

- The purpose of this bible study is to gain the knowledge of God that He has given us in His word and then be able to apply that knowledge in order to strengthen Marriage relationships, Family relationships and any of our other Person to Person relationships.
- We will see that the bible gives specific instructions about how we are to treat one another. The 10 Commandments that we find in the Old Testament, let us see the mind of God and let us know that God wanted us to pay special attention to how we treat one another. These 10 Commandments that God gave were written on tablets by the hand of God and were the basic rules that everyone needed to pattern their life by. We can see by looking at the 10 Commandments that all of these commandments had to do with the way we treat others in our relationships. The first 4 commandments have to do with our relationship with God and the last 6 commandments have to do with our relationship with others.

Exodus 20:1-17

- How should we treat our relationship with God? - Listen to the first 4 Commandments.

1st Commandment - Thou shalt have no other gods before me - God wants preeminence in our relationship with Him: We are to put nothing in front of Him. He doesn't want a position in our lives, He wants preeminence. We are not to make something else a god to us and then put it front of Him. (person, possessions, money, hobbies, pleasure, things).

2nd Commandment - Thou shalt not make unto thee any given image - We are told not to create our own god by taking something that God has created and making an image of it and worshipping it. We are not to bow down to any other image and treat it as our god.

3rd Commandment - Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain - The name of God actually means, the name, character and person of God. We are not supposed to defile or dishonor the name of God or the character of God with any of our words or actions. To defile God with our words or our actions is to take His name in vain. Our relationship with God is supposed to be a relationship in which God is spoken of with all honor and our actions should honor Him.

4th Commandment - Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy - In our relationship with God, there needs to be a special time set apart to focus on Him and to turn our minds toward Him and Him alone. God wanted a designated time that was devoted to strengthening every persons relationship with Him. This was a day that any other activity that would distract us or take away our focus from Him was stopped. God designated a distraction free day that He could have man's undivided attention. It was a day of rest from our labor because our labor requires so much of our attention. Our relationship with God is our priority relationship, when it is right, we can have healthy relationships with others.

- Now we see that the next 6 commandments have to do with our relationships with each other. Person to person relationships, husband & wife relationship and parent/child relationships.

5th Commandment - Honor thy father and mother - This commandment was given to man to strengthen the relationship between the parent and child. God established an order between the child and parent, giving the parent authority in the home and requiring that the child honor that parent with their words and actions. To honor is to respect, obey, and esteem someone. God is saying, in order for this relationship between parent and child to be strong the child must give honor to the parent.

6th Commandment - Thou shalt not kill - We are never to disregard the person to person relationship and decide to willingly take life away from someone else because we think we have the authority to make that decision.

7th Commandment - Thou shalt not commit adultery - This commandment has to do with the marriage relationship. The marriage covenant is a covenant that God has ordained. The husband and the wife are supposed to be loyal to each other and faithful to give their physical bodies only to each other. This also applies to those who commit adultery with someone else's husband or wife. Everyone is supposed to honor the marriage covenant whether it is your own or someone else's.

8th Commandment - Thou shalt not steal - This commandment is put in place to instruct us not to violate the person to person relationship by taking something that another person has. To steal is to take something that isn't given to you. This is a violation of the law of possession. When a person steals, they decide that they should have something that belongs to someone else and by doing this they disregard the person they take it from.

9th Commandment - Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor - Our neighbor is another person; any other person. To bear false witness is to lie. When we lie about someone or to someone we completely dishonor that person or people by stating something that isn't true. Our words cause others to be misled from the truth and God takes this seriously because He is the God of truth. When we lie about others or to others we violate the person to person relationship because we have made a statement claiming truth, but have actually attempted to deceive the ones we have lied to and misrepresented the ones we have lied about. The bible tells us that the devil is the father of lies, so when we bear false witness it is a case of us being obedient to the devil and disobedient to God.

10th Commandment - Thou shalt not covet (covet - to long to possess something that belongs to another person)- This commandment is a commandment to keep our desires under control. When we covet another person's possessions it is the beginning of our future actions of taking something from them. It is the beginning of jealousy. It is the beginning of discontent, it leads to killing, stealing, adultery and lying to get what we want. Notice that God is specific in giving examples with this commandment.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors house.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors wife.

Nor his servants, nor his livestock

Nor anything that is thy neighbors.

- To covet something is to desire something so strongly that you would disregard the other person that has something that you want, so that you can get something for yourself, no matter if it is unfair to the other person.
- Have you ever thought about this? - These were the foundational instructions that God gave us.
- All of these commandments are commandments from God to us, to give us explicit instructions on how we are supposed to handle our relationship with Him and with others. This is how important relationships are to God.
- The relationship principle was affirmed by Jesus in (Matthew 22) (Mark 12) and (Luke 10:27)
- Turn to (Matthew 22:35-40) "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind this is the first and greatest commandment and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

- On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.
- This is how important our relationships are - God said and Jesus affirmed that everything that was commanded and everything taught by all of the prophets have to do with how we treat God and how we treat each other - Our relationship with God and our relationship with others.
- God continually gives man instruction in these areas because He knows that we have a big problem and if we can ever get a handle on this problem then we will please Him and we will be able to live obedient to Him. The problem is our SELFISHNESS. Our selfishness is the one thing that damages and sometimes destroys our relationship with God and each other.
- The first thing we need to do is recognize our own selfishness and ask God to help us to be unselfish.

As we talk about relationships we would do well to see how relationships began and our need for relationships.

