

Forty Days of Purpose Devotional

Day 20 "Relationships are always worth restoring."

In the Bible the Father provides considerable instruction for His children on how to restore relationships, and these work IF the people involved listen to and learn from them. Jesus said that:

"Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me." (Jn 6:45 [NIV])

What does it mean to "come to Jesus"? It means to focus on Him, learn from Him, obey Him and continue to become like Him. In Christ, God reconciled mankind to Himself (2 Cor 5:19). We have been given the ministry of reconciliation, working in the power of the Holy Spirit to help transform relationships between people and God and each other. What are the features of God's plan for relationships?

"Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others." (Phil 2:4) *"Speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ."* (Eph 4:15-16) *"Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another."* (Heb 10:25 [NIV])

We cannot always restore a relationship, because it is not in our power. But we can pray and ask for God's help, and we must do everything that IS in our power:

"If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone." (Rom 12:18)

- Christ died to transform relationships.
- If we live like Christ we will be devoted to transforming relationships, appealing to people to be reconciled to God and to each other.
- The Father has made it clear how we are to relate to each other, and promises to be near when we follow His instructions.

Imagine a big house, with the family of God inside – having a party. You are a part of the family, and are of course welcome. The Father wonders why you are not there, and finds you outside, unwilling to fellowship with some of the people inside because of unresolved disagreements. This is the situation Jesus describes in Luke 15:28-32. The prodigal son has returned and reconciled to the father. Now it is the older brother's turn to reconcile with the father, and with his brother. What disputes do you have with your brothers and sisters? What disputes do you have with the Father? Write them down, and seek council from Scripture and from mature Christians about what you should do – then take action.
