# Home - Part 2

# https://www.cccemmitsburg.org/s/cc_images/cache_17468989.jpg?t=1505151088Great Relationships

# (Mark 10:13-16)

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Welcome everybody to week number two of our message series, called HOME. I'm excited to have all of you with us, and my prayer is that God would help each of you, working in your heart to give you the tools you need to have a home that truly honors him. I am believing that God's Word is going to strengthen you, empower you, encourage you, giving you the ingredients to make a home that would be a blessing to you and yours for generations to come.

Now, if you missed last week, we discussed “Protecting Your Priorities” and how important it is to make every effort to safeguard our homes knowing the dangers and the statistics in our culture. We discussed loving the Lord your God, number two loving your spouse, and number three leading your family. We saw how important it is to be proactive, because there’s no other area of your life where you can be lazy and see improvement. And so, speaking of your home, if the grass is looking greener somewhere else, maybe it’s time to water your own yard, spread some fertilizer, and such.

If you were with us last week, we saw how God should be your number one priority, your spouse number two, and your family number three. And so today I want to take that one step farther and talk about three ingredients to building great relationships, because I don’t think anyone gets married with the intention of having a bad marriage. I don’t think anyone plans to lose their intimacy and sit down after seven years arguing over splitting everything they have and who’s going to get the kids on the weekends. It just doesn’t work that way, does it? You see, we love each other, we have the best of intentions, but life simply wears us down. And so, life at home can be overwhelming and though we want to show the love that we feel we simply don’t do it. So today I want to share with you three ingredients to help close the gap between our intentions and our actions. Three unchanging ingredients of great relationships. And the first one is to encourage one another daily.

## 1. Encouragement

It’s one ingredient that’s really simple and practical to add into your everyday relationships. Just encourage one another. Every time you think of something good about your spouse, your mother, father, brother, sister, son, or daughter tell them. Every time you think of something good just say it, add value to your relationships, be a blessing, and let it blossom and grow. The Bible says this in Hebrews chapter 3:

“Encourage one another daily, as long as it is called today” (Hebrews 3:13).

I want to share with you an encounter that Jesus had with some children that really illustrates the three ingredients that I am going to share with you today about building great relationships. Mark chapter 10 tells us:

“People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them” (Mark 10:13-16).

Here we see Jesus taking time to talk to and encourage the kids. Notice he doesn’t say, “Hey, stop talking, stop pushing, or “cut that out” but in verse 16 he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them” (Mark 10:16). Now we don’t know exactly what he said, but we do know it was a blessing, that he encouraged them, and that he lifted them up with his words.

One of the most important things that we can do for our children today is to speak words of life over them, blessing rather than cursing. I find that to be rather convicting, because if you’re like me, it seems like most of my communication with my kids is telling them what they’re doing wrong, or what they should have been doing, instead of encouraging them and telling them what they are doing right. I catch myself all the time, not building them up, but tearing them down, and so it’s got to be very intentional as we encourage one another.

Honestly, sometimes it’s really hard to find anything good to say.  Sometimes it’s just the little things, like, “Wow, you’ve got your shoes on the right feet and your shirt’s not on backwards”, or “Hey, I can actually walk into your room without tripping over something. Great job, I’m so proud of you.” And so, over and over and over again I want to speak encouraging words to my children. So, every time I think of something good or see something good I want to try to acknowledge it and encourage my children.

What’s really interesting, is that there is only one place in the Bible where God the Father is quoted speaking to his Son Jesus. Now, I am sure that he spoke to him a lot more than that, but there’s only one place where the audible voice of God is recorded in scripture. This is important, because I want you to see what God the Father said to his Son. Matthew records it and tells us in chapter 3 that as Jesus was baptized a voice from heaven said,

"This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:17).

Just a simple word of encouragement, but note that the one time it’s recorded of God speaking to Jesus, he was boasting, “With my son, I am well pleased.” Isn’t that awesome? It’s those words of encouragement that mean so much to us.

Encourage one another daily as long as it’s called today” (Hebrews 3:13).

And then number two, be expressive of your love.

## 2. Show Your Affection

My youngest daughter, who is six now, she’s always going to be my little girl no matter how old she is, but I always tell her that I love her. Well actually, I always tell all of my children that I love them, but Olivia often says, “Dad, you already told me that!” It’s like, she’s exasperated, she’s tired of me telling her that I love her. But she had better get ready. Because there’s a 1000 more where that came from.

If you think of something special, do it, say it, be creative and show your affection. Now I know sometimes for guys this can be a little challenging, but if you can express your love for your wife with nonsexual affection; I know that’s difficult, even saying those words together, but if you can, it really communicates a sense of unconditional love and acceptance. I want to encourage you to try, be creative, do the dishes, help straighten up, take the kids out to play, be expressive of your love.

And ladies, I’d encourage you that one of the best ways to express your love to your husband is to affirm him, to build him up, to confirm his worth and his contribution. I guarantee you that he will become what you speak over him. The problem is that so much in our culture today, men are told what they are not, what they can’t do, and it becomes so defeating. But when you build him up, he’ll grow into the man that you hope that he’ll become.

