

Relational Health, Wellness, Wholeness

OUTLINE

We delight to continue our journey with you regarding becoming and being a Healthy Church. On this journey, we continue to embrace God's Will that His Intent is for His Church to be a Healthy Church, A Living Church designed to demonstrate and bring Life to a Dying World.

In this section we will take the challenge to delve into an aspect of health that I am sure we all believe in and hold to be important, but if we are honest, often find difficult to achieve. This section we will focus on being Healthy, Well, and Whole, RELATIONALLY. Let us ask the Lord to be our guide as we try to navigate our way to walk intentionally, and consistently into RELATIONAL HEALTH WELLNESS AND WHOLENESS.

Please do not be disturbed if you find these encounters into discovering Relational health to be somewhat foreign, uncomfortable and even challenging. Difficulties in relating to others date back to our fall in the garden. Sin caused mankind to become disconnected and distant from the very God who made us for connection, fellowship and worship.

This disconnection became immediately evident as the children of Adam and Eve began to multiply on the earth. Instead of the loving, harmonious, and mutually beneficial Relationships that God intended to be prevalent in the human family, jealousy, anger, hatred, and even murder began to prevail.

Thank God that the Redemption He wrought at Calvary now allows us access to a New Birth, intended to bring us back into the kind of Relationships that bless us to enrich each other and bring Glory to God!



STUDY & REFLECTION

We begin our study of Relational health, wellness, and wholeness, with the same scriptures we began our study of Intellectual health, wellness and wholeness. This should not be surprising to Bible scholars. A principle of Bible study is to begin such study...at the beginning. This is called in theology, the 'scripture of first mention.' It appears that the issue of Relationship is first mentioned here in our passage: "And God said, let US make man, in OUR image, after OUR likeness, and let THEM have dominion." We do not need to have a long discussion here about the nature of God, His personality or being. But we cannot deny that even in these timeless words of scripture, that Relationship is presented!

Think about the basic definitions that we must picture and embrace if we are to discover the key insights regarding what God intends for us to have as it relates to Relationship health, wellness, and wholeness:

- **Relationship:** Connection; a significant connection or similarity between two or more things.
- **Related:** connected by similarities or a common source; belonging to the same family; in music: having close, harmonious connection.

Almost immediately in scripture, we discover the mind and intent of God for us as His plan for creating us is announced. We are made in the image and likeness of a Creator who makes THEM in His own image (male and female created He Them!)

ACTION ITEMS

As you ponder the deep truths of the creation passage, consider *what was God's intention for the first humans, and what therefore is His intention for you and us?* We were created to be first in Relationship and fellowship with the God who created us. Can you be healthy if you are not in relationship with Him? To what degree do you 'relate' to God?

INVOLVING OTHERS

Discuss with your small group this powerful passage, keeping the central focus of the discussion, **the Divine Intent of Relationship.**

UNRELATED AND ALONE: NOT GOOD!

[Genesis 1:28](#); [Genesis 1:31](#); [Genesis 2:18](#)

STUDY & REFLECTION

As you consider the Divine plan of creation, notice the dynamic unfolding of God's intention for those made in His Image and Likeness. In Gen 1:28 we are told that God blesses THEM and empowers THEM to be the managers, the rulers over all that He created. In verse 31, it was God's Divine pronouncement that all He had made was Very Good!!

The shift occurs, as God carries out His plan in Creating or forming man from the dust in chapter 2, breathes into this body the breath of life and man becomes a living soul. As the height of God's creation begins to operate as ruler and manager of the wonderful creation, God has a pronouncement, different from Very Good. God declares, "It is NOT GOOD THAT THE MAN SHOULD BE ALONE!" One translation says, "Not Good, this Aloneness of man!"

Could it be that God never intended for us to thrive and prosper, seeing ourselves and living out our God-Intended purpose as independent individuals?

No one could defend the statement that God intends all human beings to be married, but who can deny that from the beginning God wanted us to live and grow in the light of connection with, and fellowship with others.

ACTION ITEMS

Clearly the condition that the scripture describes as ALONENESS, is not the intent of God. Give serious thought and perspective to what this means in you as you have been living your life. *Have we been aware of the need for us not just to know, but to be properly and appropriately connected with others?* As you reflect on this, journal your thoughts. Be prepared to admit new thoughts about others and their place in your life.

INVOLVING OTHERS

Try to be brutally honest and transparent as you share your new found insights with others. Can you see and share how it is our tendency to be Alone? This is especially true when it comes to areas and challenges in our lives where we fail if we "keep it to ourselves."

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THE REMEDY FOR ALONENESS AND DISCONNECTION: THE LOCAL CHURCH

SCRIPTURES OF THE DAY Wednesday, July 14, 2021

[Matthew 16:18](#); [Acts 2:44](#)

STUDY & REFLECTION

As I hope you will notice and appreciate, we are studying scriptures that we looked at before. The Word of God is a living, breathing document. It is alive and powerful, able to give us profound insights and understandings from each passage, as we study in obedience and submission to the Holy Spirit.

Matt 16:18, announced by the Lord Jesus Himself, declares something profound and critical to everyone who wants to know and please Him. Jesus declares and puts front and center, the antidote, the cure, the remedy to our sin-sick condition...the CHURCH!

As we learned previously, the Greek word used here by Jesus is *ekklesia*. Let's explore the insight this implies for our study of Healthy Relationship. *Ekklesia* is understood in its application, as a "called out assembly....congregation....community.

