

PEACE HOUSE  
**SAYCO**

ONLINE  
ONSITE

STUDENTS AND YOUTH CONGRESS

**SEMINAR B**

**BUILDING AND MAINTAINING  
HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS AS A YOUTH**

**'GO  
IN THIS  
THY  
MIGHT..'**



**28-02**  
APRIL/ MAY

**20**  
**21**

Bro.  
GBILE  
AKANNI

*Ministry*

**ALL SAYCO CENTRES**

# **BUILDING AND MAINTAINING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS AS A YOUTH**

TEXTS : 1Sam 18:1-4, 20: 12-17, 2Sam 9: 1-7, 1Tim 5:1-2

## **1. Introduction**

Relationship is defined as the way in which two people or more, how they feel and behave towards each other and the way in which they are connected.

The story of David and Jonathan is the story of two young people in excellent relationship that had the welfare of the partner in mind. In the physical, Jonathan was the heir apparent to the throne after his father Saul. But he knew that the throne was going to David by divine allocation and he accepted. Their friendship was healthy and worked well for as long as both of them were alive

So it is possible for young people to have healthy relationships on earth in the midst of deceit, unfaithfulness, jilting. etc. that is so common in our society today. If you have suffered from any friendship relationship you will agree with me of how common this backstabbing is. And if you have not, I pray you never have and it is possible not to have, which is the reason for this Seminar.

## **2. Different types of relationships.**

I want to classify relationships into two broad categories:

- i. Vertical Relationships
- ii. Horizontal Relationships

Vertical relationship refer to that between man and God or between man and the devil. The first vertical relationship for man with God is in Gen 1:28-30. God gave more clear instructions in Gen 2:16-17. The second vertical relationship for man was with the serpent (Satan) in Gen 3:1-7. Since then vertical relationship for man has become a choice between God and the devil.

The vertical relationship which is only one for every human is either with God or the devil. God and the devil serve as fathers to humanity. Jesus stated that very clearly. In Matt 6:9, Jesus introduced God to us as “our” Father who is in heaven. On the other hand, Jesus while addressing some Jews said in Jn8:44

*“Your father is the devil. You belong to him. You want to do what he wants. He was a murderer from the beginning He was always*

*against the truth. There is no truth in him. He is like the lie he tells”  
(Easy-to-Read)*

Fortunately or unfortunately whoever is your father directs you on earth including your horizontal relationships.

God becomes your Father by a deliberate choice as stated in Jn 1:12

*“But as many as receive Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name”*

So the question is, WHO IS YOUR FATHER? God or the devil?

On the horizontal relationships with human beings, as a youth/student the relationships that are common to all youths include the following

- Relationship with parents
- Relationship with siblings
- Relationship with relatives
- Relationship with teachers/pastors
- Relationship with classmate/school mate
- Relationship with peers/friends
- Relationship with neighbours.

Some of these relationships are mandatory (no choice) while some are voluntary. For the voluntary ones you walk in and walk out and you can choose not to get in at all. And I am talking about intimate relationships.

There is nothing intrinsically good or bad in these relationships. It depends on the persons in the relationships. In this seminar, **Building and maintaining healthy relationships**, our prayer is that you will choose good relationships that will add value and make you able to fulfil your purpose on earth.

While all the relationships mentioned earlier have consequential effect on each other, I will minimise on mandatory relationships and concentrate on relationships that are entirely by your choice, relationships that you have hundred percent (100%) control over.

### **3. Starting or getting into a relationship**

The pathways through which young people get into relationships are very many starting with as small as meeting on the internet like Facebook, physical meeting orchestrated by one joint venture or the other like

schooling (Classmates/school mates/sports/Games etc), Church meetings (Youth meetings, Conferences and Retreats), Social events (birthdays, weddings, burials etc). Every opportunity to meet create opportunity for relationship to begin. At all the meeting points, you have the responsibility to start or not start any relationship. If you must start, it is good to start right. As a Christian, there are biblical guidelines in entering any relationship:

Caution

- i. *Don't fool yourselves. Bad friends will destroy you. 1Cor 15:33*
- ii. *Don't become partners with those who reject God. How can you make a partnership out of right and wrong? That is not partnership; that's war. Is light best friends with dark? Does Christ go strolling with the Devil? Do trust and mistrust hold hands? Who would think of setting up pagan idols in God's holy temple? But that is exactly what we are, each of us is a temple in whom God lives God himself put it this way: I'll live in them, move into them; I'll be their God and they'll be my people 2Cor 6:14-16(MSG)*

So for you to start right, intimate relationship should be with someone who is a child of God, someone who is godly because he loves God. His love for God is not hidden. It is not difficult to know such people in your community, school, class, etc. Anyone you love, you talk about that person. Anybody who loves God will talk about God

#### **4. Building healthy relationship.**

You build what is not in existence. Building requires deliberate efforts. So building especially healthy relationships require deliberate efforts, deliberate inputs.

#### **Ingredients of building Relationships**

##### **i. Goals:**

A goal is an idea of the future or desired result that a person or group of people envision, plan and commit themselves to achieve. Every relationship has goals or at least a goal; whether stated or not Amos 3:3 asks: *"Can two walk together except they be agreed?"*

If agreements are based on goals, any relationship that has no defined solid goal(s), be very casual with it. When you meet you relate, when you part, relationship is suspended.

Goals are future expectations, future targets. If you use goals to evaluate your friendships, you are likely to trim down your intimacy or develop intimacy if you don't have any presently. The relationships you are keeping now, what are the goals?

## **ii. Objectives:**

While in a larger sense, objective can carry the same meaning as a goal, for the purpose of this Seminar. I want to define objective(s) as strategy(ies) for achieving a goal or goals. With this definition, goals without objectives remain in the dream world, they are unachievable.

