**Enemies of Relationships**

**Part 2**

**August 5, 2018**

* Relationships

* God wants them, why wouldn’t we?

* Because its about building God’s Kingdom and not ours

* But, there are enemies of Godly relationships

* An enemy besides the unholy three
* An enemy that the unholy three use
* To try and destroy relationships, spiritual family, community

* That try to destroy the culture we are building here
* **A culture of love,** edification, encouragement, building up, strengthening, loving, taking care of each other, unity, relationships, family, and community, all based upon the Triune God and His Holy Word!
* The enemy: the tongue that is used to bring forth the opposite of the culture we wish to build
* As seen in James 3 – that which is a small member, yet it is a fire and a world of unrighteousness
* All too often used to curse people who are created in the image and likeness of our God
* Which is sin – Bible study – not suppose to mention that word sin

* Why Paul exhorts us not to use our tongue negatively
* **Eph 4:29 (NLT**) – “Let no corrupting (putrid, rotten, harmful) talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.”
* What are we to do, what are we to do – chicken little
* **Well, we have choices, we can** choose:
	+ To shun tearing down, instead choosing to build up
	+ To shun legalism, instead choosing to give grace
	+ To shun cursing, instead choosing to bless and encourage people
* Also choose not to use negative words we talked about last time - words that knowingly hurt, speak forth unforgiveness, or come from anger – tear down
* Those words will also lead us into sin, requiring repentance and forgiveness

* **Tim Keller (God’s Wisdom** for Navigating Life) – “And if Jesus died to forgive you of your infinite debt to him, how can you not forgive the wrongdoer his finite debt to you.”

* Let’s look at three more words that tear down, leading us into sin
* One (1) – Judgment – to judge
* Personally, I think this word is often misused – don’t judge me.
* People can get judgment confused with discernment, which can be good
* **Discernment means** to perceive, to have perception with the senses as well as the mind; to become cognizant of. Involves insight through relationship
* **While judgment,** or to judge means to render an opinion; to decide and set forth a decision; to condemn – to judge

* Basically, discerning can be good in relationships – helping a person walk into truth - all God has for them - as you walk in relationship with them.
* While judgment is rather final, even to the extent of passing a sentence
* In relationships we want to be able to walk with people and help them walk out of sin and closer to Jesus – being built up – to mature

* However, we don’t want to pass judgment on a person, thus writing them off, basically as finished, beyond help, passing a sentence – tears down

* We are commanded not to judge
* **Matt 7:1-5 (ESV) – “7 Judge** not, that you be not judged. 2 For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. 3 Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? 4 Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your own eye? 5 You hypocrite first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.”
* We’re not to look at others and judge them for their actions - inactions

* We are not to judge as guilty and liable for punishment – to condemn
* The truth is that we can’t see what is in a person’s heart – the hurt, pain.
* **Only God can as it says in Jer 17:10 (ESV) “**search the heart and test the mind to give man according to his ways”
* Must start with our self and see what needs to be changed in our own life
* Because it’s about building God’s Kingdom and not ours
* Look for the logs in our eyes and take them out
* Let God search hearts and test minds, thus removing the specks from others.
* Truth – we don’t have ability to fix other people or ourselves – only God can
* Instead we should take a different path
* **2 Cor 5:16,17 (NLT) –** 16 So we have stopped evaluating others from a human point of view. At one time we thought of Christ merely from a human point of view. How differently we know him now! 17 This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!”

* Stop evaluating others – judging others from a human point of view

* Instead look at those in Christ from a Godly point of view
* That they are a new person and the old life is gone – a new one has begun

* Understanding that they have a new heart that God is working in and on
* So, let us walk in thankfulness, showing gratitude for who they now are

* **Col 2:6,7 (NASB) – “**6 Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, 7 having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude.”

