Intelligent relationships sermon notes

**Mark 2:1-12**

Intro

Among the things that have the power to destroy our faith, one of the things we overlook is who we have around us.

You don’t just need people in your life, you need the right people in your life. You can’t control who’s in your life but you can control who you’re close to.

Social constructs in today's culture and our society have made it hard to manage and distinguish who people are to us and what their roles are in our life. We live in a day and age influence is popularized to the point where you can know so many people have nobody know you. Or people can think they know you when in reality they don’t know you. We very easily toss out the term friend. It doesn’t mean anything. It doesn’t carry any weight.

Just because you call somebody something doesn’t make them that.

There are some people who we call friends but they don’t behave like friends. There are some people we call family who behaves like it.

Here’s the truth: relationships matter but the right relationship matter even more.

Your relationships are either moving you forward or they’re bringing you backwards.

Intelligent relationships move us and others forward.

No real relationship is neutral.

Proverbs 27:17

As Iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

- An axe sharpened can be used to cut trees or used to hurt someone.

**1 Corinthians 15:33** Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character."

One of the biggest mistakes we can make regarding our relationships is to think that they don’t shape us.

“don’t be misled” means that it is possible to be misled, to be unaware of the state and the impact of the relationship I currently have.

God sends people to our life and life gets better. But the enemy also sends people into our lives.

The enemy doesn’t bring people into our lives to destroy us but to distract us

- What’s worse than a relationship ending is letting a relationship derail you without ever dealing with it

* + It’s being ruined by a destructive relationship without even realizing it

- You can be unaware of the impact a relationship is having on your life.

This is why it’s important to define where people fit in my life – so I know what to expect of you

- So if I know that you gossip, I know not to tell you certain things.

* It’s not that I don’t love you – I just don’t want to expect something from you that I know you won’t deliver on

- But because we’re misled

* We don’t see that people with great gifting don’t always have a great heart. And people with the right personality don’t always have the right intentions.
* and you let their gifting, or their personality, distract you from the reality that they might night be good for you.
* And so you let yourself get attached to the very thing sent to assassinate your faith and your future.
* Many of our hurt has come from putting people in the wrong place (places of trust and expectation)

Matthew 7:16

You will know them by their fruit

Evaluate your relationships without judging the person

* I’m not saying you’re not a good person, you’re just not good for me. I’m not judging, I’m just examining fruit.

Jesus never stopped Judas from leaving the table.

* Jesus didn’t grab his arm and tell him to sit back down. He said “go and do quickly what you have to do” – in other words, my expectations of you have changed – I’m no longer expecting what you can’t give.

Stop expecting Judas to behave like John.

Don’t judge or condemn. People still have value.

Jesus didn’t devalue them but he knew them by their fruit. We need to carry the eyes of Jesus even when we evaluate our relationships.

Jesus told Peter “you will deny me three times” – and yet Jesus still washed his feet.

Judas betrayed him – yet he still washed his feet.

 I’m not saying you’re not good. You’re just not good for me.

I know we were close in one season but I am going into a season where I cannot afford to have people in the wrong place.

Love doesn’t mean access

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Jesus loved everybody, but he didn’t treat everybody the same. So we’re still called to love people without conditions and value them according to how God values them, but that doesn’t mean we treat everybody the same.

How can I say that? Well, Jesus had 12 disciples. He didn’t disciple every person he came in contact with. He taught them. He loved them. He healed them. He died for all of them. But he only had the last supper with the 12. He only washed the feet of 12.

Even within the 12, Jesus had 3, Peter John and James. They had access to Jesus that the rest of the 12 didn’t.

He gave the 12 access the crowds didn’t have, and he gave 3 access the rest of the 12 didn’t have.

And Jesus never even explains it.

- He took them to the mount of transfiguration, where he was seen in his glory, and he brought to the garden of Gethsemane, where he was seen in his agony.

- You need people who can handle you at your best and your worst. Not everybody in life can have that access

**Proverbs 13:20** ESV

Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.

Default relationships.

We do many things in life “on default” – without giving too much thought to them. We cannot afford to do this with relationships.

* We need to be intentional
* We need the right people in our life
* You can have the right people in your life but have them in the wrong place of your life.
  + People who need to stop going to for advice
  + People who you need to start going to for advice

Your circle may need correction. People at your table

* As much as you appreciate their company, their character or lack of character, will become a hindrance

You don’t just need friends who know you. You need friends who understand what God has called you to and they won’t let you settle for less

- It’s possible to be in a relationship for so long that you no longer work on it.

You cannot be around blindness and expect to change.

* The problem is a lot of people are surrounded by individuals who have no vision and direction from God over their life, and yet they wonder why they don’t have vision and direction from God over their life.

Proverbs 27:6

Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.

