



PRINCIPLES *for Good* RELATIONSHIPS

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All scripture taken from
New King James Version



PRINCIPLES FOR GOOD RELATIONSHIPS

A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity. Proverbs 17:17

Here are principles which can be used to cultivate and keep relationships healthy and strong.

At Christian Fellowship Church, we have discovered that friendships are not held together by sincerity and love alone, but by covenantal agreements. When we agree to walk together according to godly standards and ethics, we find God's favor and truly prove that friends love at all times.

THE FORGIVENESS PRINCIPLE

I will choose to walk in forgiveness and not easily take offense against me.

Scripture: Acts 24:16 - “*This being so*, I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men.”

Thought: *Can you just forgive and move on?*

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

- ***What causes people to withhold forgiveness?***
- ***What happens to you mentally, emotionally, and even physically when you hang onto unforgiveness?***
- ***What process or what are the mechanics you use to go from step 1 (unforgiveness) to actual forgiveness?***
- ***How do you handle it when only one side of the offense wants to walk in forgiveness in a given situation?***

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

THE FIRST WORD PRINCIPLE

You will be the first person to hear about any problem I have with you.

Scripture: *Matthew 18:15* - “Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother.”

Thought: *Have you spoken to anyone else about this offense?*

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

- ***Why do people feel a need to share their hurts or offenses with others rather than the supposed offender?***
- ***How should you approach someone when they have offended you in some way?***
- ***If you do not know how to handle a particular situation, who should you talk to about the situation? Can you do it in such a way as to not expose the individual?***
- ***Knowing we all make mistakes at times, how would you approach someone that you think you may have offended in some way?***

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THE FAITHFULNESS PRINCIPLE

Faithfulness to our relationship outweighs the importance of any offense between us. I will not allow any problem to override the principles by which we live.

Scripture: *Proverbs 27:6* - “Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.”

Thought: *Is this problem a threat to our relationship?*

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

- ***Why do people think they have to be right in order for them to work and walk with others?***
- ***What is it in us that will allow small issues to make us lose sight of the big picture of walking in unity with others?***
- ***If the issue must be brought up, why do people often instead “sweep it under the rug” rather than dealing with it as scripture says, or truly letting it go? What is that root?***

[illegible]

THE FRIENDSHIP PRINCIPLE

It is my responsibility to approach you if I need your help. I will not expect you to interpret my actions or recognize my heart's condition.

Scripture: *Proverbs 18:24* - "A man who has friends must himself be friendly, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother."

Thought: *Are you offended that I did not recognize you were troubled?*

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

- What keeps us from pursuing help in areas of our lives when we know we need it?***
- Why do some choose to isolate themselves when things in life aren't going well, rather than reach out for help from someone they know will listen and give them wise counsel?***
- When the words "transparency" and "accountability" are considered what comes to your mind?***
- Why do people often cast the blame on others for not seeing that they are going through a difficult time in life?***

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THE FOUR-DAY PRINCIPLE

I will not allow any problem I have with you to go unresolved for more than four days

Scripture: *Proverbs 28:13* - “He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.”

Thought: *How long have you been troubled about this problem?*

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

- ***James 5:16 “Confess your trespasses to one another and pray for one another that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.” How does this scripture apply to this principle?***
- ***When seeking restoration of a relationship why is it important to understand the perspective of the other person as much as being understood ourselves?***
- ***Can you give an example of a good approach to use when working to resolve an issue with someone that you haven’t been able to resolve in your own heart?***

[illegible]

THE FINAL WORD PRINCIPLE

I will believe and act upon the last words we spoke concerning our relationship.

Scripture: *Philippians 4:8* - “Finally brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy - meditate on these things.”

Thought: *Did you forget or disregard what we last spoke to one another concerning our relationship?*

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

- ***What causes people to question the standing of various relationships in their lives when such questioning goes against the “Final Word Principle?”***
- ***What should you do if you feel that someone’s behavior seems different than what was said between you both regarding the relationship?***
- ***1 Peter 4:8 “Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love covers a multitude of sins.” How might this apply to the “Final Word Principle?”***

[illegible]

THE FLEXIBILITY PRINCIPLE

I will search out options with you in making possible adjustments in how we relate to one another.

Scripture: *Isaiah 1:18* - "Come now, and let us reason together, says the Lord..." & *Malachi 3:16* - "Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another, and the Lord gave attention and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the Lord and who esteem His name."

Thought: *Am I being flexible enough to allow for the inevitable changes in life?*

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

- ***Are there adjustment in our relationship that need to be made because of changes in our personal lives or circumstances?***
- ***Are you a flexible person?***

[illegible]

THE FRUSTRATION PRINCIPLE

When all efforts to apply these principles have failed to the point of frustration, we will commit ourselves to appeal to a higher authority for the sake of the relationship.

Scripture: *Hebrews 13:17* - “Obey those who rule over you and be submissive for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.”

Thought: *Have you followed through with all the other principles?*

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

- *When all the other principles discussed have been tried, how should you approach someone to discuss it with a higher authority?*
- *What do you do if the other party is unwilling to seek the counsel of those under whose authority you have placed yourself?*
- *Why do people often have difficulty submitting to the direction of those in spiritual authority in their lives and following through with the counsel given?*

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