Sermon Notes for January 26, 2014

Keys to a Healthy Relationship

I Peter 3:8-12

Introduction

Sometimes couples lack the one thing they need to make their marriage work – the ability to resolve conflict.

Peter lists several qualities that are needed for a healthy relationship.

These same principles apply to our relationships in church, at work and at home. They even apply to our enemies.

I. Live in harmony. Verse 8

There are 5 qualities essential to healthy relationships.

- Live in harmony – Learn to get along.
- Be sympathetic – It is the ability to identify with someone who is suffering and put yourself in their place.
  “Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.” Hebrews 13:3
- Love as brothers – as a family in the best sense of the word.
- Be compassionate – Tenderhearted, moved by the needs of others.
- Be humble – Look out for others and work for their good.

II. Bless, don’t curse. Verse 9

There are three kinds of relationships we can have.

- Insult for insult – You hurt me, I’ll hurt you.
  “Sarcasm is like sulfuric acid to a relationship.” Howard Hendricks
- Blessing for insult – This relationship is motivated by a desire to please Christ, no matter what the other person does.
  “A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.” Proverbs 15:1
- Blessing for blessing – This is the best of all relationships.
  You receive what you give.
III. Trust God to work. Verses 10-12

Peter closes this section on relationships by quoting Psalm 34:12-16. It is a perfect illustration of the point he is making.

Psalm 34 was written by David during the time in his life when he was fleeing from Saul.

- David had an unjust boss.
- David felt all alone.
- David chose to trust God in his circumstances.
- David prayed and waited on the Lord to act.
- God protected David and exalted him.

Conclusion

What kind of relationship do you want to have?

- Insult for insult
- Blessing for insult
- Blessing for blessing

We can’t control how the other person will respond, but we can choose to bless and trust God to work.