

Made New

Building Healthy Relationships

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Sermon in a Sentence: A healthy relationship starts with a healthy me.

Application: The foundation of any healthy relationship is love. Love isn't just a feeling, it's an action, and it involves respect, trust, and forgiveness. As we navigate the relationships of life, it's important to embody those qualities and look for those qualities in those who are closest to us.

Me

How many of you have ever gotten a Man cold? It's just like a woman cold, but obviously way worse.

Dennis & Barbara Rainey in their book *Staying Close* suggest that responses to a cold evolves during your married life.

The first year: "Baby darling, I'm worried about that sniffle. So I've called the paramedics to rush you to the Hospital for a checkup and a week of rest. And I know you don't like hospital food, so I'm having gourmet meals brought in for you." That's the first year.

Second year of a marriage: "Sweetheart, I don't like the sound of that cough. I've arranged for Dr. Knotts to make a house call. Let me tuck you in bed."

Third year of a marriage: "You look like you've got a fever. Why don't you drive yourself over to Walgreens, get some medicine, I'll watch the kids." You know, very caring.

Fourth year: "Look, be sensible. After you've fed and bathed the kids, washed the dishes, you really ought to go to bed."

Fifth year: "For Pete's sake, do you have to cough so loud? I can't hear the TV. Would you mind going into the other room while this show is on? You sound like a barking dog."

Men don't have babies because God saw the way they handle colds and knew the species would never survive.

Today we're going to talk about healthy relationships and how God helps us grow.

- Week 1: God makes our lives better and makes us better at life. God loves us as we are, but He loves us too much to leave us there.
- Week 2: We can trust Him in this process. When we start to live according to what's outlined in the Bible we begin to see things in a new light.
 - Like a recipe, the closer we follow it the better our chance at having a good result.

- We talked about casting our cares on Him instead of trying to carry everything ourselves, because how has that worked out so far?

Tension Set: Today we're going to talk about relationships. The Bible teaches us that there is a foundation you can build in your relationships that will help them to weather the storms of life.

We (Exploring the tension)

Who needs to hear this?

- Married, widowed, dating, or single.
- Have kids or have parents
- If you have co-workers, friends, or neighbors

Today is about making our relationships better by making ourselves better. This will also give you a clue for what to look for in a future spouse, roommate, business partner, or anyone else you can choose to spend time with. And with family these are even more important to cultivate in each other.

What is the big picture (sermon in a sentence):

[SLIDE] A healthy relationship starts with a healthy me.

God

Paul writes a letter to the church in Corinth to correct problems of division in the church, tolerance of sin, and others issues that kept them from standing apart from the world.

Essentially, he argues that the Corinthian church is no different than those who worshipped other gods. In chapters 12-14 he talks about us being a body and how God has called us to relationships with others in order to build us up and to be an example to others.

In chapter 13 he pauses to define what love is

What is love?

The dictionary doesn't really have a clear definition because we use love to describe so much. I love the Seahawks and I love chocolate and I love solving puzzles. Love can be romantic, friendly, or unconditional.

- If love is just attraction, then what happens 10 years from now when you wake up next to your spouse and their hair is a mess and their breath smells like onions?
- If love is a feeling, then what happens when you just don't feel it?

Paul doesn't answer the question directly, but instead he describes what love does.

[SLIDE] If love is a feeling, then that feeling is determination

- [SLIDE] What Love is
- **1 Corinthians 13: 4-8a (NIV)**
 - 4 Love is patient,**
 - waits for you to get ready, doesn't pressure you to make decisions or do things you don't want to.
 - love is kind.**
 - Love is nice.
 - Rejoices when good things happen to others
 - It does not envy,**
 - It doesn't want what you have (accomplishments or Nintendo Switch), instead it is excited that you have it.
 - it does not boast, it is not proud.**
 - It looks to build others up, instead of proclaiming how great it is.
 - 5 It does not dishonor others,**
 - In person, in a group, or behind their backs
 - it is not self-seeking,**
 - Love isn't looking for what it can gain, but for what it can give.
 - it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.**
 - It's too easy to keep a mental list of the way someone has hurt you, or screenshots on your phone.
 - 6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.**
 - It even rejoices when they confront you about a hard truth you have been ignoring. And love confronts when the other person is doing something they shouldn't.
 - 7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.**
 - There are different levels of commitment and trust. Protect doesn't mean covering for someone. You can trust without putting yourself in a position to be hurt again. You can hope and persevere from a distance.
 - 8 Love never fails.**
- [SLIDE] "Respect is one of the greatest expressions of love." –Miguel Angel Ruiz
 - Patient and kind,
 - It doesn't want what you have, belittle what you have, or think it's better than you
 - Communicates needs/wants
 - Expects good in every situation
 - You're treating them with dignity as a human being
 - Respect builds a feeling of safety
 - You are on the same team, and if one wins you both win!
 - Keeps no record of wrongs, but we all mess up

- **[SLIDE] Trust equals consistency over time.**
 - In conflict it protects, trusts, hopes and perseveres
 - Marriage can't be 50/50
 - How to build trust
 - Trust is built when someone expresses a need and that need is met, over and over again
 - **[IMAGE] Baseball** - Illustration: Trust is gained in drips and lost by the bucket (baseball, pitcher has to be perfect every time, especially on the M's)
 - **[SLIDE] Trust is made up of:** (Only use the bolded parts)
 - **Safety** - Physical or verbal rejection erodes trust. Nagging says "I don't trust you", leading to a feeling of instability.)
 - **Reliability** – If you say you're going to do it, do it! If she's always nagging, maybe there's a reason? Predictability is important to trust. I trust that this podium will support me because it always has.
 - **Commitment** – God first, spouse and family second, job third. We need to give our spouse priority time in our schedule
 - **Faithfulness** – Sexually faithful, but also emotionally faithful. We can't turn away from them in the hard times, instead we need to lean in.

- **Ephesians 4:32 (NIV)**

³² **Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.**

- **Proverbs 17:9 (NLT)** <- Note translation

Love prospers when a fault is forgiven, but dwelling on it separates close friends.

- There is no love without forgiveness, and there is no forgiveness without love
- Ghandi said this: "The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong".
- It's been said that **[SLIDE] Forgiveness is the oil of relationships.** It's like it's inevitable that we will hurt even those closest to us, maybe those are the ones we hurt the most. Like oil to the engine of a car, that keeps it moving, so forgiveness is the thing that keeps a friendship growing strong.

You

What is the foundation that will help your relationship weather the storms? Love, manifesting in respect, trust, and forgiveness. When you come into a relationships offering these things and expecting them in return, you will build connections that will last a long time.

Altar