

# Human Relations

## Introduction.

I. Have you ever had a really rotten day. I am sure everyone of us can answer “yes” to this question. Recently I read these statements that indicate when you can be sure you are going to have a rotten day.

<p>You wake up Face Down on the pavement.</p> <p>You call Suicide Prevention and they put you on hold.</p> <p>You see a "CBS 60 minutes" team waiting in your office.</p> <p>Your son tells you he wishes Anita Bryant would mind her own business.</p> <p>You wake up and discover that your waterbed broke and then you realize you don't have a waterbed.</p> <p>You wake up and your braces are locked together.</p> <p>You are running late for work and you spill something on the only clean thing you have to wear.</p> <p>Your Birthday cake collapses from the weight of the candles.</p> <p>You put on the news and they are showing emergency routes out of the city.</p>	<p>You try to start your car and you hear click, click and when you go to check under the hood you notice the front tires are flat.</p> <p>Your car horn goes off accidentally and remains stuck as you follow a group of `Hell's Angels' down the freeway.</p> <p>The boss tells you not to bother taking your coat off.</p> <p>The bird singing outside your window is a Vulture.</p> <p>Your income tax check bounces.</p> <p>You call your answering service and they tell you that its none of your business.</p> <p>You put both contact lenses in the same eye.</p> <p>Your pet rocks snaps at you.</p> <p>Your wife say's "Good morning, Bill" and your name is Fred.</p>
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II. Yes, these things and a host of other things can make a day rotten. Another thing that can make our day rotten is human relations.

A. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century man has made many great advancements. He can travel faster than the speed of sound. He can instantaneously communicate over long distances. He has conquered many diseases and made numerous other advancements.

B. Even though man is making phenomenal progress in many areas, there is one area man has made little if any improvement. This is the area of human relations. Man is still not able to get along with those around him. The world is filled with hatred, hostility, bickering and strife.

III. I **am not an expert on human relations**, but I would like to discuss a few things from the Bible that will improve our relations with others. Our relations to others is so important to our happiness and well-being. Our relations to others is vital in avoiding many rotten, wretched days.

I. **Not Critical** - We will get along with others better if we make it a practice not to be critical.

A. Criticism is one of the most dangerous and destructive things in the world. It can make others hostile toward us as fast as anything I know.

1. I know of **husbands and wives** who have separated because of too much criticism.

2. I know **friends** who are not speaking because of a critical spirit.

3. I know of **churches that have split** because of fault-finding. Indeed, criticism is very dangerous and should be avoided.

B. If we do criticize, let's make sure that we first **admit our own faults**.

1. The late **Gus Nichols** was a preacher for the church in Jasper, Alabama for many years. He also served as an elder. On one occasion he told a story about when it became necessary for the church to withdraw fellowship from a man. In a final attempt to bring the man to repentance, the elders went to him. One of the other elders served as the spokesman on this occasion. He said, "We do not come to you as perfect men. If the state of Alabama knew everything we have done we would probably be in the federal penitentiary. We come as men interested in your soul and we want you to repent. We want you to be saved." With these statements the man broke down and began to cry and said, "I know I am wrong and I want your help and forgiveness."
2. The **humble attitude** of those elders disarmed the man and brought him to repentance. If they had gone to him with an egotistical spirit, the man would probably still be in sin.

C. Another thing we should do before criticizing is **begin with praise**.

1. One time **some men were going through a cafeteria line** and one man asked the cashier if he could see the cook. She replied, "Yes." In a few minutes a middle age woman came out and said, "Yes, what can I do for you?" He said, "I would like to tell you how much I enjoy eating here. The way you cook vegetables reminds me of the way my mother fixes them. If you could cook cornbread the way my mother fixes cornbread, I would really enjoy eating here a whole lot." She said, "How does your mother fix cornbread?" He replied, "I don't know, but it comes out soft and moist." She said, "I will see what I can do." The next day when the man was passing through a the line, the cashier said, "The cooks has something for you." The cook walked out with a skillet full of soft, moist cornbread.
2. **Now I ask you, is this criticism?** This is criticism in the very best way. Begin with praise and when the person sees the criticism is not going to completely sink his ship and destroy his well-being he will listen and make correction.

II. **Correct Differences Immediately**- We will get along with others better if we will correct differences immediately.

- A. **The time to correct a difference is now**, not tomorrow or next week or next year. The longer we wait to settle a difference the harder it is to make reconciliation
- B. One time **2 elders of the Lord's church** had a falling out, over a matter, in an elder's meeting and said some unkind, bitter things to one another. That night one of the elders could not sleep because of the fight with his brother in Christ. He got up at 1:30 in the morning and dressed and started walking to the home of the other elder. When he had gone half way, he saw someone coming in the dark. It was the other elder who had also been unable to sleep. Those 2 elders made reconciliation there on the street in the middle of the night and prayed for God's forgiveness
  1. They acted as Christ taught all of His followers to act. He taught both the offender and the offended are to make peace as soon as possible.
  2. **Remember Paul said.** (Eph. 4:26). Anger that lingers beyond sunset is destructive to all.

