

Relationship Status: Week 3

#ItsComplicated

Many people will walk in and out of your life, but only true friends will leave footprints in your heart. (Eleanor Roosevelt)

Relationship status #ItsComplicated, means they may be unsure of where their relationship is headed, they may be unsure if both parties are equally committed to the relationship, or they may be frustrated by how they are being treated in that relationship.

1 Peter 4:7-8

“The end of all things is near. Therefore, be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray. Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.”

- To have strong relationships in the body of Christ we must deal with our brokenness.

How to Love One Another Well

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.”

- We can do all the “right” things and even look good doing it, but if we don’t have love as our driving force, then it is all worthless.

#1 – THE ABSENCE OF LOVE MEANS THE PRESENCE OF FRICTION

Agape love is self-sacrificing and selfless to the core. Without love, there is always friction because each person is looking out for themselves.

If your relationship status right now is “it’s complicated”, ask yourself:

- Am I approaching it with love?

- Have I demonstrated selflessness?
- Do I demand the other person to bow to my needs?
- Am I handling my friend, family member, co-worker, spouse, employee etc. the way Jesus would?

Paul then goes on to describe what a relationship of love looks like.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8a

“Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.”

- Paul works from every angle to try to describe the kind of love he is inviting us to have for one another.

#2 – LEARN THE DOS AND DON'TS

Patience – Paul would place this attitude in the “do” section. Love is patient.

Envy – Paul places envy in the “don’t” category. Love is not envious.

Pride – Paul places pride in the “don’t” section. Pride is when you lift yourself up by pushing someone else down.

Selfishness – Paul places selfishness in the “don’t” category. Being selfish is the exact opposite of the nature of God.

Anger – Paul, again, places anger in the “don’t” section. It is incredibly difficult to get clarity on a relationship when you find yourself angry.

Truth – Paul places truth in the “do” category. Any relationship will only thrive when there is truth between the people involved.

Protection – Paul places protection in the “do” category. Love protects and makes sure to be sensitive to past wounds, current fears, and future hopes and dreams.

Perseverance – Paul places perseverance in the “do” section. When love commits to someone, it lasts for the long run.

#3 – HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS COME WITH A COST

Jesus was willing to sacrifice His desires and His life for us to experience real life.

John 13:34-35 “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

“Our relationship with each other is the criterion the world uses to judge whether our message is truthful—Christian community is the final apologetic.” *Francis Schaeffer*

Help Guide as your relationship status changes from time to time.

The SIX most important words: "I admit I made a mistake."

The FIVE most important words: "You did a good job."

The FOUR most important words: "What do you think?"

The THREE most important words: "After you please."

The TWO most important words: "Thank you."

The ONE most important word: "We."

The LEAST important word: "I."

Romans 12:9 “Love from the center of who you are; don't fake it. Run for dear life from evil; hold on for dear life to good.” MSG