

# Like Glue...Making Relationships Stick

## Six Week Lesson Series

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### Note from Pastor Kermit:

We hope you are blessed by this new Bible Study Series.

- ❖ Be engaged
  - Take notes and do the homework
- ❖ Be in prayer
  - Allow God to be God in your life

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### Lesson 1

#### Stick with Love – John 15:9-14

What foods do you like best straight out of the oven?

**Background Scripture:** “Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.”

**1 John 3:1 NKJV**

#### John 15:9-10

9 "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. 10 "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.

#### Discussion Question #1

- What do you expect from the people who love us?

#### John 15:11-12

11 "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. 12 "This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

#### Discussion Question #2 & #3

- Have you experienced the joy of loving others as Christ loves you?
- How does your relationship with God impact our relationships with others?

#### John 15:13-14

13 "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. 14 "You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.

#### Discussion Question #4

- Have you experienced the power of sacrificial love?

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### Live It Out

How will you boost your level of love in the lives of other ?

**Give a small gift.** Give an unexpected gift to someone who needs it. Attach this simple note as well: "Thank you for being a part of my life."

**Reach out.** Think of a relationship that has become stale, or even hostile. Make a phone call to see if you can revive or refresh that connection.

**Make a major sacrifice.** Think of something that hinders your closet relationships, golf clubs, salon appointments, cable TV, car payments, and so on. Then get rid of it.

Nobody wants the heels from a bread loaf, but everyone has a desperate need for healthy relationships, you included. Therefore, choose to love the people in your life, as Jesus commanded.

## Lesson 2

### Stick with Encouragement – Acts 9:26-28 / 11:21-26

Have you ever met a person that's a natural encourager?

**Encouragement:** something that makes someone more determined, hopeful, or confident

**Background Scripture:** *"I want you to know how much I have agonized for you and for the church at Laodicea, and for many other believers who have never met me personally. I want them to be encouraged and knit together by strong ties of love. I want them to have complete confidence that they understand God's mysterious plan, which is Christ himself. In him lie hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."* Colossians 2:1-3 NLT

#### Acts 9:26-28

26 And when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple. 27 But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. And he declared to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. 28 So he was with them at Jerusalem, coming in and going out.

#### Discussion Question #1

- What risk do you take when you endorse an outsider?

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### Acts 11:21-24

21 And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord. 22 Then news of these things came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas to go as far as Antioch.

23 When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord.

24 For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord.

### Discussion Question #2 & #3

- How do we intentionally grow into the role of an encourager?
- How can we actively encourage others to use their spiritual gifts?

### Acts 11:25-26

25 Then Barnabas departed for Tarsus to seek Saul.

26 And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

### Discussion Question #4

- How can we actively encourage God's larger work in our church?

### Live It Out

How can you use encouragement to strengthen your relationships?

- **Say thanks.** Express thanks to someone who has been an encouragement to you. Be specific regarding how his or her words or actions helped you.
- **Evaluate your day.** Take a moment at the end of the day to count the number of times you encouraged someone else. "We want to be a Barnabas."
- **Call to action.** Identify an opportunity to serve in your church or community. Take action not only to serve yourself, but also to rally others to join the cause.

Encouragement doesn't work every now and then, you need a daily dose in order to function well. The same is true of the people you love. Therefore, choose to be a person of encouragement.

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### Lesson 3

#### Stick with Forgiveness – Matthew 18:21-28, 32-33

When was the last time it cost you a lot to fix something?

*Background Scripture: "There were also two others, criminals, led with Him to be put to death. And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." And they divided His garments and cast lots." Luke 23:32-34 NKJV*

#### Matthew 18:21-22

21 Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" 22 Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.

#### Discussion Question #1

- What actually happens when you forgive someone?

#### Matthew 18:23-27

23 "Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. 24 "And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. 25 "But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. 26 "The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' 27 "Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.

#### Discussion Question #2

- Since Jesus has forgiven us, what hinders us from forgiving others?

#### Matthew 18:28-33

28 "But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!' 29 "So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' 30 "And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt.

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31 "So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done.

32 "Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me.

33 'Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?'

### Discussion Question #3 & #4

- How do the King's actions in this parable mirror God's actions toward us?
- Have you ever seen forgiveness deepen a relationship?

### Live It Out

How can you incorporate forgiveness into your life this week?

**Evaluate.** Consider your current relationships and spend time identifying area of unforgiveness in your heart.

**Take a small step.** Make an effort to extend forgiveness in a relationship where you've been wronged or slighted. Take the first step even if you've done nothing wrong.

**Take a large step.** Identify a relationship where you need to be forgiven, one where you've contributed to bad feelings, or even where you're completely in the wrong. With humility, make an effort to bridge the gap.

