

HARRINGAY UNITED CHURCH-BAPTIST  
SUNDAY FEBRUARY 12, 2012  
RENEWING OUR RELATIONSHIPS

Text: Romans 12:1-2; Colossians 3:1-17

Introduction:

If I want to sound like a politician, I would say the next agenda is relationship!, relationship!! relationship!!!. But I want to say it differently that relationship is the key to right living and right living is also the key to right relationship, so they open and lead to each other..

God is a God of relationship. He longs for us to be in right relationship with Him and with each other. Hence He created man in His image and He also created woman for the man because the man being alone is not good. He also created the Church so that all of us can be in harmonious relationship. The more we are in harmonious relationship, the more peaceful and joyous we are.

Therefore, relationship is extremely important to our lives, whether Christians or non Christians, whatever parts of the world you come from or are living. Tell your neighbour 'develop the right relationship'.

Why is Relationship is important?

We want to belong and loved:

We all want to love and be loved, we want to be accepted in groups and long to belong to a group to satisfy the desire for relationship. One of Maslow's hierarchy of needs is love and belongings and because it is so important, people go all the way to find satisfaction for this desire.

Living in close and peaceful relationships is too important for a healthy living. And healthy living improves healthy relationships. It is in God's heart that He commands that we live in peace with each other. The Psalmist knows this very well that he wrote in Psalms 133:1 "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brethren to dwell together in unity!" NKJV

What is it to be unity? It is a state of harmony or agreement between people or groups. It is not a state of same opinion and non disagreement but a state of harnessing our differences for the and disagreements are subjected to the oneness of the group. It is not a selfish attitude where "I" must prevail but an attitude of "we" takes precedence.

If any group is to enjoy life and each other, relationship must be good. Today I am going to talk much relationships between people, families, singles and groups whether large or small.

Our lives are based on relationship, relationship and relationship. There is no life without relationship and there is no relationship without life. Both are in circle. Our relationship with God automatically should affect our relationship with others, families, children, spouse, colleagues and neighbours. It is like a triplet wheels driving each other. Once you engage one, others follow suit.

Paul concludes most of his letters with a list of practical duties that are based on the doctrines he had discussed. Doctrine is a body of truths, beliefs and teachings about God that guards our relationships with God and each other.

In the Christian life, doctrine and duty always go together. What we believe helps to determine how we behave. It is not enough for us to understand Paul's doctrinal explanations. We must translate our *learning* into living and show by our daily lives that we trust God's Word.

Learning as someone has defined it is 'a relatively permanent change in behaviour' or "modification of behaviour through practice, training, or experience." You will realise that both definitions have change/modification in behaviour hence if we are learning anything in life, our behaviour must be changing or modified constantly since we are constantly learning in every situation, place, and time. If we remain the same, we are not learning anything.

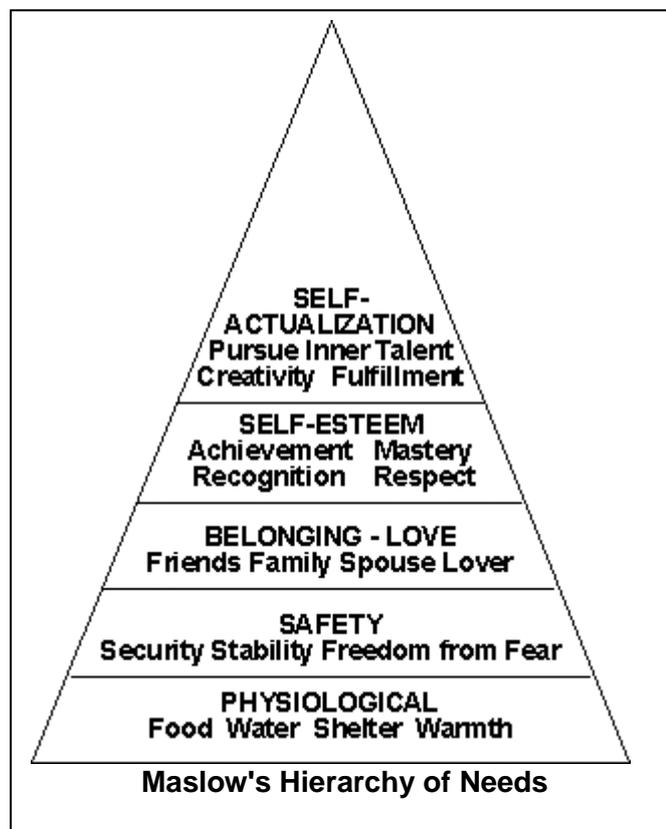
So the key idea in this passage *is relationships*. If we have a right relationship with God, we will have a right relationship with people around us.