We are going to focus on 4 main relationship groups.

1. Mans relationship with God
2. Husband and wife relationships
3. Parent/Child relationships
4. Person to Person relationships.

- We see that ever since God created man, He has emphasized our need for healthy relationships.
- In (Genesis 1) we see the creator of the heavens and the earth and everything in them.
- We see in (vs 24-29) the overview of the creation of man and animals.
- Notice in (vs 24-25) God made everything after its kind.
- (vs 26) God said let us make man in our own image after our likeness.
- Man was different than anything else that God had made, Man was made in the likeness of God - the reason that man was made in the likeness of God is so man could have a relationship with God, fellowship with God.
- Man was created to think differently than animals, man was created with different emotions than animals, Man was created with a soul.
- (vs 27) God created man in two forms or two models - Male and Female
- (vs 28) God gave man dominion over every living thing that He had created before - God established an order between man and animals and the order was that man would have authority over animals.
- Now in (Chapter 2) we see the details about the creation of man and we begin to see the relationships that man entered into.
- (Genesis 2:7) “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul.”

- Notice, God didn't just create man, He formed him, he shaped him. Remember we were made in the image of God.
- But notice this next significant detail in (Genesis 2:7) After God formed man out of the dust of the earth - He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul.
- I know some bible versions say "a living being" but I think "living soul" really lets us identify with what God did differently with man than any of his other creations.
- The breath of life that God breathed into man is a breath that can not be taken away. This breath of life gave man an inner self, a soul. This inner self will continue to live even when the outer body passes away. This Breath of Life "This Soul" begins to live synonymously in a person the minute they begin to live and the soul occupies the body of man and influences the actions of man. Animals and fish and birds were not given a soul, they were not given the Breath of Life, so they can not have the same relationship that we have with God.
- Sometimes the bible calls it the "Heart of Man", "the Spirit of Man" or the "Soul of Man", but we need to know that this innermost part of us is what makes us special. It is the Breath of God and everyone of us are ultimately judged according to what we have done with our soul while we were living in our body.
- It is most important part of us.
- Think about what Jesus said in (Matthew 10:28) "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."
- You see our soul will never cease to be, it will either be eternally in heaven or eternally in hell. And God gave us the free will to choose.
- Notice (Genesis 2:8) God placed man in a specific place - The Garden of Eden. God put man in a place that would sustain man's every need.
- (Genesis 2:15) God gave man responsibility - to take care of the Garden of Eden. Next in (vs 16-17) God gave man rules. He gave man an opportunity to be obedient or an opportunity to disobey Him. And be punished.
- Every relationship has rules - we see this first in our relationship with God.
- Now we see a (key verse) - (verse 18) "And the Lord God said, It is not good that man should be alone, I will make him a help meet.
- "Help meet" is a ancient Hebrew expression that means "a second self"
- Up until this point we see that God had created the earth and the sea and saw that it was good and all the reproducing plant life and saw that it was good, the sun and the moon and saw that it was good, the fish in the sea and saw that it was good, and the animals of the earth and saw it was good but for man to be alone, God said it is not good.
- This is key for our study - God said that it is not good for man to be by himself. Man needs to have a meaningful relationship along with his relationship with God.
- (vs 19) For the first time we see what this man was named "Adam". Next we see that God gave Adam a job - This means that God had a relationship with Adam, he talked to Adam, he gave instructions to Adam.
- The job was to name all the animal and birds.

- But in this process we can see that Adam didn't see any animal or bird that he could have a meaningful relationship with. None of the animals were like him; "not even monkeys". None of the animals had a soul and none could communicate and feel and share with him.. Also he saw that each animal had a partner; a second self. He saw that there was a male and a female.
 - But for Adam there was not found a help meet.
 - So in (vs 21-25) God created a second self for man and Adam named her woman because she was taken out of man. This woman was brought to the man so that this man and this woman could have a relationship together and so both of them could have a relationship with God.
 - Notice in (vs 21-22) How woman was made. God put Adam to sleep and removed one of Adam's ribs and made woman out of the rib, and then he brought this woman back to Adam.
 - When God brought this woman "Eve" (Genesis 3:20) back to Adam it was to present her to Adam - this relationship was instituted and ordained by God. This is when Adam and Eve were married - God gave her and Adam took her. In (vs 23) Adam makes his first public statement in the bible. (vs 23) Adam said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh, she shall be called woman because she was taken out of man."
 - Now listen to God's proclamation about this marriage relationship between man and woman that we see in (vs 24)
 - (Genesis 2:24) "Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall become one."
1. We see that God put the marriage relationship in a place of importance above every other person to person relationship even the parent child relationship. The child is supposed to leave their parents and make their marriage relationship their priority relationship.
 2. He shall cleave unto his wife and they shall be one flesh. When the rib is joined back with the body then both the man who needed a rib and the woman who needed a body became complete. This is the picture of one flesh.
- We see here that God has given the husband and the wife something special; he has given them oneness. He has united man with his second self.
 - When God does this and man and woman become one flesh, he gives them something as a gift. He gives them the ability to join together physically in an expression of love and consummate their marriage.
 - Society today has labeled this action having sex, but this special act that God has given man and woman is a gift. It is an expression of their oneness, it is the closest two people can be and it is only given to husband and wife because they have been joined together to be one. God gave it to the husband and wife to strengthen their relationship, it is something that sets the marriage relationship apart from any other relationship and God takes it seriously when man decides that he can perform this act outside of marriage.