

# 1. Better Relationships

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Subtitle: Living Life out of the “New Man”

Over the next few weeks our messages will focus on relationships, and how we can improve our interactions with those around us (family, friends etc.)

- Our Sunday messages will include video messages from a relationship expert who teaches on marriage, family & improved relationships
- We will also launch a Life Group video study on relationships

Today’s message is introductory & preparatory towards our relationships focus.

## Two opening statements:

- a. The message of the entire Bible is primarily about relationships**
  - i. God created human beings because He wanted to have a relationship with us
  - ii. When man’s relationship with God was broken through sin, God sent His Son Jesus to die for us so our relationship with Him could be restored
  - iii. God put His love in our hearts so we can have good relationships with one another (Rom. 5:5)
- b. Ultimately, happiness and fulfilment in life doesn’t come from having lots of stuff or high accolades for our achievements**
  - i. Happiness and fulfilment in life comes mainly from having good, strong & lasting relationships

## One qualifying paragraph:

- Much of our discussions will focus on family relationships
- If your natural family circumstances are less than desirable, remember, you have a spiritual family
- We are your family

**Psalm 68:6 (NKJV)** *God sets the solitary in families; He brings out those who are bound into prosperity ...*

**Mark 10:29–30 (NKJV)** *So Jesus answered and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or*

*mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, 30 who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life.*

## **1. The “new man” - a precondition towards better relationships**

**2 Corinthians 5:17–19 (NKJV)** *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, **he is a new creation**; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. **18** Now all things are of **God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ**, and has given us the ministry of **reconciliation**, **19** that is, that **God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself**, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has **committed to us the word of reconciliation**.*

- In vs. 17, God speaks about a new creation, a “new man”
- This “new man” is the born again (human) spirit inside every believer
- Once we surrender our life to Jesus Christ and become born again:
  - We are reconciled to God
  - The old life has gone
  - The new life has begun
- Immediately after this reference about the “new man”, God speaks about relationships & reconciliation

## **2. Apostle Paul instructs about the “new man” BEFORE he instructs about good relationships**

Much teaching on marriage, family and employment relationships is concentrated in Paul’s writings to the Ephesian and Colossian believers.

What’s interesting is:

Before Paul instructs them about the relationships and roles relating to husbands, wives, children, employment etc., he instructs them about the “new man”.

- Colossians 3:10 speaks about the “new man”
- Colossians 3:18-22 speaks marriage, family & employment relationships

The book of Ephesians follows a similar pattern:

- Ephesians chapter 4 speaks about the “new man”
- Ephesians chapter 5 & 6 speaks about marriage, family & employment relationships

In other words, if we live our life out of the “new man”, we are going to have better relationships!

**Colossians 3:9–10 (NKJV)** *Do not lie to one another, since you have **put off the old man** with his deeds, **10** and have **put on the new man** who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him.*

- Put on – be clothed with – the “new man”
- Even though the “new man” is on the inside, we need to put him on on the outside

**Ephesians 4:22–24 (NKJV)** ... **put off**, concerning your former conduct, **the old man** which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, **23** and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, **24** and that you **put on the new man** which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

- **Vs. 24 ... the new man** which was created according to God
- **the new man** is the God-factor in our lives
- **the new man** was created ... *in true righteousness and holiness*
- **“right relationships” and “right living” are centred in the “new man”**
- In each instance, when God tells us to put on the “new man”, He also tells us to “put off the old man”

### **3. Who or what is the “old man”?**

The “old man” is the old sin nature that was there before the “new man” came when we were born again.

#### **Definition of the “old man” by Finis Dake**

“The spirit, nature, and power of sin of the old man ... is nothing more nor less than the spirit, nature, and power of the devil working in men of disobedience”.

- The old man is corrupt according to deceitful lusts (Eph. 4:22)
- Col. 3:9 speaks about the old man with his evil practices (NASB)
- 2 Cor. 5:17 tells us that old things (the old man) has passed away
- The old man was nailed to the cross with Christ

**Romans 6:6 (NET)** *We know that **our old man was crucified with him** so that the body of sin would no longer dominate us, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.*

**Question:**

So what's the problem then if the old man is dead, crucified and gone?

**Answer:**

Although the "old man" is long dead and gone, yet many of his attitudes, his thought patterns, his corruption and his brokenness still reside in the unrenewed mind of many believers.

**Romans 12:2 (TNIV)** *Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind**. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

- Our mind needs to be renewed by the Word of God, so we can conform to the patterns and ideals of the "new man"

**Romans 12:2 (WUESTNT)** *And stop assuming an outward expression that does not come from within you and is not **representative of what you are in your inner being** but is patterned after this age; but **change your outward expression to one that comes from within** and is **representative of your inner being, by the renewing of your mind**, resulting in your putting to the test what is the will of God ...*

- Many broken relationships are the result of inner brokenness that has never been healed
- Sometimes our relationships are a visible expression of the invisible condition of our heart
  - Hurts beget hurts
  - Disappointments beget disappointments
  - Resentment begets resentment
- Many people's relationships are not influenced by what is happening today, but by what has happened to them decades ago
- Hurts and unresolved issues of the past will badly influence our relationships today
- The "new man" knows how to live free from unforgiveness & resentment

**Colossians 3:14–15 (NKJV)** *But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. **15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.***