

## Week 18: "Relating to One Another"

### Memory Verse

"Looking at his disciples, he said:

'Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied.

Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.

Blessed are you when men hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man.

"Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their fathers treated the prophets" Luke 6: 20-23

### Day One

Sunday, February 18, 2003

### "Relating to One Another"

**Read:** Luke 6:20-42 (p. 1161) and Commentary (p. 1162)

**Reflect:** What verse in this passage is most challenging for you to obey?

**Dig:** What commands in this passage strike you as especially counter-cultural?

What *motivation* does Jesus offer for living in the way he commands? (hint: see verses 22b, 35b)

What *reason* does Jesus give for living in the way he commands? (hint: see 35b, 36)

**Apply:** What "enemy" does God bring to your mind that he is asking you to be gracious to? (Remember, our "enemies" are often living with us or part of our church or working situations.)

**Day Two**  
**Monday, February 17, 2003**  
**"Discipline and Judgment"**

**Read:** Zechariah 8:14-17 (p. 1059) and Commentary (p. 1060)

**Reflect:** Who are you willing to be accountable to? Can you grow in your spiritual life without effective accountability?

**Dig:** See if you can state in a few sentences the contrast between judgment and discipline.

What does Hebrews 11:7-11 (p. 1436) add to your understanding of God's discipline?

According to this text, does God hate? What does he hate? Do we have God's heart in this matter?

**Apply:** How can we build a community of believers that quits judging and gossiping and begins to discipline with wisdom? How can you do your part?

**Day Three**  
**Tuesday, February 18, 2003**  
**"A Proper Defense"**

**Read:** Isaiah 53 (p. 810) and Commentary (p. 811)

**Reflect:** When have you been unjustly accused or judged? How difficult was it for you to just let it pass and trust God to defend you?

**Dig:** How does 2 Timothy 2:22-26 (p. 1406) tell us about how leaders are to conduct themselves when entering into conflict? What are the two reasons that the author of the Freedom Bible gives in the commentary that we should not try to defend ourselves?

What does trust in God have to do with this lesson?

**Apply:** Ask God for a heart to trust him to vindicate you and be your defender. Then ask God for wisdom as to how to answer those who today will accuse you.

**Day Four**  
**Wednesday, February 19, 2003**  
**"Acceptance and Affirmation"**

**Read:** Romans 15:1-7 (p. 1298) Read: Commentary (p. 1299)

**Reflect:** Why is the church sometimes compared with disfavor with the bar when it comes to accepting people who are broken and in need?

How can we become caring and accepting without going soft on sin?

**Dig:** How does this passage begin? Therefore, how much is dependent upon the pastors, elders and other leaders to set the pace for an affirming church?

What does the word (vs. 4) have to do with our people being able to build such a community of acceptance and affirmation?

What might this tell you about the role of sermons? (Cross-reference 1 Cor. 14:1-3 (p. 1320) to answer this question biblically.)

**Apply:** Ask the Holy Spirit to give you a specific way (note of encouragement, email, phone call, act of kindness) to affirm and encourage someone who might need some lifting up.

**Day Five**  
**Thursday, February 20, 2003**  
**"Overcoming Rejection"**

**Read:** Acts 15:36-40 (p. 1257) and Commentary (p. 1257)

**Reflect:** How do you tend to respond to rejection? Why?

**Dig:** Why might this incident, reported in Acts 15, encourage your trust that the scriptures are under the direction of the Holy Spirit and can be trusted?

See if you can summarize the three ways that people tend to respond to rejection (according to the commentary).

How is God's way of handling rejection different?

**Apply:** Satan will use conflict and disagreement to bring the spirit of rejection into your heart. Ask God to remove this spirit. Turn to page 1199 and repeat out loud the affirmations on that page. Then go out and live your day in God's acceptance!