

Discipleship Groups — Level 6 WEEK 5

Heart Check: RELATIONSHIPS

Hello everyone. We are continuing with our discipleship classes. We are in the fifth week of Level 6 of the discipleship classes.

The apostle Paul asks the church in Corinth to examine their faith, their character, their habits and decisions, and their words.

In 2 Corinthians 13:5 (NLT), *Paul tells them: "Examine yourselves to see if your faith is genuine. Test yourselves."*

I must do this evaluation responsibly. Remember, self-examination is a self-evaluation that helps me establish how I am living my life as a disciple of Christ.

It is really about confirming that Jesus Christ lives in me and if I reflect this to others. In this lesson, we continue with our evaluation. Today we are going to talk about examining our Relationships. The assignment is to evaluate all of our relationships.

We can ask ourselves. What is my relationship like with:

- God
- My family
- People at church
- My friends
- My classmates or coworkers
- My neighbors

We can see that the topic of relationships is quite broad and varied.

Romans 12:18 (NLT) says: *"Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone."*

"Do all that you can" tells me that I must strive to LIVE in peace and make my relationships good. This verse also teaches us that I must live in peace with all of the people I interact with daily. We can achieve peace as long as each of us does our part.

There are three elements that I consider necessary to live in peace:

1. Spiritual Maturity

Spiritual maturity is reflecting Christ in my daily life. A spiritually mature person thinks before speaking, controls their emotions, and avoids conflicts and arguments. When we are spiritually mature, our priority is relationships.

In any conflict, we prefer reconciliation to confrontation.

Spiritual maturity is not achieved overnight. It is cultivated with intention and perseverance. Spiritual maturity is born from a good relationship with Christ and the key is obedience to God and His word. Spiritual maturity fosters good relationships and those good relationships are evidence of it.

2. To live in peace, we must practice forgiveness, humility, patience, and love for others—the attitudes that reflect the character of Christ.

Through **forgiveness**, we can restore broken relationships. **Forgiveness** frees us from the weight of offenses and breaks the cycle of resentment. When we forgive, we choose to heal rather than wound.

Humility also helps us in the process of living in peace. Humility allows us to recognize our own shortcomings and value others. Humility helps us understand that we are not superior to anyone.

Patience helps us endure difficult processes, people, and times without reacting with anger. And finally, **love** is the foundation of every good relationship.

When Christ lives in us, our words, decisions, and reactions will always build up others.

3. To live in peace and have good relationships, I must be a peacemaker.

The Lord Jesus tells us in Matthew 5:9 (KJV):

“Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.”

A blessed person is a happy person. It is a person who lives well with others. Jesus teaches that peacemakers are truly happy.

What is a peacemaker?

A peacemaker can be defined as a person who seeks, promotes, and maintains peace. I will mention some characteristics of a peacemaker:

A. A peacemaker governs their heart.

This means they possess self-control. A peacemaker does not allow emotions to rule over their spirit.

Self-control allows you to:

- Control your emotions
- Think before you speak
- Know when to be silent and when to speak

A peacemaker reacts with humility. Before reacting or arguing, a peacemaker asks themselves: "Does what I am about to say or do build peace or destroy it?"

Self-control is evidence of spiritual maturity.

B. A peacemaker seeks to restore relationships.

Restoring is repairing what was broken. It is healing the wounds caused by bad relationships. In other words, it is joining what was broken. In relationships, restoring does not mean returning to exactly how things were before. Restoring is building something healthier and more mature, always seeking reconciliation.

For a peacemaker, the goal is not to win arguments or prove they are right; their great goal is to restore the relationship.

The Bible reminds us that God is a God of reconciliation, and He has entrusted us with this ministry.

2 Corinthians 5:18 (KJV) says: "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation."

This leads us to conclude that when a believer restores a relationship, they demonstrate that they live as a child of God.

C. A peacemaker speaks the truth.

When a peacemaker encounters conflict:

- They speak at the right time
- With the right tone
- With the right intention

Peace is built on truth, not lies. Often, the truth is silenced out of fear, and this prolongs the conflict. Speaking the truth means speaking honestly, without hiding anything.

The Bible teaches us to speak the truth in love.

Ephesians 4:15 NLT says: "Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church."

Jesus says that peacemakers will be called children of God. Every child of God is called to be a peacemaker. That is our identity.

Finally, losing peace is very easy, and restoring it takes a lot of time and effort.

That is why it is better to seek, maintain and work for peace and not lose it.

If a relationship is broken—or in the process of breaking down—what should I do?

Humanly, when a relationship breaks down, the natural reaction is to defend oneself, blame, or walk away. However, the path God offers is different.

What should you do?

1. **Examine your heart.** We must understand that restoration always begins with us, not the other person.
2. **Intentionally seek peace.** This involves deciding to forgive, even if the pain remains, and choosing humility over pride.
3. **Restore.** Restoring a relationship requires spiritual courage. It is important in this process to speak the truth in love, listen respectfully, and be willing to ask for forgiveness when necessary. It is important to understand that not all relationships are restored immediately. Some relationships need time, healthy boundaries, and much prayer and fasting to be restored.
4. **Reconcile.** Reconciliation means returning to a relationship, re-establishing communion, and walking together in peace once more. Reconciliation occurs when both parties are willing to forgive, change, and move forward together.

Scripture reminds us in *Romans 12:18 (KJV)*: “*if it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.*” Restoring relationships is not easy, but it is clear evidence that Christ lives in us.

Here are some suggested activities to do:

1. This week:
 - a. Write the name of someone you decide to forgive.
What firm step can I take this week to seek peace with that person?
 - b. As a group, pray together for a peace-loving heart.
2. Questions for reflection:
 - a. How do I react or respond when there is conflict in a relationship?
 - b. What emotions usually govern me when a relationship is about to break down?
 - c. What is most difficult for me: forgiving, asking for forgiveness, or telling the truth?
3. Memory Verse: *Matthew 5:9 (NLT)* “*God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God.*”

With this, we conclude our fifth week of discipleship. We hope that everything we have taught will be of great benefit and blessing to your life. See you in the next lesson.
Blessings