* Let the gratitude – thankfulness, thanksgiving – for our brothers and sisters overflow out of us

* Also showing gratitude to God – thanking Him for putting them in our lives

* Being thankful that God uses ALL our brothers and sisters in our lives

* Even with all their faults and imperfections
* Just like God uses us in people’s lives despite our imperfections
* Even though it might be painful at times.
* **Prov 27:17 (ESV) –** “Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another.”
* We are called to be friends with each other; honest in discernment, not judgmental, yet sharpening each other in the Triune God
* It’s important to just be there, showing gratitude for each other

* Always praying for and walking with each other through thick and thin
* Second (2) – Sarcasm – Only Found in AMP Bible Ps 59:7
* **The word sarcasm** – 1828 Webster’s – A satirical remark or expression, uttered with some degree of scorn or contempt; a taunt; to deride.
* **Matt 15:31 (ESV)** – “So also the chief priests with the scribes mocked him to one another, saying, ‘He saved others; he cannot save himself.’”

* Sarcasm, as a humor, is widely accepted today
* Even to the point where the more sarcastic you are the funnier you are

* That person is one card short of a full deck

* You go girl! And don’t come back

* Mirrors can’t talk, lucky for you

* The same people that said the earth is flat wrote the Bible – internet

* And on and on and on – all at someone’s expense
* Usually producing hurt – even if they might laugh and not show it

* Again, violating what Paul told us

* **Eph 4:29 (NLT)** – “Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.”
* But, there’s a better path to follow than sarcasm

* Being kind to one another

* **Eph 4:32 (ESV)** – “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.”

* Being kind means we are to furnish what is needed, that which is profitable; we are to be gracious – full of grace, building people up

* Now, that’s a winner!

* Sarcasm tears down, while kindness builds up

* We really have no choice but to clothe ourselves with kindness

* **Col 3:12 (NLT) –** “Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.”

* If we are Holy we are to clothe (put on) kindness (goodness of heart)

* The opposite of the negative that may accompany sarcasm

* As we do, we will build relationships, community, and family

* This is an easy choice – We are always to show kindness in every situation to everyone rather than sarcasm
* Third (3) – Jealousy

* Which is a work of the flesh
* **Gal 5:19,20 (ESV)** – “Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy…

* Jealousy is walking in envy of someone; a particularly strong feeling of resentment against someone

* Which is seen in the body all too often

* Why did that person get honored and not me?
* I should have been asked to do that; after all I’m more qualified than her

* I’ve been here longer than him and he was chosen for leadership

* We don’t want to be like the Jews who were so very jealous

* **Acts 13:45 (NLT)** – “But when some of the Jews saw the crowds, they were jealous; so, they slandered Paul and argued against whatever he said.”
* The Jews were resentful of the fact that Paul and Barnabas were drawing large crowds – probably larger than the Jews drew
* So, the Jews spoke evil against whatever Paul and Barnabas said or did, trying to hurt their reputation
* Just like the Pharisees did over and over with Jesus – search it out.
* We don’t need jealousy in the church – produces negative fruit – divisive!
* **James 3:16 (ESV) –** “For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice.”
* Which tears down and destroys relationships, community, and family
* Instead, we need goodwill

* **Acts 2:46,47 (NLT) –** “46 They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord’s Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity—47 all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.”

* Our goal should be goodwill in every relationship – that which causes joy, pleasure, gratification, favor, acceptance, for a kindness granted or desired, a benefit, thanks, gratitude.
* Goodwill, where we stand with others and cheer their good fortune
* So, how do we not judge, not be sarcastic, and not be jealous
* By choosing to be thankful vs. judging, kindness vs. sarcastic, and expressing goodwill vs jealousy
* By seeking God and His healing so we can learn to walk out who we are
* **2 Cor 5:17 (NLT) –** “This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!”
* New people in Christ – new life – not people of the flesh, but the Spirit
* We are new people – we have been set free from sin – Romans 6
* So, let us be who we really are, not saying words that judge, using sarcasm, or living in jealousy
* Using words/actions that are enemies of relationships, family, and community
* They are counter to the culture we are building
* Instead let’s choose to be who we really are in Christ, choosing to speak words of thankfulness, kindness, and goodwill
* **All the while building** our culture of love, edification, encouragement, building up, strengthening, taking care of each other, unity, relationships, family, and community, all based upon the Triune God and His Holy Word!

* Find two or three people and tell them something positive – not long – holy, favorite, child of God, new creature, blessed,
* Now, we’re going to close with some worship that tells something positive to our God