

Relationships 101

By Jill Meek

for use as
STEP 1**Lesson 3****Focus:**

Base your relationships on God's guidelines.

Lesson 3**Bible Basis:**

Exodus 20:12-14;
Romans 13:9-10;
Ephesians 6:1-3

Lesson 3**Memory Verse:**

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" —Matthew 22:37-39

Students will discuss an example of a committed marriage relationship and discover that God's guidelines should be the basis for all our relationships.

Materials:

Internet access

As your group meets, ask if anyone of them know of someone who has had to cancel a wedding or drastically changed their wedding plans due to the pandemic. Allow your student to share about stories they've heard online.

Whether a couple takes their vows privately or in front of a large crowd, a wedding celebrates love as it signifies that a couple is committed to a covenant of marriage—a lifelong commitment of love which requires support, honor, and faithfulness.

The story of one couple's marriage demonstrates this kind of relationship. Ian and Larissa had been dating about 10 months when he was in an accident which resulted in severe brain injuries. Much to the surprise of many, Larissa decided her love for Ian ran deep, and they were married.

Share the following video [9:25; although this video is long, it is well worth viewing.]:

2014 Update: The Story of Ian and Larissa

<http://vimeo.com/88485530>

➤ **How is this love story different than those portrayed in many movies or other media?** (Answers will vary but may include: Their love for each other seems driven by selflessness rather than self-gratification. Their relationship is not about what they can get out of it; it is complicated and sacrifices have to be made.)

This standard is one we can apply to all of our relationships—relationships with our parents, friends, and anyone else God puts in our lives.

➤ **Do you see the relationships in your life as marked by support, honor, and faithfulness or would you say that something else drives them?** (Your students may feel very

vulnerable as they discuss this; be sure to acknowledge that for many of us there is some element of selfishness involved in our relationships as we want to see our own needs met. Share your own vulnerability in this relationship analysis to make the conversation a safe place to share.)

➤ **Who is your personal real-life example of someone who supports, honors, or stays faithful to you and others?** (Accept all reasonable answers.)

How different the world would be if all of our relationships looked like Ian and Larissa's! Our relationships matter to God—let's see what God has to say about how we treat each other.

Additional resources:

What Larissa and Ian Want the World to Know | Belief | Oprah Winfrey Network (4:09):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S60_O6SUquw

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher's guide; your Step 4 appears below.)

high school



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STEP 4 

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Materials:

- Paper strips (tissue wrapping paper if possible)
- Pens/pencils

None of us are perfect at loving others the way God wants us to. You can blame it on the circumstances, the other person's attitude, the influence of the world, or our own selfishness but regardless, God calls us to a higher standard for all relationships. He calls us to true love.

- **What gets in the way of you loving others the way God asks of us?** (Answers will vary.)
- **How do you think life might change if you began treating everyone by God's standards rather than the world's standards?** (Answers will vary.)

Ask students to think of three people: one they have hurt, one they have dishonored in some way, and one to whom they have not been loyal. Their challenge will be to find a way to reach out to the one they've hurt, honor the one they have dishonored, and show loyalty to the person toward whom they've been unfaithful. Your students might choose a parent, sibling, friend, teammate, classmate, teacher, etc. Some of the situations might be bigger (a major break of trust with parents or spreading a lie about a friend) and others smaller (not helping when they said they would or a thoughtless joke that really stung). This challenge could very well take longer than a week to complete, but encourage your teens to see it through.

Hand out the paper strips and pens/pencils if you are meeting together. As a symbolic reminder of today's commitments, have your teens write the names on a strip of paper. Challenge them to carry these names with them this week, being careful not to wrinkle or rip the paper. Being careful with a delicate piece of paper will serve as a reminder that our relationships require care, gentleness, and respect. If you are still social distancing, ask your students to think of another way to show care, gentleness, and respect to the names they identified.

Close in prayer asking God to help you and your students learn to see others through His eyes and base your relationships on His guidelines.

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