

The Art of Living

Wisdom from the Book of Proverbs

How to Get Along with People

Series Overview

In this series, we're exploring the book of Proverbs to learn the art of living with wisdom.

Sermon Introduction

People. Can't live with them; can't live without them. (No, not even with the best AI has to offer.) Life is all about people. They're unavoidable and, believe it or not, they're really the best thing about living. So, learning to get along with them is pretty important if you want to have a fulfilling life.

Passage: Proverbs 3:3-4 & select verses (NIV)

Prov. 3:3 Let love and faithfulness never leave you;
 bind them around your neck,
 write them on the tablet of your heart.

Prov. 3:4 Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man.

Personal Reflection and Group Discussion Questions

1. In Prov. 3:3, what do you think Solomon is conveying by saying we should bind love and faithfulness around our necks and write them on our hearts?
2. Is it surprising that Solomon seems to consider one's reputation and relationship with other people as something to be desired, not just our relationship with God (v. 4)? Why isn't "God and me alone" a healthy recipe for life?
3. Proverbs has a lot to say about how to handle disagreements and quarrels. Read 12:16; 17:14, 19; 18:19; 20:3; 26:17-19. What are your key takeaways from these verses?
4. Read Prov. 11:12-13; 16:18; 17:9; 20:19; 25:9-10; and 26:20-21. A quick way to damage a relationship is to talk about others behind their backs and betray their trust. What hints do these verses give for avoiding gossip and maintaining others' trust?
5. Guarding our responses when others hurt us is crucial to protecting a relationship. Looking at Prov. 10:12; 12:16; 17:9, 27; 14:29; 15:18; 25:15, 21-22; 29:11, what are some key

attributes we need when others offend us?

6. If there was one way you'd want to change how you respond when others offend you, what would it be? More patience? More grace? Greater compassion or empathy?
7. Reflect on ways you've offended God by trying to live without him, prioritizing things in your life ahead of him, treating others harshly, gossiping, judging, deriding or unfairly criticizing others. Despite it all, how has God treated you? Cf. 2 Corinthians 5:17-19a.

Prayer

Often a position of submission helps us physically connect with the spiritual reality of meeting God. A posture of kneeling with open hands can demonstrate our willingness to submit to God's power.

- Praise God for his personal presence in your life.
- Thank him for the people he's placed in your life, both the ones who are easy to love and those who require extra patience and understanding.
- Be honest about those people—or that person—you struggle to get along with or appreciate.
- Ask God to help you to show them the love and grace that he's shown you through Jesus.