

What do My Relationships say About Me?

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Introduction: Our God has a great plan for our lives!

- A. I vividly remember as a young man having great doubts about what life would bring for me. There is no certainty without God. **(Ps 90:10-12)**
 - 1. Much of my thinking was short term.
 - 2. Much of my worry surrounded the dating game and seeking a mate.
 - 3. There were other very important relationships that my God provided me that were critical in my future relationships.
- B. My God answered prayers and provided wonderful people in my life.
 - 1. In becoming a Christian it changed my relationships over time.
 - 2. I cannot give enough thanks to God for those who wanted to be a part of my walk of faith. Jesus promised this would be so! **(Mk 10:28-30)**
 - 3. I found that as I became closer to God that my relationships changed!
 - 4. Let us look at scripture and then our lives and see the direction of our lives.

I. The priorities of our relationships

- A. Jesus knew that one of the greatest tests will be in relationships.
 - 1. Does Jesus come first before all relationships? **(Lk 14:26-27)**
 - 2. If that is not the case we will find out in a hurry.
 - 3. Some have found ways to be in good standing with brethren and with those that hate and oppose strong Christians! **(Lk 6:26)**
 - 4. Some will abandon you because you correctly stand on a doctrinal issue that is not popular with some brethren! (Ex. Dancing) **(Gal 6:12)**
- B. If we would make that unwavering commitment to love God with all that we have, then the pain of lost relationships will be bearable.
 - 1. Committing yourself wholly to God will always bring great changes.
 - 2. Look at the life of Joseph in its entirety! **(Gen 50:20)**
 - 3. At the first this is hard to see. Here knowledge of God and His promises will sustain us. **(1 Pt 3:12-14)**
 - 4. David pointed this out in many ways! **(Ps 37:23-25)**
- C. The greatest associations you will ever find are among the people of God who have stood and suffered. **(Heb 10:32-33; 11:24-26)**
 - 1. It is not uncommon for weak Christians to distance themselves from strong Christians and in some cases even persecute them.
 - 2. Paul talked about the danger of being ashamed of him. **(2 Tim 1:8, 16)**
 - 3. I will never forget the little church in Abbeville, Alabama or the brethren that met in Charlottesville, Virginia.

II. The direction of our relationships

- A. You can definitely see your spiritual direction by your relationships.
 - 1. Peter made a series of bad decisions that led him into a place where he would fall. **(Lk 22:54)**

2. Paul was encouraged to know he had brethren that would stand with him!
(**Acts 18:9-11**)
3. I am speaking of relationships where we depend on others and let our guard down around others.
4. Our relationships change over time. How are they changing?
- B. Are you moving away from zealous, faithful Christians? (**Ps 1:1-3**)
 1. You can move to those in the world or to worldly Christians, both will work against your spiritual life. (**Prov 13:20**)
 2. Some have what is called a “toxic faith.” They are scoffers and pull you into a pool of poison. (**1 Cor 15:33**)
 3. When you are drifting doctrinally this also happens. (**Gal 4:16-17**)
 4. You must fight and escape such relationships! I have known of some respected preachers like this. (**Heb 12:15**)
 5. What a blessing to have “crazy” friends that love to talk about the word of God and of saving souls! (**Ps 119:63; Mal 3:16-18**)

III. Wisdom in our relationships

- A. Be the kind of friend you would want to have! (**Ruth 3:11**)
 1. How did David and Jonathan become friends? (**1 Sam 18:1-3**)
 2. My best friends have come in very obscure places and circumstances. One thing they all had in common was a service to the Lord.
 3. When we become people of integrity and principle then we are becoming like God. That kind of person will never forsake us.
 4. Can you find a mate like this?
- B. Learn how to share burdens without becoming bitter.
 1. I have had to work with friends who were moving towards bitterness because someone hurt me. Preachers who move likely will face this scenario.
 2. Your friend nor you will be profited by sharing an uncontrolled anger. (**Eph 4:26-27; 1 Jn 3:15**)
 3. I need people who can understand and then help me to move on!
- C. Be around thankful people.
 1. Do you have friend that can go on at length about how God has blessed them and others?
 2. I need people to help me lift up my eyes and see the eternal blessing given by our God! Are you with thankful men? (**Rom 1:21; Phil 4:6-8**)
 3. What have you learned about yourself by looking at your relationships?
 4. We need to help our students in this area! An old study found that the key in making it as a new convert was breaking 3 old relationships and establishing 3 new.
 5. Parents, you can make a huge difference in the relationships your children establish!

Conclusion: Let us pray for our God to provide the wonderful gifts of relationships with faithful Christians! (**Heb 10:23-25**)