Intimacy in any relationship demands that there be objectives that drive your interactions. For example, if you are relating with a classmate with a goal that both of you would top the class. One of your objectives will be to study together. Amos 3:3 still applies

*“Can two walk together except they be agreed.”*

So you must not only have common goals but also common objectives.

## **iii. Acceptance**

Acceptance is a very important ingredient in relationship. Any relationship that lacks acceptance cannot be dynamic, productive and healthy and it cannot grow. It is possible to have common goals and common objectives but be unable to accept the personality(ies) of the person(s) involved in the relationship.

Acceptance despite certain differences is crucial because there is nobody on the surface of the earth, no, not one, that is or can be like you, and fit into all your expectations.

God has shown us the example of acceptance as we see in Rom 5:8

*“But God commendeth His love towards us, in that while we yet sinners, Christ died for us”*

So for you to build and maintain any healthy relationship you must learn to accept people as they are.

## **iv. Lubricants of relationship.**

There are two lubricants of relationship that no one can do without at the different levels and lines of relationships. One of these is learning **to apologise** and say **I am sorry** when you are wrong. The second lubricant is to learn **to forgive** when you are hurt. The two are the two sides of the coin of the

lubrication of relationship. Jesus parables in Matt 18:21-35 address these two issues succinctly:

You can never sustain any relationship if you are not ready to forgive and if you not ready to say “I am sorry”. The time to begin to build or imbibe them is NOW. As long as you are Mr RIGHT you will not be able to say sorry and you will not be able to forgive.

#### **v. The Give(s) and take(s) in relationships**

Every relationship is characterised by giving and receiving of good things too numerous to attempt to enumerate them. The giver is the dispenser and the receiver is the recipient. Let’s see what our attitude should be to giving and receiving in relationships as contained in Acts 20:33-35.

*“I have coveted no man’s silver, or gold or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and them that were with me. I have shewed all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, it is more blessed to give than to receive”*

Jesus taught it and Paul quoted Him here. This is an attitude that you must learn and imbibe as a Youth in your relationships and grow with it. The natural tendency is to be on the receiving side. In the story in Matt 18: 21-35, the unmerciful servant enjoyed mercy from his master, but refused to give the same to his subordinate. A receiver is a debtor while the giver is a creditor and his credit is both on earth and in heaven. Matt 25: 31-40. So be ready to give more than to receive.

“

“

### **5. Lines of relationships as a youth**

As mentioned earlier, relationship with God is foundational to all other relationships. Consequently, we are going to just be highlighting from scriptures, how all the lines of human relationships should be for the Christian youth.

#### **i. Parents and older people.**

(a) Treat them as fathers and mothers to whom you owe obedience  
1Tim 5:1a&2a

Eph 6:1-4

(b) Treat them as disciples to whom you are responsible to

#### **ii. Other young people (the group you relate with most):**

- **With believers (generally)**

Be an all-round example 1Tim 4:12: Tit 2:7, 1Tim 1:4

- **With believers (opposite, same sex)**

Young men as brothers 1Tim 5:1b

Young women as sisters 1Tim 5:2b with all purity

- **With Unbelievers**

Be salt and light: Matt 5:13-16

No close relationship: 2Cor 6: 14 -18, whatever relationship you already have with them (e.g. classmates, schoolmates, etc.) is enough for evangelism.

6. **Relationships NOT to get into: 1Cor 15:33, 1 Jn2:15-17, 2Cor 6:14-16**

i. **Cultism:** Any relationships that target hurting/harming others for the benefits of your group Prov 1:10-18

ii. **Drugs:** Any relationship that will introduce alcohol and drugs into your life Prov 20:1, 30: 4-5, Is 5:11, Hab 2:15-16

iii. **Premature Sex:** Any relationship that can lead to romance and sex early in life before marriage. Heb 13:4, Gen 35:22, 49: 3-4, Lev 18:6-18

**Consequences of these relationships**

i. **Cultism:**

- Shortened lifespan for themselves and their opponents. Prov 1:18-19..

- Poor performance in academics

- Many distractions

ii. **Alcohol and drugs**

- Alcohol distorts judgement

- Drug waste lives. Nothing wastes a man's life while alive than drugs.

iii. **Sexual perversion**

- Lifelong consequences from the memory

- HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

- Unwanted pregnancies/babies outside marriage

- Wrong marriages.

- It is theft/robbery to give someone what does not belong to him/her

- You sin against God and His wrath awaits you.

Be like Joseph who said No and exclaimed "how can I do this thing and sin against God?"

## **7. Benefits of healthy relationships**

### **i. You are being formed.**

There is a general saying: “Show me your friends and I will tell you who you are”

Whether you agree with it or not the people you relate with (including fellow youths) are making you and what you become is directly proportional to who they are. So this is the most important benefit (or demerit) of relationships. 1Cor 15:33

“Do not be deceived, evil company corrupts good morals.

### **ii. Realisation of set goals and objectives.**

Success in all your endeavours in life, professionally and otherwise

### **iii. Happy marriage and happy home. Eph 5: 22-31, Heb 13 :4**

### **iv.**

## **8. Conclusion**

The secret of success in life and in eternity is correct vertical relationship with God and right and healthy horizontal relationships with other human beings especially children of God.

This Seminar has emphasized the significance of relationships and the need for you to build and maintain healthy relationships. The best time to begin to do that is now that you are young, before the evil day comes when you will say “I have no pleasure” in what is trying to distract you today. Say NO to them NOW and YES to God and godly relationships. May God of heaven and earth bless you as you do so, in Jesus Christ name, amen.