- Why don’t you give everyone to access? Because not everyone can handle your trust

* + You don’t have enough time to be testing every one of trust
  + So you give some access that you don’t give to everyone

- You need to give them access to correct you.

* + Sometimes you don’t expect people to deliver on correcting you – and when they do, it can hurt

- A friend knows when to wound

- Not everyone who hurt you is against you

- If I can’t tell you the truth, because I’m scared to hurt you, we’re not friends

- A friend cares more about you than the relationship

- A friend will hurt you to save your life even though it might cost the relationship

- How do you handle correction?

* + Most of us reject it

- This is why we need to have people who we have given access to and permission to correct us

Could it be that there are people in your life who you need to value more?

- Some of you have rare people in your life, placed there by God to give you favour, to support you, to encourage you, to give you accountability, and you need to recognize their value

* + Some people are harder to replace than others

Ex: when you’re a kid you always think parents on your case are a curse – until you find out what happened to the kids who had too much freedom for their good.

If you don’t recognize this, then the people who should mean the most to you, receive the least from you.

There are people with who you need to get more intentional.

We can chase people for their approval and neglect the ones who already approve of us.

- Everybody in this room, everyone watching online has taken advantage of someone

David was a man after God’s heart but he failed in relationships. – it is possible to be spiritual and not have relational discernment.

Proverbs 18:24 A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

- You don’t need a lot of friends – you need the right friends

Some of you need friends you don’t currently have and don't need friends you currently do have.

And I know it’s easy to get into the attitude of as long as I have Jesus I don’t need anybody. It’s me and Jesus and Jesus and me. He’s my "ride or die". All I need is Jesus. That may sound nice, but it’s a miserable way to live.

Social media posts about me and Jesus.

That’s cute but it’s incomplete.

Jesus said the greatest commandment is to love God, and the second is to love others. It’s impossible to obey the second greatest commandant outside of relationships.

- We’ve been designed for relationship. When living with the mentality that we don’t need relationships we don’t just live in isolation, we also live in rebellion – because we are trying to function outside of the design of God

- Genesis 2:18 It is not good for man to be alone

* the first problem in the Bible wasn’t the fall of man – the first problem was a relationship problem.
* when we avoid relationships, we try and live in a space that God himself said you were created for – you cannot run from relationships.
* We need people. People are connected to our destiny.

**1 Samuel 23:16**

And Saul’s son Jonathan went to David at Horesh and helped him find **strength in God.**

- Jonathan helped David find strength in God. You don’t need people to help you find strength in yourself but strength in God!

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- Don’t be unequally yoked – this doesn’t just apply to marriages it applies to our relationships. They would put a strong ox with a weak ox.

- What’s the end goal?

**Luke 17:3-4**

3 Pay attention to yourselves! If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him, and if he sins against you seven times in the day, and turns to you seven times, saying, ‘I repent,’ you must forgive him.”

- Sometimes what you need is comfort. You need people who know how to encourage you.

- Sometimes you don’t only need comfort you need correction. Luke 17:3-4 is an interesting text focus on forgiveness. And forgiveness is very comforting to receive and also to give. It heals, it restores, it’s comforting. But let pay close attention to every word Jesus commands. Because before there is forgiveness there is a rebuke. We talk a lot about forgiveness but we don’t talk that much about rebuke.

- Two things I want to say regarding the role of rebuke in our relationships. This is a command.

- Sometimes repentance requires rebuke.

- This must not only be given it also must be received.

* + Because careful of friends who do not correct but be even more careful of friends who can’t be corrected.

Back to Mark 12

- Jesus saw their faith

- They did just leave him by the door.

You don’t just need people who can point the way you need who will walk with you on the way. You need people around you who don’t see just as you – they see what God has put inside of you

Many will tell you of your potential but who’s going to help you get to it?

The paralytics' friends didn’t just believe but they helped him get there. They believed that God has more for him. You need a friend who has faith for your future! Who can see when you can’t. Who can be wise when you’re acting a fool. Who can help you up when you’re feeling down. Friends who can have faith even when you don’t.

Sometimes it’s not even that people are keeping you from your purpose, they could just be keeping you from your potential. In other words, you can get stuck on one level and not even realize that there’s more to your life.

Let me prove it; the paralytic is brought to Jesus and is healed and given the ability to walk – his friends brought him to a place where in a moment he discovered a new level to his potential – not his purpose – why do I say that?

* + Because climax of that man’s life is not his healing – the climax of his life will occur now that he can do something he’s never been able to do before
  + Where his feet will take him,

Your relationships

- Those around you

- Those above you

- Those beneath you

- Your relationship with yourself

* + You can get so busy judging your emotions that you don’t take the time to listen to them. Your emotion can help you discern the state of your soul

A man is known by the company he shuns as well as by the company he keeps – Spurgeon

You need intelligent relationships. And you need relational intelligence to navigate those relationships.