

Relationship Math

July 29, 2018

I. Relationship Math: How do you respond when you have a relationship problem?

Acts 15:36-38 Some time later Paul said to Barnabas, “Let us go back and visit the believers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord and see how they are doing.” Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them, but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work.

Acts 13:13 From Paphos, Paul and his companions sailed to Perga in Pamphylia, where John left them to return to Jerusalem.

1. Add Effort

Ephesians 4:3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

Romans 14:19 Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.

A. Unity is worth the effort.

B. Choose to move things forward.

James 3:18 Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.

Ephesians 4:26-27 “In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.

C. What kind of conflict are you dealing with?

Matthew 18:15-17 “If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

- What is in the other person’s heart?
- What is the other person’s history?

Matthew 5:23-24 “Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.

- What is my role in this conflict?

2. Subtract Self

A. Choose to hold things back.

Proverbs 21:23 Those who guard their mouths and their tongues keep themselves from calamity.

- To lose one's temper is to lose one's mind.

Philippians 2:3-4 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

B. Humility allows for greater clarity.

- What advice would you give to you?

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

C. Let love subtract what fuels a conflict.

Galatians 5:26 Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

- Stop pushing buttons.

3. Divide Graciously

Acts 15:39 They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus,

A. Gracious division is proactive and not reactive.

Genesis 13:5-9 Now Lot, who was moving about with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents. But the land could not support them while they stayed together, for their possessions were so great that they were not able to stay together. And quarreling arose between Abram's herders and Lot's. The Canaanites and Perizzites were also living in the land at that time. So Abram said to Lot, "Let's not have any quarreling between you and me, or between your herders and mine, for we are close relatives. Is not the whole land before you? Let's part company. If you go to the left, I'll go to the right; if you go to the right, I'll go to the left."

- It may be that the best way to preserve unity is to divide graciously.

B. There is a difference between gracious division and selfish escape.

James 3:14-16 But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such “wisdom” does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

- **Release the grudge.**

James 1:19-20 My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.

C. Embrace God's work.

- **How you exit one season affects how you enter the next.**

4. Multiply God's Plan

Acts 15:39-41 They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, but Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the believers to the grace of the Lord. He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

A. Choose to not be sidelined by your setback.

B. What the enemy would use to divide, God can use to multiply.

Genesis 50:20 You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.

C. God may have to allow division for a season to multiply something great in your life.

5. Take Your Time

2 Timothy 4:11 Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is helpful to me in my ministry.

Colossians 3:15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.