

June 3, 2018  
BUILDING SUCCESSFUL RELATIONSHIPS - Part 3  
**“Interest”**

We become interested in people who are interested in us.

Being interested in others has great power to build and strengthen relationships, and the ultimate example of this is Jesus himself.

**Philippians 2:1** (NIV): “<sup>1</sup>If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, <sup>2</sup>then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.”

Paul always sees great value in the body of Christ, in being in community with other Christians, as crucial to being a disciple of Jesus Christ.

**Philippians 2:3-4** (NIV): “<sup>3</sup>Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. <sup>4</sup>Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.”

In Roman culture, it was common for individuals to seek out honor and glory.

This self-seeking harmed relationships, as others seemed to just be stepping stones to getting ahead.

The idea of “vain” is that of a useless “conceit” or glory, because they really have nothing for which to be conceited about, at least as compared to Jesus Christ.

The ANTIDOTE for “selfish ambition” and “vain conceit”:

**1. SEEK to be humble.**

**Jesus:** “Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” (Matthew 11:29 NIV)

**Luke 14:7-11** (ESV): “<sup>7</sup>Now [Jesus] told a parable to those who were invited, when he noticed how they chose the places of honor, saying to them, <sup>8</sup>When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in a place of honor, lest someone more distinguished than you be invited by him, <sup>9</sup>and he who invited you both will come and say to you, “Give your place to this person,” and then you will begin with shame to take the lowest place. <sup>10</sup>But when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that when your host comes he may say to you, “Friend, move up higher.” Then you will be

honored in the presence of all who sit at table with you. <sup>11</sup>For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

**Jesus:** “<sup>11</sup>The greatest among you will be your servant. <sup>12</sup>For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.” (Matthew 23:11-12 NIV)

**Humility sees oneself rightly as a creation of God, along with others, and therefore they, too, are deserving of respect and honor.**

**“Humility is not thinking less of yourself; it’s thinking of yourself less.”**

**Philippians 2:5-11 (NIV):** “<sup>5</sup>Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: <sup>6</sup>Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, <sup>7</sup>but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. <sup>8</sup>And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross! <sup>9</sup>Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup>that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup>and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

**The greatest person who ever lived, who has always existed, who created all there is, humbly submitted for our sake.**

**2. REGARD others as better than ourselves.**

**When we’re keeping our focus on Christ and his mission, then we don’t have to be worried about putting ourselves first, because others in the community will be concerned about us – in fact, allowing them to serve us is a gift to them.**

**We’re not called to imitate the world around us but to imitate Jesus.**

**None of this is possible unless we keep Christ at the center of our lives and seek not just to imitate him, but to allow him, through his Spirit living in us, to give us the power and will to live this way.**

**In effect, we do everything we do for an audience of One.**

**“Remember: the most interesting person in the room is the one you’re sitting next to!”**

**Want to go deeper? – Check out “Building Successful Relationships” by Michael and Laura Fletcher on RightNow Media ([www.gateway-community.org/find-it/](http://www.gateway-community.org/find-it/)).**