Your sin is a 10,000 talent debt forgiven by God. The debts others may owe to you are insignificant in comparison, as are the debts you may owe to others. God forgives. You can, too.

## Lesson 4

### Stick with Service – Galatians 5:13-15; 6:1-5, 10

Have you ever received stellar or exceptional service?

**Background Scripture:** "Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

**Acts 6:1-4 NKJV**

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### Galatians 5:13-15

13 For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. 14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 15 But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!

### Discussion question#1

- What is the connection between freedom in Christ and the command to serve?

### Galatians 6:1-5

1 Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. 2 Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. 3 For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. 4 But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. 5 For each one shall bear his own load.

### Discussion Question #2 & #3

- How can we help others see blind spots in a way that strengthens relationships?
- What actions and attitudes enable us to carry one another's burdens?

### Galatians 6:10

10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

### Discussion Question #4

- What opportunities does our church have to work for the good of others?

### Live It Out

Where is God leading you to serve?

**Family.** Be intentional about blessing your family members this week. Make an extra effort to serve the people you love the most.

**Church.** Search for a specific way you can minister to your brothers and sisters in Christ.

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**Community.** Think through your gifts and resources, then find a need in your neighborhood or community that corresponds with your gifts and resources.

To follow Jesus is to represent Him as a member of God's kingdom. Therefore, live your life in such a way that people can't help but connect the name of Jesus with humble and loving acts of service.

## Lesson 5

### Stick with Humility – Philippians 2:1-5, 13-15

Have you ever wanted to be the first in line? Why?

**hu·mil·i·ty** : the quality or state of not thinking you are better than other people : the quality or state of being humble

**Background Scripture:** *“Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.” Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.” 1 Peter 5:5-7 NKJV*

#### Philippians 2:1-4

1 Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, 2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

#### Discussion Question #1 & #2

- What circumstances in life tempt you to ignore the instructions in these verses?
- How do we balance our responsibility to ourselves and to others?

#### Philippians 2:5

5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,



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### Discussion Question #3

- How have you seen relationships strengthened through acts of humility?

### Philippians 2:13-15

13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

14 Do all things without complaining and disputing,

15 that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,

### Discussion Question #4

- How can our church serve as a safe place for honest conversation in light of these verses?

### Live It Out

#### What steps will you take to practice humility and place the needs of others before your own?

**A small step.** Intentionally park in the worst space in the church parking lot next Sunday. Or, come early and set up the room for the next service.

**A medium step.** Volunteer with your church's homeless ministry and treat those you serve with respect.

**A large step.** Talk to your church staff and commit to helping a family or individual that may be in need.

As followers of Christ and representatives of His Kingdom, we should be waiting in line all night to help others. We should be sacrificing our own needs in order to meet the needs of those around us. That's what it means to stick with humility.

## Lesson 6

### Stick with Acceptance – Romans 14:1-4, 13-19

#### How do you decide what's not worth arguing about?

**Background Scripture:** *“Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing. And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised*

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*that he is a debtor to keep the whole law. You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.” Galatians 5:1-4 NKJV*

### **Romans 14:1-4**

1 Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters. 2 One person's faith allows them to eat anything, but another, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. 3 The one who eats everything must not treat with contempt the one who does not, and the one who does not eat everything must not judge the one who does, for God has accepted them. 4 Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To their own master, servants stand or fall. And they will stand, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

### **Discussion Question #1 & #2**

- Why is it so easy to pick apart the opinions of others?
- What current issues provide opportunities for Christ followers to treat one another with patience and understanding?

### **Romans 14:13-15**

13 Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister.

14 I am convinced, being fully persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean in itself. But if anyone regards something as unclean, then for that person it is unclean.

15 If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died.

### **Discussion Question #3**

- How do you balance enjoying your freedom and avoiding stumbling blocks?

### **Romans 14:16-19**

16 Therefore do not let what you know is good be spoken of as evil.

17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, 18 because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and receives human approval.

### **Discussion Question #4**

- How does serving Christ in this way change how we approach disagreements?

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### Live It Out

What will you do to build relationships in spite of any differences of opinion?

**Extend grace.** Be on the lookout for those who go against your convictions, and choose to forgive. Seek a relationship rather than standing in judgment.

**Let go.** If your habit or preference has become a stumbling block for someone you care about, let it go.

**Agree to disagree.** Seek a meeting with someone who disagrees with you on an important issue. Voice your desire to maintain your relationship with that person in spite of your differing opinions.

Your relationships are more important than your opinions. Love Christ by loving other people more than loving your rights or opinions. Doing so is a big step toward a more perfect world.