

**SENIOR ASSOCIATE PASTOR PETRINA GUNERATNAM****SERMON: THE GIFT OF RELATIONSHIPS****TEXT: John 13:35; Matt. 22:37****INTRODUCTION**

Nothing in the world has a greater influence on us than the relationship we have with other people. For the last 42 years in ministry and 41 years in marriage, at this stage of my life, I am appreciating more and more the value of true **Kingdom relationship that impacts who I am becoming in Christ rather than what I am doing for Christ.**

**God cherished and valued relationship so much so that God was willing to pay the highest price to restore His relationship with man.** He did by sending His Only Begotten Son, Jesus into the world and to die that cruel death on the cross for the restoration of broken relationship with God and with each other.

**Briefly touch on 3 areas of relationships****I. The Gift of Marriage Relationship**

My emphasis this morning is to see Marriage as a Covenant with God.

**Mal. 2:13-15 NLT**

v13 *Here is another thing you do. You cover the LORD's altar with tears, weeping and groaning because he pays no attention to your offerings and doesn't accept them with pleasure.*

v14 *You cry out, "Why doesn't the LORD accept my worship?" I'll tell you why! **Because the LORD witnessed the vows you and your wife made when you were young. But you have been unfaithful to her, though she remained your faithful partner, the wife of your marriage vows.***

v15 *Didn't the LORD make you one with your wife? In body and spirit you are his. And what does he want? **Godly children from your union.** So guard your heart; remain loyal to the wife of your youth.*

Prov. 2:16-19 The disloyal wife

Prov. 2:17 *Who forsakes the companion of her youth, and forgets the covenant of her God.*

**God, not you, made marriage. His spirit inhabits even in the smallest details of marriage.**

**II. The Gift of Family Relationship**

**What does the Lord want? Godly children from your union.**

Godly children, not beautiful, intelligent. Who can produce Godly children? Non-believers cannot. Only Christians.

**Psalm 127:3 NLT**

*"Children are a gift from the LORD; they are a reward from him."*

Everyone of our children belongs to God.

### **What and how should we relate to our children?**

1. They are God's **gift** to us. Treasure and **nurture** this priceless gift.
2. They have been **entrusted** to us to bring them up in the fear of the Lord. Seek God's guidance.
3. Christian parents are **first of all to develop the spiritual potential in a child** as the priority. The physical, emotional, intellectual aspect will excel.

When our covenant relationship is right with God and with our mate, it opens the door to **all God's promises for our seed.**

### **The Choice Parents make determines the future of our children/generation**

#### **Deut. 30:19 (NKJV)**

*"I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore **choose life, that both you and your descendants may live;**..."*

E.g. Noah in Gen. 6:8 (NKJV) - *"But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD."*  
Because of **one righteous father whole family entered the ark.**

#### **Ps. 112:1-3 (NKJV)**

- v1 *Praise the LORD! Blessed is the man who fears the LORD, who delights greatly in His commandments.*
- v2 *His descendants will be mighty on earth; the generation of the upright will be blessed.*
- v3 *Wealth and riches will be in his house, and his righteousness endures forever.*

#### **Prov. 14:11 (NKJV)**

*"The house of the wicked will be overthrown, **but the tent of the upright will flourish.**"*

### **Allow God space to teach your children**

#### **Is. 54:13 (NKJV)**

*"All your children shall be **taught by the LORD,** and great shall be **the peace of your children.**"*

### **III. The Gift of Kingdom Relationship**

The Bible has very clear teachings on how Kingdom relationships should function and excel. The health of the Body of Christ depends on the relationship with one another. The vibrancy and effectiveness of the Great Commission largely depends on the health of the body. The glory of God can only be seen through unity in the body.

In John 15, Jesus told His disciples that they are to bear fruit. To bear fruit, the branch must first of all stay connected to the vine and to the other branches. You don't see a vine and a branch. Christian life is more than just 'Jesus and me'.

The key to healthy, flourishing relationship within the Kingdom family that will transform lives and impact nations is **Unity.**

## **The Call to Unity in the Church Family is given by Jesus Himself**

### **Unity brings glory to God**

**John 17:22, 23 (NKJV)**... Jesus last words in a form of prayer

- v22            *And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one:*
- v23            *I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.*

### **John 13:35 (KJV)**

In another instance Jesus said, *“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”*

What sort of relationship did Jesus have with the Father?

**Love expressed in oneness of heart and purpose.**

### **Unity brings blessings**

#### **Ps. 133:1-3 (NKJV)**

- v1            **Behold, how good and how pleasant it is**  
**For brethren to dwell together in unity!**
- v2            *It is like the **precious oil upon the head,***  
*Running down on the beard,*  
*The beard of Aaron,*  
*Running down on the edge of his garments.*
- v3            *It is like the dew of Hermon,*  
*Descending upon the mountains of Zion;*  
**For there the LORD commanded the blessing—**  
**Life forevermore.**

When brothers and sisters dwell together in unity:

- 1) the anointing of God flows
- 2) the blessing of God is present abundantly/automatically.

That is why Satan works hard to cause disunity in the church.

### **Satan’s Weapon Against The Church Is To Bring Disunity**

The Bible has very strong warnings against those who bring division in the body through strife, murmurings, scoffing, contention, pride, disputes, evil suspicion etc.

**Prov. 22:10(NKJV)**- *Cast out the scoffer, and contention will leave; Yes, strife and reproach will cease.*

### **Unity is where God dwells/His Presence**

#### **Eph. 2:21-22 (NKJV)**

- v21            *“...in whom the whole building, **being fitted together,** grows into a holy temple in the Lord,*
- v22            *in whom you also are **being built together** for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.*

### **Unity releases the Power of the Holy Spirit for miracle and harvest of souls**

#### **Acts 2:1(NKJV)**

*When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with **one accord in one place.***

#### **Acts 2:4**

*And they were **all filled with the Holy Spirit** and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

#### **Acts 2:46**

*So continuing **daily with one accord in the temple,** and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with **gladness and simplicity of heart,***

#### **Acts 2:47**

*praising God and having favor with all the people. And **the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.***

### **The Power of Agreement/Unity in Prayer**

#### **Amos 3:3(NKJV)**

*“Can two walk together except they agreed?”*

#### **Matt. 18:19(NKJV)**

*“Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven.”*

The emphasis in this passage is not upon what is being prayed but on the **agreement** of those praying.

God is not so much looking for a prayer to answer as much as He is looking for a **relationship** to respond to.

### **CONCLUSION**

It is in God our Creator’s design that no two persons are exactly alike, yet it is possible to have unity in diversity.

Our relationship with God empowers us to excel in all relationships – marriage, family and church family. Through the blessing of relationship ... the Kingdom expands, the glory of God is declared.