

**HEALING THE PAST GOD'S WAY**  
**CHAPTER 17 TEACHING NOTES**  
**INTIMACY**

**MEMORY VERSE:**

Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom,  
that we may present everyone mature in Christ.  
Colossians 1:28

**RESOURCE HIGHLIGHTS:**

*Relationships: A Mess worth Making* by Tim Lane and Paul Tripp

*War of Words: Getting to the Heart of your Communication Struggles* by Paul David Tripp

*Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands: People in Need of Change Helping People in Need of Change* by Paul David Tripp

**INTRODUCTION: BIBLICAL MODEL OF RELATIONSHIPS**

**BALCONY PEOPLE SEE THE GOOD – a study in PHILEMON**  
(from a sermon series James MacDonald preached in 10/2001)

Balcony people are thankful for every person and circumstance in their life: thankfulness is a critical choice, prayers of gratitude for *all* circumstances.

**PRINCIPLE #1:** I must see every person or circumstance as God coming to me through that person or circumstance to make me more like His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. (Job 23:10)

Balcony people focus on the positive in others. A word of encouragement can move a mountain of discouragement.

**PRINCIPLE #2:** I must see people in terms of what God is making them and not what they are.

Balcony people focus on the good that others do, not the wrong.

Benefits of focusing on the good:

1. Gives me something to enjoy thinking about
2. Blesses person and gives them hope
3. Draws others around you instead of repelling them
4. Consistent with God's view of His own people

**\*PRINCIPLE #3:** There are no enduring relationships without forgiveness.

\*Can not be emphasized enough

## **WE ARE DESIGNED TO BE IN RELATIONSHIP:**

### ***WITH GOD – the vertical***

The shattered relationship between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit at the cross provides the basis for our reconciliation. No other relationship ever suffered more than what Father, Son, and Holy Spirit endured when Jesus hung on the cross and cried, “*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*” Jesus was willing to be the rejected Son so that our families would know reconciliation. Jesus was willing to become the forsaken friend so that we could have loving relationships. Jesus was willing to be the rejected Lord so that we could live in loving submission to one another. Jesus was willing to be the forsaken brother so that we could have godly relationships. Jesus was willing to be the crucified King so that our communities would experience peace. Tim Lane and Paul Tripp, *Relationships: A Mess Worth Making*

Genesis 1:26 - God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. . .”

2 Corinthians 5:18 – 21 All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

**\*IF THE VERTICAL RELATIONSHIP IS BROKEN, THE HORIZONTAL RELATIONSHIPS WILL NOT WORK**

### ***WITH OTHERS – the horizontal***

We often think that if God really cared for us, He would make our relationships easier. In reality, a difficult relationship is a mark of His love and care. We would prefer that God would just change the relationship, but he won't be content until the relationship changes us too! Tim Lane and Paul Tripp, *Relationships: A Mess Worth Making*

Genesis 2:18 LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him. . .”

1 Corinthians 12 (body of Christ) and 13 (Way of Love)

**LOVE YOUR NEIGHBORS AS YOURSELF – SELF LOVE ASSUMED**

**BIBLE INFESTED WITH STORIES ABOUT HORIZONTAL RELATIONSHIPS – THEY ARE AS NATURAL AND AS NECESSARY AS AIR**

### ***OUR MODEL IS JESUS***

## **GOD DESIGNED US TO *DO LIFE* TOGETHER**

WE ARE **PART** OF THE BODY OF CHRIST, NOT THE WHOLE (WE NEED EACH OTHER)

But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? 1 Corinthians 12:18 - 19

WE ARE **CALLED** TO FELLOWSHIP WITH ONE ANOTHER

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. Hebrews 10:24 & 25

## **GOD'S FAMILY IS COMMITTED TO FELLOWSHIP**

(from a sermon series James MacDonald preached in November, 1997)

*koinonia* – Christian fellowship or fellowship with God; community, a relationship that involves active participation towards a common goal