III. **Provoke Good In Others** - We will get along with others better if we will provoke good in them.

- A. One of my favorite verses is Hebrews 10:24. The Hebrew writer exhorts us to provoke one another to love and good works.
- B. **As humans we can do two things.**
  1. We can **provoke evil** in one another. We can make others just as evil and mean as the devil himself by the things we say and do. Or we can make others good and fine and wonderful.
  2. **Several years ago I heard an example about 2 sisters that illustrate this point.** The younger sister

married a man who was kind and gentle. This woman is kind and gentle and has a wonderful home. She became crude and rude and vulgar. Her conversation is rough and sounds more like a man than a woman. She looks many years older than her sister. This example and others convince me that we provoke the very best in others or we provoke the worst in them.

C. As Christians we are to provoke good in other people.

1. **I would like to ask a few soul-searching questions.**

- a. Are the **elders of this church** better or worse because you are a member here?
- b. Are the **deacons and teachers** and other members better or worse because of their contact with you?
- c. **Wives**, is your husband a better man because he is married to you?
- d. **Husbands**, is your wife a better woman because she is married to you?

2. If your answer is not yes to all these questions, something is seriously wrong with your life. You should be provoking the very best in others.

IV. **Make A Fault As Easy To Correct As Possible** - We will get along with others better if we make a fault as easy as possible to correct.

A. **One time a preacher's daughter was backing the family car** out of the garage and did several hundred dollars worth of damage to the car and garage door. The girl was very frightened and dreaded telling her father about what had happened because she thought he would explode with anger. To her surprise her father put his arm around her and said, "I'm glad you were not hurt. You could have torn your hand off."

1. Now I ask you would it have done any good for the father to blow his top and scold the girl? Would it have fixed the car?
2. This father was more concerned about his precious relationship with his daughter than he was over a few hundred dollars.

B. On another occasion I heard about **a preacher** who had an old typewriter in his office valued at about \$35.00. One day one of the deacons was visiting in the office and accidentally knocked the typewriter on the floor and broke it. The preacher became very angry and began to shout at the deacon so he could be heard a half block away. A friendship was severed all over a \$35.00 typewriter.

1. How many times have we hurt or completely severed our relationship with others over a typewriter or something else like it.
2. **This is tragic.** Our relationship with others should be more important than material considerations. You can fix a car or typewriter, but a marred or severed relationship is hard if not sometimes impossible to fix.

V. **Express Gratitude** - We will get along with others better if we will express gratitude.

A. This is an area of life that is so important, but one that is so often neglected.

1. When is the last time you went up to **one of the elders** and praised him for the many hours he spends as a shepherd of the flock?
2. When is the last time you went up to **your teacher** and praised him for the hours he spends preparing a class for your benefit?
3. Husbands, when is the last time you **praised your wife** for the fine job she is doing at home caring for the children and the house and you?

4. Wives, when is the last time you **praised your husband** for the many hours he spends trying to make a living for the family?

B. Isn't it sad that we so often take one another for granted? Isn't it sad that we often fail to express our appreciation to others?

VI. **Return Good For Evil** - We will get along with others better if we will return good for evil.

A. Most people today live by the eye for eye rule. If someone does harm to them, they will not rest until they have retaliated with evil. This retaliation never settles anything. It only makes the situation worse.

B. It would be much better if we would return good for evil.

1. This is what the Bible teaches us to do. (Matt. 5:38-48).

2. Nothing could be plainer. Children of God return good for evil - never evil for evil.

VII. **Forgive One Another** - We will get along with others better if we will learn to forgive one another.

A. Very often someone does wrong to us.

B. Instead of storing up hate in our hearts and severing our relationship with them, we should forgive.

1. How many **wars** would have been prevented if someone had forgiven the wrong?

2. How many **churches** would have never split if the members would have forgiven one another?

3. How many **marriages** would have never ended if the marriage partners had been willing to forgive?

4. How many **children** would be at home, instead of far away, if the parents would have forgiven them?

C. I think it is absolutely impossible to over emphasize the importance of forgiveness in human relations. (Eph. 4:32).

**Conclusion.**

I. In closing I would like to read a passage that if followed would enable us to live peacefully with others. (1 Cor. 13:4-7).

**1CO 13:4 Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, 5 does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, 6 does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.**

II. In this lesson we have discussed some principles that will enable us to get along with others better. It is also of utmost importance that we get along with God. In order to get along with God we must humble ourselves and become obedient to His commandments. We must be born anew and walk in the light. If you have not done so, you are invited to come as we sing the hymn of invitation.