



The relationships we have with one another are typically only as good as the relationship we have with God. If someone wants to have fuller, more satisfying relationships in marriage, family and friendships, the answer is first to build a strong friendship with God. The most critical part of building the God relationship is prayer — consistent, daily, honest prayer. The closer we are to God, the more God will be able to influence our “complicated” relationships. This passage has a simple guideline for prayer: 1. Rejoice; 2. Trust; 3. Request; 4. Thank; 5. Accept God’s peace.

*How do you think that trusting God in consistent prayer and offering God daily prayer requests can give peace?*

*Why is peace between each of us and God such an important part of experiencing peace in our relationships?*

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Psalm 119: 97-105**

We may be used to it, it may even seem normal to us, but most of us live in a constant whirlwind of noise, stress, temptations and demands. It can wear us down if we are not careful, and this can create very fragile lives — lives that can break, broken lives that can cause our relationships to break. This does not have to be because God has given us His Spirit and His Word to keep us whole, even in the whirlwind many of us live in. “Meditating” on God, God’s Book and the relationship we want with God is an essential part of every relationship. Meditation is a heart that turns to the creator.

*Why is it important to meditate on the commands of God? What are the commands we most should focus on?*

*How can the Word be a lamp that helps us see the way, shows us what is most important and helps us keep on track in the most important thing in life — our relationships?*

.....  
.....  
.....

We don’t like to confess. We don’t want to face up to our sins, flaws, mistakes where we have been wrong, hurt others, hurt God, been selfish instead of selfless, self-centered instead of Christ-centered. It’s easier to roll with the flow than face God with the truth about who we are, who we are not, and to ask God for forgiveness. We know that when we seek forgiveness from God, change must follow. Change is hard. Today think about “confession.” The Bible says when we “confess our sins,” God is faithful and just to forgive those sins. (1 John 1:9) Grace!

*What sins do you need to confess today? What do you need to ask forgiveness for? What needs to change? Where is your brokenness? Can you name those things in specific ways?*

*It is hard to confess, forgive and change without being specific. What is broken must be healed. When we bring brokenness into any relationship, the brokenness spreads into that relationship. “God heal me!”*

.....  
.....  
.....

**James 3:13-18**

Selfishness often dooms a relationship and is the core of what sin is. When people are selfish, their lives are lived by how others treat them, what they want and what they like; they make decisions on emotion and feelings. It is almost impossible for selfish people to be compassionate for their feelings and wants can be all that matters. James calls for us to abandon “selfish ambition,” calling this “wisdom from above,” teaching that selflessness allows for healthy relationships. This begins in the idea that we love God because he first loved us, also a biblical teaching.

*If selfishness is the root of sin, can selflessness be the root of righteousness? What are some of the ways temptation to be selfish can be destructive to our relationships — with God, with others, how we grow as Christians?*

*Can you name areas where self-centeredness might be sabotaging your relationship with God and the people you care about? How is choosing a life of selflessness “wisdom”?*

.....  
.....  
.....