

April 6, 2008

RELATIONSHIP SKILLS 101
Serve With God's Love
Galatians 5:13-14

“You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. The entire law is summed up in a single command: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’. If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.”

Galatians 5:13-15 NIV

Action follows Attitude!

- Different understanding of worth leads to different treatment.

1. Christ's Example:

- His high opinion led to loving service.

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Mark 10:45

2. Our Two Responses:

- “Me” Focus—self-serving
- “Him/You” Focus—selfless serving.

3. The Results—

- “biting and devouring” – strain and brokenness in relationships.
- “fulfillment” - GREAT relationships.

4. The Process—Repeatedly choosing to serve through love.

“Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.”

Galatians 6:9-10

Bottom Line: The best things you can do for yourself are the things you do for others.

The Ride Home Question: Which of my relationships most need the “sweet oil” of service right now?

Study Questions:

1. Think of a time when you selflessly served someone in love. What were the results of that?
2. How might Christ's reasons for giving up his right to be served differ from yours? What might he sacrifice that you haven't been willing to give up?
3. Read Philippians 2:5-11 and reflect on the following.
 - What does this teach us about the example of service God has given people to imitate?
 - What value does God place on humility and obedience?

- How does this impact the way you relate to the people in your life?
4. Read Colossians 3:17-25 and think about serving people for the love and glory of God rather than your own personal gain and answer the following.
 - How would it change your attitude during the act of service?
 - How would it impact your expectations of the results of your sacrifices?
 - How would it change your encounters with people?
 - How does it help you treat people with grace and truth?
 - How does it help you love people more purely?
 5. What is the most important thing for you to do as a result of this lesson?