

All That Matters
Lesson 8—Relate
Colossians 3:18-4:6

I. We are Created for Relationship

“Let Us make man in **Our** image, according to **Our** likeness...” Genesis 1:26a

“God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.” Genesis 1:27

“...being created in the image of God means that we image God. We reflect God. We live in a way, we think in a way, we feel in a way, we speak in a way that calls attention to the brightness of the glory of God” (John Piper. Retrieved from <https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/what-does-it-mean-to-be-made-in-gods-image>).

II. Relationships are Hard Work

“The problem with relationships is that they all take place right smack-dab in the middle of something, and that something is the story of redemption, God’s plan to turn everything in our lives into instruments of Christlike change and growth. You and I never get to be married to a fully sanctified spouse. We will never be in a relationship with a completely mature friend... We will never have self-parenting children. We will never be near people who always think, desire, say, or do the right things. And the reason for all of this is that our relationships are lived between the *already* and *not yet*” (Paul Tripp. *Relationships: A Mess Worth Making*, p. 108).



III. Relationship Markers to Guide Us

A. Follow God’s Pattern

“Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God. But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love. God showed how much He loved us by sending His one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through Him. This is real love—not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins. Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other.”
I John 4:7-11, NLT

In the Old Testament, *hesed* is the most common word used to describe the love that God has for us. It is used more than 250 in the Old Testament and it is a word that actually has no English or Greek equivalent.

Hesed is often translated as love, faithfulness, goodness, kindness, mercy, devotion, and favor. Blended words using “love”—lovingkindness, steadfast love, unfailing love—actually give a fuller understanding of what the word means.

“Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed, ‘The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in **lovingkindness** and truth; who keeps **lovingkindness** for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin...’” Exodus 34:6-7

“‘For the mountains may be removed and the hills may shake, But My **lovingkindness** will not be removed from you, And My covenant of peace will not be shaken,’ Says the Lord who has compassion on you.” Isaiah 54:10

In the New Testament, *agape* is the word used to describe how much God loves us:

“For God so **loved** the world, that He gave His only begotten Son...” John 3:16

“But God demonstrates His own **love** toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8

Agape is also the kind of love that Jesus tells us to demonstrate to each other:

“A new commandment I give to you, that you **love** one another, even as I have **loved** you, that you also **love** one another.” John 13:34

B. Develop a God-View of Others

“So we have stopped evaluating others from a human point of view. At one time we thought of Christ merely from a human point of view. How differently we know Him now! This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!” 2 Corinthians 5:16–17, NLT

C. Live the Fruit of the Spirit

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.” Galatians 5:22

D. Love Your Enemies

“But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in Heaven.” Matthew 5:44-45, NLT

“So far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.” Romans 12:18

E. When Relationships are Hard – Love!

“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.” John 14:15-17

1. God uses disappointment in relationships to remind me of my need for Him.

“And He said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the great and foremost commandment.”
Matthew 22:37-38

2. Keep the relationship bigger than the problem.

3. The greater my love is for Jesus, the easier it is to love others.

“But seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.” Matthew 6:33

4. When someone is hard to love, remember, there is more to their story.