

Love Community Baptist Church

Wednesday Night Virtual Bible Study

Dr. Michael O. Oyedokun II, Senior Pastor/Founder
pastor@lovecommunitybc.org
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Part 2 - Building Relationships (Family)

Mother, Father, Sister, Brother, Children

Are relationships important? I am not just focusing on Marriage or Dating but every relationship you have with others. Should relationships be healthy? Should relationships be cultivated? Should we work to mend, restore and rebuild broken relationships? Let's look at what God says in scripture concerning our relationships with one another:

The Bible ranks healthy relationships as the most important thing in life. A Jewish religious expert asked Jesus (Matt. 22:36), "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied (Matt. 22:37-40):

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS: MOTHER, FATHER, SISTER, BROTHER AND CHILDREN

You would think that dealing with family would be the easiest relationship to build, maintain and nurture. But sometimes family relationships can be the most difficult to understand let alone...BUILD! Our expectations toward family is different than others we have relationships with. We look at family and say that "blood is thicker than water", but if that blood is thin there is a chance that the relationship can be challenged.

Family problems are nothing new. In a fallen world, those we should love the most—our families—often become the ones we fight with the most. The Bible doesn't gloss over sin, and it records a number of family problems, starting with Adam's blame-shifting, with his wife as the target (Genesis 3:12). Sibling rivalry crops up in the stories of Cain and Abel, Jacob and Esau, and Joseph and his brothers. Jealousy among wives—one of the negative consequences of polygamy—is found in the stories of Hannah, and Leah and Rachel. Eli and Samuel dealt with wayward children. Jonathan was almost murdered by his father, Saul. David was brokenhearted by his son Absalom's rebellion. Hosea experienced marital difficulties. In each of these cases, relationships were damaged by sin.

I am not going to deal with the Husband / Wife relationship as a part of the family relationship dynamic. That deserves a study on its own and that will be next week. I want to look at: mother, father, sister, brother and children.

PARENTS: MOTHER AND FATHER

“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.” – Exodus 20:12

How do children Honor Father and Mother?

- **Appreciate them.** You honor your father and mother when you are thankful for all they have done for you. You can show your appreciation by valuing their guidance. (Proverbs 7:1, 2; 23:26) The Bible encourages you to view your parents as your “glory,” that is, to be proud of them.— Proverbs 17:6.
- **Accept their authority.** Especially while you are young, you honor your father and mother when you recognize the authority God has given them. Colossians 3:20 tells young ones: “Be obedient to your parents in everything, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.” Even young Jesus willingly obeyed his parents.—Luke 2:51.
- **Treat them with respect.** (Leviticus 19:3; Hebrews 12:9) This often involves what you say and how you say it. True, some parents at times act in ways that make it hard to respect them. Even then, children can honor their parents by avoiding disrespectful speech and actions. (Proverbs 30:17) The Bible teaches that speaking abusively of one’s father or mother is a serious offense.— Matthew 15:4.
- **Provide for them.** When your parents get old, they may need practical support. You can honor them by trying your best to make sure that they have what they need. (1 Timothy 5:4, 8) For instance, shortly before he died, Jesus arranged for the care of his mother.—John 19:25-27.

1 Timothy 5:8 says that families are to take care of their own. Jesus had harsh words for those who evaded their financial responsibilities to their aging parents by claiming they gave all their money to the temple (Matthew 15:5–6).

What are our responsibilities to our parents as children?

The Parent-Child Relationship is one that nurtures the physical, emotional and social development of the child. It is a unique bond that every child and parent will can enjoy and nurture. This relationship lays the foundation for the child’s personality, life choices and overall behavior. It can also affect the strength of their social, physical, mental and emotional health.

Benefits to this relationship are:

- Young children who grow with a secure and healthy attachment to their parents stand a better chance of developing happy and content relationships with others in their life.
- A child who has a secure relationship with parent learns to regulate emotions under stress and in difficult situations.

How can this relationship be strengthened?

- Communication and Time Spent Together.
- Affirming your love through verbal and physical effort (say I love you, hugs)
- Eat Meals Together (with no electronic distractions)
- LISTEN!!! (don’t be too quick to judge) Let them feel safe to speak.

When relationships are not built right you can have a negative fallout like David and Absalom.

What challenges do Parents / Children have that challenges their relationship?

SIBLINGS: BROTHER AND SISTER

Siblings are mentioned often throughout the Old and New Testaments. Some of the most famous siblings we find are Cain and Abel (Genesis 4:1–8); Jacob and Esau (Genesis 25:19–27); Joseph and his eleven brothers (Genesis 37); Moses, Aaron, and Miriam (Numbers 26:59); Peter and Andrew (Matthew 4:18); and Martha, Mary, and Lazarus (John 11:1).

Love among siblings should be a natural thing, and the Bible uses such phileo love as an illustration of love among believers. The Bible commands us to love one another in the family of God as we would love a brother or sister: “Love one another with brotherly affection” (Romans 12:10, ESV). Paul expressed his love for the saints in Philippi this way: “My brothers and sisters, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown” (Philippians 4:1).

Unfortunately, not all siblings express love for one another. Many of the famous sibling groups previously mentioned are known for their interpersonal conflict and even hatred for each other. Cain killed Abel out of jealousy, thereby committing the first murder (Genesis 4:3–8). Jacob and Esau were at odds from the time they were in the womb and into adulthood (Genesis 25:23; 27). Joseph’s brothers sold him into slavery in Egypt (Genesis 37:12–28). Even Martha and Mary’s story contains a disagreement between the sisters (Luke 10:38–42).

So, what can we learn from the biblical examples of brothers and sisters? It’s important to understand that conflict between siblings is not part of God’s plan for the family. Although God ultimately used each situation to bring about His will, the conflict between some of these siblings caused murderous jealousy, grief, wars, and broken families.

CHILDREN

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honor your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise), “that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.” Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” – Ephesians 6:1-4 (ESV)

“Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.” – Proverbs 22:6 (ESV)

The key to harmony in families is not one we naturally want to apply. Ephesians 5:21 says to “submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.” Submission is in direct opposition to our flesh’s desire to rule and have its way. We defend our rights, champion our causes, defend our opinions, and assert our own agendas whenever possible. God’s way is to crucify our flesh (Galatians 5:24; Romans 6:11) and submit to the needs and wishes of others whenever we can. Jesus is our model for that kind of submission to God’s will. I Peter 2:23 says, “When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.”

Most family problems could be lessened if we all followed the instructions found in Philippians 2:3–4: “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.” When we adopt the spirit of

humility and treat others as Jesus would treat them, we can resolve many of our family and relationship problems.

Types of Relationships that we will be discussing:

Introduction

Family: Mother, Father, Sister, Brother, Children

Spousal: Husband and Wife

Friend

Work: Colleagues

Church: Pastor (Clergy)

Church: Member