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THE RELATIONSHIP OF YOU, ME AND THE WORLD

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Define *relationship*? What various types of relationships are there? Do you think that there is a difference as to how a Christian or a non-Christian describes relationship? How so?

As you think about the following relationships, consider what type of bridges might have to be built or maintained in these relationships.

Relationship 1

Read **Titus 2:3-5**.

What is the two-way relationship between the older and the younger women? What are the benefits of such a teacher/student relationship? Are these words still relevant in today's society? What is the purpose of the relationship in **Titus 2:11-14**?

Relationship 2

Read **Ephesians 5:22-31, 33**.

What is the relationship between husband and wife? Why is *submission* such a “dirty word” in today's society? For a Christian, why is submission such a wonderful word? See **Ephesians 5:21**. Why is submission necessary in a relationship?

Relationship 3

Read **Ephesians 6:1-4**.

What is the relationship between parent and child? What are the benefits of a “good” relationship? Who is to be the reason for all our relationships? Why are our relationships with each other so important to God?

Relationship 4

Read **Ephesians 6:5-9**.

What is the relationship between employer and employee? Why is obedience the “core” of this relationship? Does this type of relationship benefit from the knowledge that we are “serving the Lord, not men”? What difference does it make?

Relationship 5

Read **Mark 12:30, Matthew 22:37, 38.**

What is to be our relationship with God?

Relationship 6

Read **Mark 12:31, Matthew 22:39.**

What is to be our relationship with our neighbour? Considering our society today, why is it difficult to love our neighbour putting his needs before our own? Think about our neighbours who are not Canadian-born; English is not their first language; their skin is a different colour; their dress distinguishes them as *different*. What about the blatant sinner (see **Romans 3:22-24**)—the couple living beside us who has never been *churched*—they might not even be man and woman; what about the child abuser; the individual who has just been released from prison? How do we deal with these situations? What practical advice is given in **Romans 13:8-10; Ephesians 4:29-32; Colossians 3:13, 14; 1 Timothy 2:1, 8?**

Read **Luke 10:30-37**. Keeping in mind that (i) the Samaritans and Jews were avowed enemies; (ii) the priest and the Levite were *church people*, what can we learn from the dynamics of the various relationships in these verses? How did Jesus conclude the whole matter?

Read **Luke 2:10,11; 1 Timothy 2:3-6.**

How do the angels' words to the shepherds and Paul's words to Pastor Timothy—and to us—impact our relationships with each other within our congregation; within our community?