You know, in Ephesians chapter 5, the Bible talks about husbands loving their wives just as Christ loved the church and how he gave himself up for her, but just after the apostle Paul shares that, what he calls a profound mystery, he says in verse 33,

“However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself and the wife must respect her husband” (Ephesians 5:33).

I believe there’s something of a mystery here as well, there’s a little nugget of truth here that God is revealing about the needs of a husband and a wife. I think you could say it this way, simply that, she wants to know if you love her today. And he wants to know if you believe in him today. And so, you need to be expressive of your love, to show your affection, because in that way we will enrich and enlarge our love for one another, which will lead to great relationships every time.

James tells us in chapter 4,

“Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it sins” (James 4:17).

I think if we can apply this principle loosely to our homes it will be helpful. If you think of something special, just do it. If you think of something amazing, say it. Show your affection, be expressive, and be creative. Any time that you think of something good that you should do to be a blessing, just do it. Maybe it’s as simple as getting off work early and picking up dinner on your way home. Or saying, “Let’s go out and do whatever you want to do.” You guys that have little ones at home, one of the most helpful, loving, romantic things you can do is to help load the dishes, wash those kids, and get them to bed.

And speaking of kids, notice that in Mark chapter 10, “People were bringing their little children to Jesus,” verse 13, to have him do what? “To have him touch them”, right?

There is power in showing your affection with appropriate touch. Now in our culture today appropriate touch is especially important, but the Greek word that is translated “touch” literally means to attach oneself. So as Jesus was sitting there, the children would run to him, and he would embrace them. He would welcome them, hug them, and hold them in an appropriate way as he blessed them and spoke words of encouragement over them.

Now, I’ll tell you, if you’re not naturally affectionate with your kids, you need to learn to be, because it’s so important in your children’s lives. Show your affection in positive and appropriate ways. And then the third ingredient, if you want great relationships, is to give an abundance of time.

## 3. Give an Abundance of Time

You see, if you want something different in your home and in your relationships, if you don’t like what you’re getting, take a look at what you’re giving. If you’re discouraged because of what you’re not getting, ask yourself what you can give to that relationship to make it better. You see, if we really want to add value to our relationships, any relationship, we’ve got to give an abundance of time. If we’re able to apply this truth, we’re going to see our relationships improve; we’re going to see our relationships grow and become healthier and stronger.

There was a book that came out in 1995 called the Five Love Languages. It seems as if people either love the book or hate the book, but in the book Gary Chapman describes how to express heartfelt commitment to your spouse. He breaks it down into five love languages, five ways to fill your spouse’s love tank.  Five ways so that your relationship isn’t on empty.  And he says that those five love languages are gift giving, quality time, words of affirmation, acts of service, and physical touch. Most likely, there was a time in your relationship when you did most of these things. Your relationship was special, because you did something special, but somewhere along the way you stopped. And so, to get back what you once had you must do what you once did. You had it before and so, you can get it again, you know what to do, and you know how to do it.

Time is a powerful emotional communicator of love with the central aspect being togetherness. Gary Chapman describes quality time as giving someone your undivided attention. Giving an abundance of time is a benefit to any relationship. Look with me at what Jesus does back in verse 13 again:

“People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them” (Mark 10:13).

The disciples thought he was too busy, he was too important to be distracted with children. But verse 14 says that, “When Jesus saw this, he was indignant…” or in other words he wasn’t very happy with his disciples. And so, he said to them,

"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these” (Mark 10:14).

Now what I’ve noticed is that many of us expect a lot from our relationships, but we’re unwilling to give the necessary time. You know, we come home after school, after work, and it’s like a pit stop.

How many of you are NASCAR racing fans? Anybody?

You know, whether you like NASCAR or not you’ve got to admit that the pitstop is amazing. The car pulls off the racetrack into the pits where six or seven people converge on the car. They change the tires, put gas in, check the car, clean the windshield, all this stuff in like 15 seconds, and then they drop the car back down on the ground and they’re off again. The problem is, many of us are investing the same amount of time in our relationships.

Now obviously I’m exaggerating, but the point is that great relationships need an abundance of time. As parents, we need to spend more than 12 to 15 seconds with our children, with one another, and every relationship that we value. You know, we all have our excuses. Maybe you’ve said, “I’m going to in a little while” You know, “After I graduate, after I get my degree” or “After I pay off the credit card” or “get this promotion, finish this project.” You know, “Then I’ll spend more time with you. Maybe around the holidays I will have more time.” Well, let me assure you, if you don’t determine to do it now, it’s not likely that you’re going to do it later. You make time for what you want to have time for, but I’ve got to remind you that life is short.

James tell us in chapter 4.  “What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes” (James 4:14).

And so, don’t miss the opportunity to have great relationships. To get what you once had, do what you once did. If that relationship was special before, it can be special again.

Jesus once talked to a church that had gotten lazy and had fallen away. He said to them very simply, and the principle is applicable to every relationship, in Revelation chapter 2:

"Remember the height from which you were fallen. Repent and do the things you did at first." (Revelation 2:5).

You’ve got today, one chance to encourage one another, to show your affection, and to give an abundance of your time. Don't waste the gift that God has given you today; invest in those relationships, be intentional, fall in love all over again. If the grass looks greener somewhere else, put some fertilizer down and water your own yard, because you can have the great relationships God wants you to have. Let's pray and make application of these truths.

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