The church is not a bunch of individuals who decide to meet and worship on Sundays. The church as Christ designed and intended it is a **COVENANTED COMMUNITY OF BORN-AGAIN BELIEVERS!**

This is what the church was at the outset. Acts 2:44 declares, ***"And all that believed were Together, and had all things common!"***

A recent quote observed regarding the world in general, and the American church culture in particular: "We are living in an age of increasingly more commitment phobia! We tend to not commit, because we want to 'keep our options open!' We rely on and fiercely defend our right to individualism. Group loyalty and allegiance, is rarely seen, even among Christians. What we must realize is that God has placed our overall growth and prosperity, our ability to be mature and to please Him, in our willingness to perceive and embrace the genuine nurturing and healing effect of being a part of a truly Healthy local Church. This is God's remedy for our rampant independence and diseased disconnection.

ACTION ITEMS

The Bible shows us that genuine transformation takes place at the point of the renewing of our minds. I challenge you to see God's intention of healing and restoring us, in the environment the local Body of Christ. Challenge yourself. Are you an active member and participant in the local Body of Christ? Are you committed to being in genuine Relationship the local Body and by being so, are you expecting to see the Health and Healing that God promises?

INVOLVING OTHERS

Relational Health and Healing takes place where there is a community of committed believers who will covenant to cooperate together to create a healing atmosphere where each person is embraced and God is Glorified. Discuss to what degree this is happening among us and what we must do to make it an ongoing reality.



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RELATIONAL DYNAMICS OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

SCRIPTURES OF THE DAY Thursday, July 15, 2021

[Ephesians 4:16](#); [Ephesians 4:31-32](#); [John 13:34-35](#);
[Hebrews 10:24-25](#)

STUDY & REFLECTION

The local church is God's remedy. **The collective environment of born-again believers, who are committed to Loving God and each other is His path to Relational Wholeness.** Biblical believers, committed to gathering together to know and embrace each other, and when necessary confront each other lovingly in order to ensure and create harmony are hallmarks that can be our reality, if we commit in faith.

As we study our devotional scriptures, we discover traits, characteristics, dynamics that may often be lacking in quantity and or quality, in our present gatherings. Too often we avoid connecting with and sharing with others. We too often avoid and do not enjoy spending time with others. Such practices and habits of isolation and avoidance demonstrate spiritual immaturity and lack of spiritual awareness and faith. We must not live in denial because of these conditions, but with Faith in God, demand of ourselves that we will no longer tolerate these conditions.

What are the qualities and godly dynamics that we will see as we commit to God's prescription for Relational Health and Wholeness? The Church has been from its' very beginning, an interpersonal/interdependent organism whose primary character is anchored in **unity, fellowship, mutual cooperation, and communion** (sharing). Those who are committed to these dynamics learn to love each other, need one another, find joy in spending time together and intentionally hold dear and esteem one another.

ACTION ITEMS

Resist the temptation to ignore or conveniently lay aside what you have just studied. The narrative above is not impossible. It is not only possible but probable, if we have the bold courage and dogged determination to let go of what has been too often common, and embrace what can become common as we act in faith.

Look at your life and identify where you have not been Relational. Allow the Spirit that we have from God to be in the driver's seat. **Repentance, confession, and renewal is not condemnation but in fact a sign of God's grace in our lives.** Commit to connecting in the manner God has prescribed.

INVOLVING OTHERS

Imagine what will happen if we open up and not only declare to others, but willfully confess where and when we have not embraced Relational habits and practices. After sharing, spend time together and enjoy the wave of restoring and healing that will take place.



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BEYOND BELIEVING: BELONGING

SCRIPTURE OF THE DAY Friday, July 16, 2021

Romans 12:5

STUDY & REFLECTION

Belonging in three translations:

- So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. (KJV)
- So in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. (NIV)
- So we belong to each other, and each needs all the others. (TLB)

In this societal environment of rampant individualism, and ‘Lone Rangerism’ the church must go beyond believing, and fiercely embrace **Belonging**. The church is the Body of Christ, a local collection of Christians committed and connected to Christ and to each other.

To Believe is one thing, to Belong is another!

1. No individual Christian can function and thrive effectively by him/herself!
2. No individual Christian can fully develop and mature apart from others!
3. Individual Christians cannot be effective in the purposes of Christ, disconnected from the Body!

What does it mean to ‘belong?’

1. To be proper, appropriate, or suitable
2. To be a member of a group
3. To be the property of
4. To be a part of something else

To Belong is to be Relational. You cannot belong into and unto yourself. Belonging demands connection. Belonging creates accountability. Belonging defines responsibility. Belonging affords protection.

ACTION ITEMS

Focus on what it means to belong. Then ask yourself, and answer the question: To what degree do you Believe and to what degree do you Belong. To Believe begins with yourself and your heart. To Belong is a step in Relational Health and maturity.

INVOLVING OTHERS

Connecting with and deliberately and faithfully being accountable to others is the essence of Relational health and wholeness. Honestly share with others your conclusions regarding Believing and Belonging. See how well you can come to agreement and commit becoming Belongers and well as Believers.



Relational Health, Wellness, Wholeness REVIEW

SCRIPTURES OF THE DAY Saturday, July 17, 2021

[Genesis 1:26-28](#)

[Genesis 1:28](#); [Genesis 1:31](#); [Genesis 2:18](#)

[Matthew 16:18](#); [Acts 2:44](#)

[Ephesians 4:16](#); [Ephesians 4:31-32](#); [John 13:34-35](#);

[Hebrews 10:24-25](#)

[Romans 12:5](#)

STUDY & REFLECTION

Review and reflect on this week's scriptures.

ACTION ITEMS

Focus on one or two changes that you will commit to in order to create an atmosphere of **Relational Health Wellness and Wholeness**.

INVOLVING OTHERS

Share the above with others and make mutual connected agreements.