

****Bumper Video –**

Relationships are hard

Whether you are talking about a married relationship, a parent child relationship, a brother sister or extended family relationship, a friendship, a co-working relationship... No matter the kind of relationship I'm sure you will agree – Relationships are hard.

Why are relationships hard?

Personalities

Expectations

What if you could fix every rocky relationship in your life? What would that look like? Feel like?

How valuable would that be?

What if I told you there was a way to improve the health of all your relationships that didn't involve years of paying a counselor? What if I told you it was at its core a very simple idea and didn't require a lot of steps?

Would you be interested?

We believe that the answer for every relationship is found in the Bible. Specifically the example of God's relationship with us is all we need to fix every relationship.

Now you may not be a Christian and you may not be sure there is a God or if the Bible is true... You are still going to want to listen to what I have to say. Because what I'm going to share today is something you can start using immediately to make your life better.

God as our example

Do you have a difficult person in your life?

Is there a better example of dealing with difficult people than God's interaction with mankind? Think about it...

The entire Bible is one big example of God interacting with mankind.

If you have a relationship where you are in the right and the other person is in the wrong... Wouldn't it be good to know the best way to respond? Well then look to how God responds... How does he respond when people fail?

If you are in a relationship where you are perhaps in the wrong... Wouldn't it be good to know the best way to respond? You can look to God's example and see the best way to reconcile and make things right.

If your relationship with God can be fixed then every relationship in your life can be fixed!

If your supernatural relationship can be fixed with a simple prayer of repentance then your natural relationships should be fixed with just as simple a process. Your natural relationships shouldn't be harder to fix than your supernatural relationship.

Now I realize there will be push back from such a sentence... Usually something around the lines of... "You don't understand... Those people... and what they did..."

Push back against that push back... Stop making it about those people... make it about yourself...

If you make your actions contingent on the actions of others then you will never fix things... Instead of basing your response on others, base your response on the example of God's character.

Live your relationships by the book.

Why God's example?

He created man. He entered into relationship with man.

Adam and Eve broke from that relationship – sin – but God still attempted to have a relationship with man.

God attempts to restore the relationship. How does he do this?

By humbling himself... by coming in the form of a man himself...

As a man Jesus wasn't received... but He didn't return violence for violence...

Even now Jesus is trying to restore the relationship between God and man...

Some people receive Him and some don't, but no matter what He still stands at the door of the heart of every man and woman and knocks. Rev 3:20

That's God's example in a nutshell. Is it your example? Is that how you handle broken relationships?

Do you cut people off at the first offence? What if God did that?

Do you refuse to forgive? What if God...?

Do you always play the pride card and exalt yourself as the person in the right? What if God did that?

Does the idea of going to a person who has done you wrong seem foreign? What if God...?

Motivation

More important that what you do... is why you do. Your Motivation directs your life.

What is God's motivation?

God's motivation is Love. His every action towards man has been love motivated.

Love Motivation

I challenge you to look through the Bible with that understanding. Every action God does in the Bible ask yourself how is love the motivation behind this action.

In fact love isn't just what he does, or why he does... it is who He is.

1 John 4:8 Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.(NIV)

Why did God go the way of the cross?

1 John 4:10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.(NIV)

And that love should effect how we treat others...

1 John 4:11 Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.(NIV)

Even some difficult to understand to understand situations like Noah and the ark. Why did God flood the earth?

Peter attributes that to a loving act...

{ 1 Peter 3:20 who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water,(NIV) }

God was patient in waiting for an evil world to change their ways. In the end Peter says his flooding of the world saved Noah and His family. Peter never uses the work destruction...

The interpretation is that the world was destroyed already and that the water actually saved some.

God's action was love motivated.

It can be tough to see a love motivation sometime... anyone who has ever parented knows what I'm talking about. Correcting our children is love motivated even when our children might not see or feel our love.

Rev 3:19

This can be tough...

TEXT NUMBER

The motivation behind God's every action is Love. How can that help you and your relationship?

Let love be your motivation

Is Love really the motivation behind your actions?

Why aren't you talking to that person? Is that love motivated? If it is ok... but if it isn't...

Your response to what they said. Was that love motivated?

You see the wrong they are doing but when you talked to them about it... was that love motivated? Did you deliver it in such a way that they knew you were motivated by love?