1 John 4:20 'If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?' NKJV

Verses 1-4 states the reasons why we must improve our relationships. We have been raised with Christ we will also appear with Him, therefore, we must set our minds on heavenly things.

Paul listed 11 things we must get rid of in v5-9; 'fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. .. anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another'.

He now encouraged us to put on a new man/person 'tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; <sup>13</sup> bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also *must do*. But above all these things put on love, peace of God to rule our hearts, be thankful, Let the Word of Christ dwell richly, teach and admonish each other. NKJV



We can improve or renew our relationships through four ways:

**1. Being transformed by the renewing of our minds:** Getting the old world view, ways of life and the way the world speak out of our system because they belonged to the world and since we have been born again and raised to newness of life in Christ Jesus, we must put on the nature of Christ. So it is like emptying ourselves of old nature and filling ourselves with new nature.

**2. Letting the peace of God rule our hearts:** a troubled heart is a restless heart and a restless heart is a troublesome heart. In a troubled heart is fear, anxiety, bitterness, envy and all sorts of evil things. But if we allow the peace of God that the Bible says 'passes all understanding' meaning that is beyond comprehension to rule our hearts, we will be a different group of people.

This means that God's peace which is not dependent of situation around us is the king who rules our lives. The peace I am talking about is beyond trouble, wars, fights and tribulations around

us. No matter what happens, no matter what news you hear or whatever you experience, you are just at peace.

**3. Letting the Word of Christ dwell in us:** When the Word of Christ dwells in us, it means we allow God's word to live in us and guides and guards us in all that we think, say and do. Psalms 119: 85, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path v105; Your word is very pure v140..and the entirety of Your word is truth v160

When God's Word dwells in us, we will be very cultured, and our behaviours properly controlled and we will truly be like Jesus.

**4. Do to other as we want others to do with us:** This is the principle of 'what goes round comes round'.. If you expect people to treat you well, treat people well. If you want people to respect you, respect them first; if you want others to be generous to you, be generous to them first; if you want others to be kind to you, be kinds to others too; if you want others to show you mercy, show mercy to others.

I remember when I told somebody years ago that I did not trust him. I thought I was speaking the truth but I did not know how much it hurts until few years later someone told me that he did not trust me, I was very hurt and complained to God about it. The Holy spirit told me, that was how it hurts Mr D the other day.

Then I realised what Warren Wiersbe said that speaking the truth without love is brutality and love without speaking the truth is hypocrisy. And since then I am careful of what I think and say

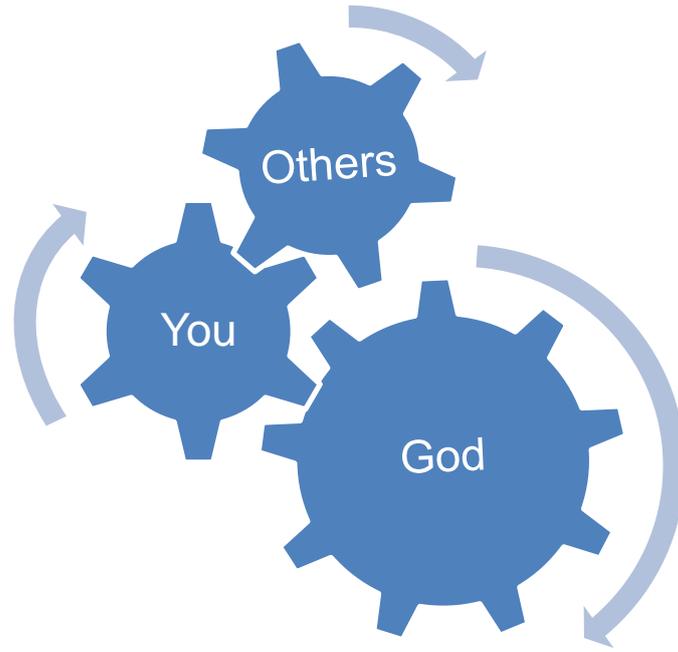
We cannot put on the new person if our relationship with God is not right and that is why Paul said we must be transformed in the renewing of our minds. Emptying our selves of the old person and his characters and putting on the new persons which can only be accomplished by letting the Word of Christ dwell and govern our lives

**To conclude:**

In order to improve our relationships, we must first renew that our minds by emptying the rubbish of the flesh before we know Christ away and put on new attribute of the one we bear His name - Christ.

Allow the peace of God to rule our hearts and let the Word of Christ dwell in us richly and do to others as we want or expect them to do to us.

It is like a triplet wheel, that interlocks each other, when you move one, the rest moves. Once you have a good relationship with God, it drives you which in turn drive your relationship with other people.



Let us renew our relationships for the sake of Christ