



Sermon Discussion Questions
What Destroys Relationships and What Builds Them?
James 1:19-25
Tyler Scott

I think we would all agree that we want to have great relationships, and that we are "better together," as opposed to doing life alone. The question is: HOW do we do build great relationships? Are there things we do that destroy or negatively impact relationships? Of course! And are there things we can do to build and enjoy great relationships? Yes! James (who writes in a very practical way) cuts right to the point in this poignant passage. He gives insight into three common "destroyers," and then points us to THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS we can do to build great relationships: and they ALL have to do with focusing on God's Word.

Humbly accepting God's Word (the Gospel) is the best thing you can do for your relationship with God, and others. Listening to God's Word, and doing what it says... will help you build and enjoy great relationships with God and others. And continuing to look into God's Word—knowing that it leads to freedom and blessing—will enable you to build and bless others in relationship. It may seem too simple (or even trite), but accepting and applying God's Word really is the best way to build great relationships!

Warm It Up:

Who is the best listener you know? Describe him or her, and what makes them so good at listening? Why is being a good listener such an important part of great relationships?

Talk It Over:

1. **Read James 1:19-25.** In v19, James tells us we should be quick to listen and slow to speak. What are some advantages to heeding this advice? What suggestions would you give to someone who struggles in these areas, and why?
2. James also tells us we should be slow to anger. Does this describe you? Think about the *pace* of your life and the *attitude* of your *heart* during the times when you LOSE your temper. What are some lessons to be learned there?

Share a recent example of when, in your anger, you said or did something you regret.

3. **Read v21a. Also read Hebrews 12:1.** In his message, Tyler mentioned the importance of “getting rid of the interference” as a first step toward building relationships. Describe something in your life – whether it’s a sinful habit or simply a disturbing trend – that is interfering with your ability to build your relationship with God, or other people close to you.

What can you do to “get rid of it?”

4. **Read v21b, and v18.** How does God’s Word--the Gospel message of God’s grace and love in Christ—save us?

Why is HUMILITY such an important aspect of coming before God’s Word, and accepting it?

Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-2. This passage proclaims the beautiful truth that the gospel SAVES us (“that you received”), SUSTAINS us (enables us to “stand”), and SANCTIFIES us (“by which you are being saved”). Why is it so important that we grow in our understanding and application of the Gospel message, and remind ourselves of its truth and power?

****SHARE YOUR STORY** of how you first heard the gospel message, and responded to God’s love by trusting Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins, and eternal life.**

How did this affect your relationships?

5. **Read v22-24, James 4:17, and Matthew 7:24-27.** Even though we may listen to/hear God's Word...oftentimes we stop short of doing what it says. In your own life, what gets in the way?

What is one thing you know God is calling you to DO in the Word—and you can clearly hear that He is calling you to DO it—yet you haven't done it yet? What step can you take this week toward "just doing it?"

Share an example of how God *changed your heart and/or your desire to do something*, as you began to regularly read/accept/listen to His Word. How did this affect your relationships?

6. Why do you think looking into God's Word – humbly, intently, continually, in community – is so important to building great relationships? What are some tangible blessings and benefits that come from spending consistent time in God's Word?

How does the gospel set us free? What can we experience "freedom" from?

How could spending time in God's Word affect your marriage? Your friendships? Your work relationships? Your relationships with your neighbors? Your parenting? Your friends at school? Your relationships with people at church?

Share your thoughtful response to this statement: *"Spending time in God's Word is the MOST IMPORTANT THING you can do to build great relationships and be 'better together.'"*

Pray It Out

Spend some time praying for one another. Ask God to help you build great relationships by heeding His advice from James, humbly accepting His Word, doing what it says, and continuing to look to His Word individually and in community.