1. Fellowship means “our common life together”. (Acts 2:42 – 47)
2. Fellowship was a high priority in the early church.
3. Fellowship is for believers only. (2 Corinthians 6:14)
4. Fellowship centers on our common relationship to Christ. (1 Corinthians 1:9)
5. Fellowship involves sharing what I have. (2 Corinthians 8)
6. Fellowship is about partnership in ministry (Philippians 1:3 – 11)
7. Fellowship requires commitment. (Galatians 2:9)
8. Fellowship hurts sometimes. (Philippians 3)
9. Fellowship requires honesty. (1 John 1:6 – 9)
10. Fellowship produces unity. (Philippians 2:1 & 2)

WE ARE **CALLED** TO PRESENT ONE ANOTHER COMPLETE IN CHRIST

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. Colossians 3:12 - 14

**INTIMACY:** *to know and be known*

Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him – a threefold cord is not quickly broken. Ecclesiastes 4:9 – 12

**IMPEDIMENTS TO INTIMACY**

*too busy*

*fear*

*difficult to trust – past betrayals*

*fierce independence – don't need other people*

*hiding something*

**INVITATION TO INTIMACY**

**JESUS – NEW LIFE; NEWNESS OF LIFE** (An abundant life experienced through the joy of sanctification and change.)

**INFLUENCE:** *to impact for good or for bad, to direct or to change*

And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted,  
help the weak, be patient with them all.  
1 Thessalonians 5:14

We are always in the process of being influenced by someone or something for good or for bad. See also *Proverbs 4:23; 6:27 – 28; 7:2 – 5; 16:25* and *Joshua 1:8 - 9*

**MODEL OF INTIMACY AND INFLUENCE:** JESUS – 72 who followed to 12 disciples to 3 beloved intimates

Draw a circle and write: OUTER CIRCLE – THOSE WE KNOW ABOUT; NON-BELIEVERS (Limited intimacy and influence in our lives)

Draw a circle inside the first one and write: NEXT CIRCLE – BELIEVERS, FELLOW WORKERS FOR CHRIST (More intimacy and greater influence; more intentional but limited)

Draw another circle inside the last one and write: INNER CIRCLE – BELIEVERS WHO KNOW US WELL AND WHO WE KNOW WELL (Greatest intimacy and influence, both ways)

Jesus had a large crowd that followed Him regularly, then He had the twelve and then He had the three. We need to live in relationship with individuals with whom we have intimacy (to know and to be known) and with whom we have influence (impacting one another for Jesus). Those inner circle relationships are critical and they need to be *cultivated*.

Traits to look for in an “inner circle” relationship:

The person must have A PASSION FOR JESUS (as I must have).

The person must have A PASSION FOR GOD’S WORD (as I must have).

The person must have THE UTMOST CONCERN FOR MY RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD (and I for their relationship with God).

If an individual does not have any inner circle relationships, it is good to desire them (not covet them). Encourage each individual to pray for God to bring those kind of relationships into their lives; to grow in their own passions (for Jesus and for God’s Word); to be open to opportunities for greater community (small groups or Bible studies) and to seek places to serve as those relationships often develop into deeper friendships.

Remind the women, especially, that inner circle relationships with men to whom they are not related or married can be problematic. Men relate differently than women and it is crucial to carefully consider the impact or opportunity for an intimate relationship to grow into another kind of intimacy. Titus; Ephesians; 1 Peter; 1 & 2 Timothy and 1 & 2 Corinthians all explore the themes of submission to one another, to pursuit of purity and to recognizing the need to come alongside of the weaker brother or sister to protect them and to build them up. If I (you) keep in mind what is best for the other above what is best for me, God will keep me pure in relation to my inner circle relationships.

Helpful to remember. . .

*Not perfectly, but increasingly*  
James MacDonald

So if there is *any* encouragement in Christ, *any* comfort from love, *any* participation in the Spirit, *any* affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Philippians 2:1 - 5 (italics mine for emphasis)