



6

Uncomplicated Relationships

WHAT DO YOU LOOK FOR IN A GOOD FRIEND?

The POINT >

Let God's love drive how you relate to others.

> 1 THESSALONIANS 4:3-12

³For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; ⁴that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, ⁵not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; ⁶that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. ⁷For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. ⁸Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.

⁹Now concerning brotherly love you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another, ¹⁰for that indeed

is what you are doing to all the brothers throughout Macedonia. But we urge you, brothers, to do this more and more, ¹¹and to aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you, ¹²so that you may walk properly before outsiders and be dependent on no one.



THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

FACT:

On average, people make 396 friendships in a lifetime.

However, only 1 in 12 friendships last.¹



LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // PEOPLE

People are created as moral beings and are responsible for their choices and the consequences of their choices, including the ways we treat others.

Some of our most enjoyable relationships may be those we had as small children. No drama. No demands on each other. We were just kids simply playing together and enjoying having someone to play with.

As we grow older, our tendency toward self-centeredness often seeps into our friendships. Somehow, our friendships become about ourselves and what the other person can do for us. Without even being aware, we place expectations on others that would mold our friends into who we want them to be. And when they won't cooperate, we simply find new friends. A simple friendship becomes complicated.

Wouldn't it be nice to get back to the simplicity of our childhood relationships. No drama—just accepting and enjoying one another in healthy ways. It's not as unrealistic or naive as we might think. Pursing simplicity in our lives includes our relationships, and in 1 Thessalonians, Paul gives us insights into what such an uncomplicated relationship looks like. It's all driven by love—not a love for ourselves, but a love for God that carries over into how we treat others.

1 THESSALONIANS 4:3-5

1 What are some “traps” teens sometimes fall into that lead to sin in relationships?

2 Where do you see a connection between holiness and avoiding sexual immorality?

1 THESSALONIANS 4:6-8

3 Why does God take purity in our relationships so seriously?

4 When have you had an opportunity to stand for holiness in the face of immorality?

5 Why do you think God places such a high value on holiness?

Failure to live a holy life is a refusal to live under the lordship of Christ and in the power of the Spirit. To ignore these is to reject God. #BSFLsimplicity



1 THESSALONIANS 4:9-12

6 What does it mean to “lead a quiet life”?

7 Why does a failure to mind your own business cause problems?

8 Where do you currently have opportunities to show God’s love to others?





LIVE IT OUT



LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // PEOPLE

People are created as moral beings and are responsible for their choices and the consequences of their choices, including the ways we treat others.

God created us to live in a relationship with Him and with others. As we spend time knowing our heavenly Father, we grow to be more and more like Him. In turn, as we relate to others, we are to reflect the character of God in the ways we treat them. To treat people unlovingly goes against the very purpose for which God created and called us, and we will be held responsible for that. However, when we treat others lovingly, not only will we receive God's blessings, but God will use our love to draw others to Himself.

>CHRIST

Jesus said the way we treat others (specifically, the least of these—fellow believers facing difficult circumstances) is, in effect, how we treat Him (Matt. 25:40). At times, loving others well can be quite difficult. People will offend us, do things that get on our nerves, and make all sorts of mistakes—and we'll be tempted to be unkind, to stick our noses in places they don't belong, or to respond poorly when people confront us about things we've done wrong. Nonetheless, our relationship with Christ depends in a big way on how we relate to others.

9 How have your relationships with others had a direct effect on your relationship with Christ?

10 What will you do this week so that God's love directs how you relate to others?

GOD

JESUS

HOLY SPIRIT

BIBLE

SALVATION

CREATION

CHURCH

PEOPLE

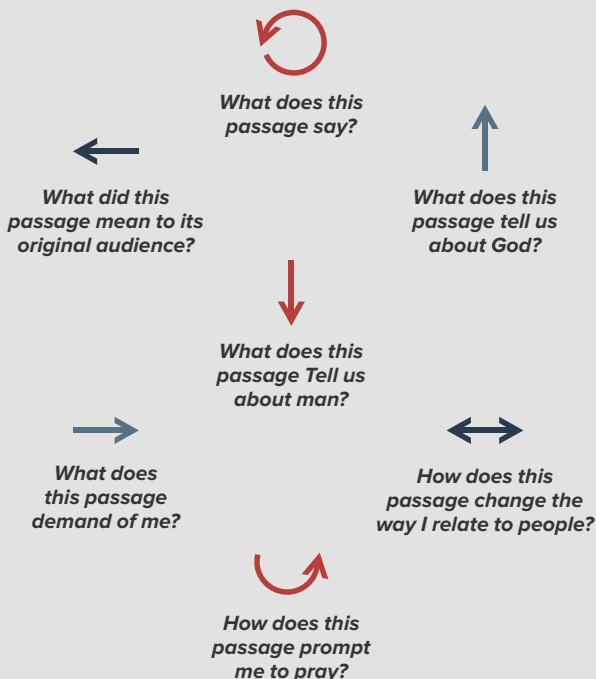
FAMILY

COMMUNITY
& WORLD

DAILY DEVOTIONS



The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



Day One **EPHESIANS 4:30**

The lives of worldly people are characterized by selfishness and pride. However, for the child of God, our coming to faith in Christ involves having our hearts transformed. Our lives are changed inside and out, and as opposed to living for ourselves, we begin to live sacrificially for others. Though we are changed, as long as we are in this life, because of our sin nature, we will still struggle with temptation and fall short of God's standard. Make no mistake, because of the Spirit within us, we have the capacity to choose rightly. And when we sin, the Holy Spirit is grieved. However, for those who are truly part of God's family, we are adopted as sons and daughters, and He will never put us away. The Holy Spirit, who has sealed us for eternity, will convict us of our sins and draw us back to the place we should be—living by faith in God.

➤ **Why is the Holy Spirit grieved over our sins?**

➤ **What does it mean that we are sealed for the day of redemption?**

Day Four

EPHESIANS 4:32b

We're often tempted to think that, if we follow Christ and live in obedience to God's commands, our lives will be easy and happy. However, this isn't what the Bible teaches at all. In fact, Jesus said that we'll certainly face trouble. But at least we have our church family, and we'll always get along, right? While God has placed us with others in the church so we would love and encourage one another, the truth is that people within the church are just that—people! And we all have our fair share of weaknesses, and we will disappoint, offend, and hurt each other. Being a Christian doesn't mean no one will never hurt you or even that you'll never hurt others. It means that when we experience things like this, we're committed to working through it. Forgiveness means letting go of an offense for the purpose of seeing a relationship reconciled. Because unity is so important in the church, when others offend us, we have to be ready to forgive in order to live in healthy relationships with those in our church family.

➤ **When have you struggled to forgive someone?**

➤ **Why is forgiveness so important?**

Day Five

EPHESIANS 4:32c



Scripture teaches that we've all sinned and fallen short of God's standards. And this "falling short" isn't just a minor slip that hurt God's feelings a little bit—we've blasphemed and rebelled and committed the worst kinds of offenses against the holy and sovereign Creator of the universe. We deserve the worst kind of punishment, and because God is just, sin can't go unpunished. In order for us to receive forgiveness, someone had to pay for our sins, so Jesus suffered the penalty for our sins on the cross. Because we've been forgiven so much, if we're truly appreciative, we should in turn be happy to forgive others who offend us.

➤ **How would you describe your offenses against God?**

➤ **What does it take for us to be forgiven?**