**50 Days of Unleashing**

**HOPE**

**REFUSE TO GO IT ALONE**

**ECCLESIASTES 4:9–10**

**GETTING SERIOUS ABOUT**

###### **BUILDING GREAT RELATIONSHIPS!**

“*…it is not good for the man to be alone…*”**GENESIS 2:18**

"…love one another. As I have loved you…” **JOHN 13:34**

# INTRODUCTION:

# FACTORS AFFECTING RELATIONSHIPS

* The Changing American **WORKPLACE**
* The Changing American **CLASSROOM**
* The Changing American **PACE OF LIFE**
* The Changing American **NEIGHBORHOOD**
* The Changing American **FAMILY**

The California Department of Mental Health discovered that if you’re disconnected from other people (i.e. there’s no one in your life that you really feel understands you), you are two to three times more likely to die an early death, four times more likely to suffer from emotional burnout, five times more likely to suffer clinical depression and ten times more likely to be hospitalized for an emotional or mental disorder.

*"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work; if one falls down, his friend can help him up.* ***But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up****."*

**ECCLESIASTES 4:9-10**

**HOW WILL RELATIONSHIPS**

**EQUIP ME FOR LIFE?**

1. Close Friendships Provide **ENCOURAGEMENT**

to Grow Spiritually

“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.” **HEBREWS 10:24**

*"Jesus died for us so that we can* ***live together with him****....So* ***encourage each other and give each other strength****... "* **1 THESSALONIANS 5:10-11 (NCV)**

1. Close Friendships Provide **SUPPORT** During Tough Times

*“Two are better off than one because together they can work more effectively. If one of them falls down, the other can help him up. But if someone is alone and falls, it is just too bad, because there is no one to help him…Two men can resist an attack that would defeat one man alone. A rope made of three cords is hard to break.”* **ECCLESIASTES 4:9-10, 12 (GN)**

*“Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.”*

**ROMANS 12:15**

“When two people really connect something is poured out of one and into the other that has the power to heal the soul of its deepest wounds and restore it to health. The one who receives experiences the joy of being healed. And the one who gives knows even greater joy of being used to heal. Something good is in the heart of each of God’s children that is far more powerful than everything bad in the world. It’s there waiting to be released and work its magic. But you have to be connected.” **– DR. LARRY CRABB IN CONNECTING**

1. Close Friendships Provide **ACCOUNTABILITY**

*"As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another."* **PROVERBS 27:17**

*“Encourage one another daily…****so that*** *none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.”* **HEBREWS 3:13**

*“Admit your faults to one another and pray for each other so that you may be* ***healed****.”* **JAMES 5:16 (LB)**

*“Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual* ***should restore him*** *gently…Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”* **GALATIANS 6:1-2**

1. Close Friendships Provide **OPPORTUNITY** for Prayer

*“Where two of three come together in my name, there I am with them.”* **MATTHEW 18:20**

*“If two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in Heaven.”* **MATTHEW 18:19**

**13 WAYS TO STRENGTHEN**

## **YOUR RELATIONSHIPS**

1. BE DEVOTED TO EACH OTHER:

## *“And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.”* **1 CORINTHIANS 12:26**

1. SUPPORT EACH OTHER:

## *“Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.”* **ROMANS 12:15**

1. CARRY EACH OTHERS’ BURDENS:

## *“Bear one another’s burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ.”* **GALATIANS 6:2**

1. RESTORE EACH OTHER:

## *“Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted.”* **GALATIANS 6:1**

1. PRAY FOR EACH OTHER:

## *“Now I urge you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me…”* **ROMANS 15:30**

1. TEACH EACH OTHER:

## *“Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.”* **COLOSSIANS 3:16**

1. REFRESHING EACH OTHER:

*“…so that I may come to you in joy by the will of God and find refreshing rest in your company.”* ROMANS 15:32

1. ENCOURAGE EACH OTHER:

## *“…that is, that I may be encouraged together with you while among you, each of us by the other’s faith, both yours and mine.”* **ROMANS 1:12**

1. FORGIVE EACH OTHER:

## *“And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.”* **EPHESIANS 4:32**

1. CONFESS TO EACH OTHER:

## *“Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed.”* **JAMES 5:16**

1. BE TRUTHFUL WITH EACH OTHER:

## *“Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth, each one of you, with his neighbor, for we are members of one another.”* **EPHESIANS 4:25**

1. SPUR EACH OTHER TOWARD GOOD DEEDS:

## *“…and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds…”* **HEBREWS 10:24**

1. SHARE WITH EACH OTHER:

## *“Nevertheless, you have done well to share with me in my affliction. And you yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone…”* **PHILIPPIANS 4:14, 15**

### HOW CAN WE GROW A THRIVING CHURCH AND MAINTAIN CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS?

# Every Person Needs to be a Part of a SMALL GROUP

*“(They met) day after day in the* ***Temple courts*** *and from* ***house to house****.”* **ACTS 5:42**

“The Christian who is not committed to a group of other believers for praying, sharing and serving so that he is known as he knows others **is not an obedient Christian**. He is not in the will of God. However vocal he may be in his theology – he is not obeying the Lord!” - **DR. RAY ORTLUND**

#### TWO ESSENTIALS FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

* Large Groups for **CELEBRATION**
* Small Groups for **FELLOWSHIP**

*“Greet the church that meets in their home.”* **ROMANS 16:5**

**(ALSO ACTS 2:26; 8:3; 16:40; 20:20; 1 CORINTHIANS 16:19; COLOSSIANS 4:15)**

**WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF SMALL GROUPS?**

**ACTS 2:42-47 – *They devoted themselves to:***

1. **LEARNING** *“…the Apostle’s teaching…”*
2. **FELLOWSHIP** *“…and to the fellowship…”*
3. **COMMUNION** *“…to the breaking of bread…”*
4. **PRAYER** *“…and to prayer.”*
5. **MUTUAL SUPPORT** *“…they gave to anyone as he had need…”*
6. **SOCIAL INTERACTION** *“They…ate together with glad and sincere hearts…”*
7. **CELEBRATION** *“praising God…”*

**THE RESULT:**

*“And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”*

##### A LIFESTYLE CHOICE

##### *“Let us not give up the habit of meeting together as some are doing.*

##### *Instead, let us encourage one another…”* HEBREWS 10:25 (GN)