocate for and willingly assist

Care for – show regard, interest and concern by looking after and providing for with fondness and affection

Compassion – charitable sympathy that actively helps others who are suffering or need help

Gifts – generously sharing quality time, things and resources with no strings attached

Trust – confident expectation with belief and hope in another

Step # 4 – Actively Communicate by:

- being present with and paying attention to others. (same room and space)
- listening actively and reflectively
- sharing our understanding of what we have heard
- validating other's perspectives and feelings
- offering emotional empathy
- being open, honest and truthful
- not assuming anything
- not mind reading
- ensuring equal airtime; being equal and balanced
- valuing the others input



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Step # 4 – *Actively Communicate by (cont'd):*

- eliminating “Why?” and replacing it with “How?”
- blessing the other person in words and deeds
- praying and hoping for the other’s best

Step # 5 – *How We Should Be*

- Humble
- Gentle
- Patient
- Kind
- Co-operative
- Grateful
- Taking responsibility for self
- Persevering
- Protective

Step # 6 – *Build Others Up*

- Respect differences.
- Appreciate and value the other’s True Self.
- Offer quality time.
- Provide positive, truthful feedback and nurturing words.
- Touch safely and with permission.
- Encourage.
- Help as needed and wanted.

Step # 7 – *Serve Others*

- Be selfless.
- Be sacrificial.
- Lay down our life for others (Let them go first).
- Don’t have conditions.
- Keep no record of wrongs.
- Develop win-win solutions.
- Work to establish mutual submission.

Step # 8 – *Be Our True Selves In Christ*

- Know our True Self In Christ.
- Function out of our strengths.
- Be true to ourselves.