You've done wrong but you haven't asked forgiveness... are you lacking a love motivation?

How does God's love motivation look in your life?

1 Cor 13:4-8 THIS IS OUR SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE THIS MONTH...

Love Motivation

A Love Motivation will simplify your life. Instead of wondering what to do you wonder how to best love..

A love motivation will bring healing and reconciliation to your relationships. Because of love you can forgive and banish the record of wrong score board.

You'll stop using and abusing people if you look at them through the eyes of love.

You'll stop selling yourself to one night stands when you start looking at others & yourself through eyes of love.

A love motivation will build trust because we trust people who love us and act out love toward us.

You will get bent out of shape much less because a love motivation brings patience.

Your arguments can have a peaceful resolve for once because a love motivation listens and doesn't just speak.

From the beginning God has been trying to show us the truth of a love motivation.

Maybe you relate to Love as an emotion... a feeling or some unspoken agreement not to kill each other...

Love is so much more than that. Love can encompass your entire life... your thoughts, your actions, your words

And this is what our relationships have always needed.

Instead of operating from a Love Motivation we often operate from the opposite.

What is the opposite of a Love motivation? You might think a Hate Motivation, but the Book of the Bible tells us the antitheses of love isn't hate... but Fear.

Fear Motivation

Listen up! I'm about to really help someone.

There are 2 kinds of motivations behind every action. Fear or Love.

We have been living out some of our actions from a fear motivation.

In fact if I asked you why you had that fight... you might say "Because I'm afraid that they are going to ruin..."

Why are you working such late hours and staying away from your family... "I'm afraid that we won't be able to afford..."

We are afraid sometimes and we don't even realize it.

You need to find the fear in your life. You need to look at your actions and find where you've been afraid.

There need to be some conversations around the kitchen table where we say.. "I'm sorry. I've been thinking about the things I've been doing and saying... I haven't been acting from love... I've been acting from the fear that..."

A fear that you won't love me anymore... You won't find me attractive... a fear I will fail or do the wrong thing... a fear that our kids won't like us... a fear that I won't get what I want...

In the beginning the Bible tells us about a Garden where God & Man & Woman all dwelt together in Love. Love was the motivation...

We never heard about hurtful arguments in the Garden of Eden. There was no divorce or separation. There were no men using their physical strength to muscle their way. There were no women manipulating in order to get their way.

There was only love... Until Adam & Eve broke their relationship with God...

When they broke from God... the next thing that happens is that they are hiding from God because they were AFRAID.

You will either have a Love motivation or a Fear Motivation.

1 John 4:18 There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.(NIV)

Fear and love can't cohabitate the same space.

Have you been trying to punish in your relationships? Be careful!
Punishment is a fear motivation.

2 tim 1:7 For God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power,
and of love, and of a sound mind.

God hasn't given you FEAR! He has given you LOVE, power, and a sound mind.

Stop doing things out of fear.

Start doing things out of love.

Don't parent your kids out of fear that they won't always be happy with you... Parent them with a love that will instill the right character in them even if they aren't happy about your choice.

Don't start trying to lose weight because you are afraid your spouse is no longer attracted to you. Start losing weight because you love this body God gave you and you love your spouse and want to live a long life with them. DO IT OUT OF LOVE NOT FEAR.

Have that difficult conversation but not out of a fear that you won't get what you want. Have that conversation out of a love for that person

Don't go to work with a fear of what you won't be able to provide for your family. Go to work out of for your family and celebrate what you are able to provide for them.

Forgive that person who hurt you and overcome the fear that they will only hurt you again.

Overcome fear with love.

MUSICIAN

Love is stronger than fear

The Gospel shows us this. This is what God has been trying to show us all along.

God extends his love to those who hadn't yet extended their love to Him.

You might have a real mess of a relationship on your hands. You might be thinking “none of this applies to this particular relationship in my life because of the way they hurt me...” Maybe they hurt you multiple times...

Or perhaps you are the person that caused the terrible hurt and you think “the last thing they would ever want is to hear from me after all the hurt I caused them...”

I'm not trying to make you hurt you or make you feel like a loser... I'm trying to bring healing to you. To bring you out of fear and towards love.

When we hold up the example of God... He always seeks reconciliation. He is always forgives when we ask. He always restores.

Shacking up

Teen pregnancy – waiting

Not a lease with an option to buy – covenant