

Leader's notes and Bible passages for this study available online

# Regarding Relationships

By Shari Miller



**R**elationships are inevitable. We all have them; some are healthy and some are not. During this study of God's Word, we will look at some biblical relationships and explore some of their characteristics.

Describe the different relationships you have in your life. Share with a partner or in your small group.

## Opening Prayer

*Dear heavenly Father, we ask that You be with us today as we look at relationships in the Bible as well as the relationships of our lives. Jesus, we thank You for Your saving work of redemption in our lives. Holy Spirit, please bless our study of Your Word. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*

## Sin = It's a natural!

Read **Genesis 2:15–25** and **3:1–24** to learn about the relationship between Adam and Eve. What characteristics of Adam and Eve's relationship do you discover before the fall into sin and after the fall into sin? List them below.

Before: \_\_\_\_\_

After: \_\_\_\_\_

Sin was born as a result of the first couple's desire to be like God. It became the natural state of all their descendants. What does **Romans 5:12–14** tell us about the result of the first sin? \_\_\_\_\_

What specific relationships were damaged in the Genesis account of Adam and Eve? How? \_\_\_\_\_

Read **Numbers 12:1–15**. What relationships in this biblical account were damaged because of sin? How? \_\_\_\_\_

## Faith Talk

Identify a relationship in your life that has been damaged by sin. Is that relationship healthy today? What could you do to mend some of the damage sin has caused? Be specific and share with a partner or in a small group. \_\_\_\_\_

## If Time Permits

Read the biblical account of Samson and Delilah in **Judges 16:1–22** for yet another account of a sin-riddled relationship. What specific sins do you find? \_\_\_\_\_

## Grace = It's a-mazing!

Read **Romans 5:6–11; 15–17**. Here is the "rest of the story"! How has Jesus' redeeming work changed our relationship with God? \_\_\_\_\_

## Faith Talk

In your own words, verbalize what Paul states in the above verses from **Romans**. How would you testify to God's grace in your life? Share with a partner or in a small group. \_\_\_\_\_

What example of God's grace can you find in **Genesis 7:1–10; 8:1–5; 18**? Identify the relationships affected by grace in this account. \_\_\_\_\_

What is the account of Noah's ark compared to in **1 Peter 3:18–22**? \_\_\_\_\_



## If Time Permits

Read the account of the birth of Jesus and the flight to Egypt in **Matthew 1:18–25; 2:13–15; 19–23; and Luke 2:22**. Focus on the relationship between Mary and Joseph. What characteristics do you see?

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## Life = It's a gift!

Read **John 3:16** together: *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. (ESV)*

Because of Jesus' saving work and His grace in our lives, our relationships with each other can also be restored. Our loving Lord gives us His Holy Spirit to enable us and empower us to live our lives to His glory. The Spirit works through the Word and Sacraments (Baptism and The Lord's Supper) to give us faith and new life in Christ.

Read the following Scripture passages about Mary, Martha, and Lazarus: **Luke 10:38–42; John 11:5, 17–19; and John 12:1–3**. What are the signs in these verses that indicate a healthy relationship between the siblings? \_\_\_\_\_

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Read **1 Timothy 1:1–2** and **2 Timothy 1:3–5**. What relationships are mentioned in these verses? How would you characterize them? Identify relationships in your life that are connected to your faith life.

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Read the following Bible verses about Priscilla (Prisca) and Aquila, a husband and wife team in the early Christian church: **Acts 18:1–3; 18; 24–26; Romans 16:3–5a; and 1 Corinthians 16:19**. Identify some of the beneficial characteristics of their relationship with each other, their friend Paul, and other Christian friends.

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Read **John 1:14–18** and **Romans 5:18–21**. What relationship is restored through Jesus Christ? What is the final result of that restored relationship?

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## Faith Talk

What relationships has the Lord given to you to encourage your Christian walk? Share with a partner or in a small group.

## Faith Walk

1. Each day thank your Savior for His redemptive work in your life.
2. Rejoice in the Holy Spirit's guidance.
3. Examine the relationships that God has given to you.
4. Thank the people in the relationships that nurture your faith in Jesus.
5. With the help of the Spirit, restore relationships that have been broken or damaged due to sin.

## Closing Prayer

*Awesome God, we humbly come before You to ask forgiveness for all our sins for the sake of Your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. We ask that You help us forgive one another, just as in Christ You forgive us. Give us healthy relationships of family and friends in our lives. Enable us to restore relationships that have been damaged or broken. Be with us throughout our days as we joyfully look forward to our eternal relationship with You in heaven. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.*

Sing together the Christmas hymn "Let All Together Praise Our God" (*LSB* # 389; *LW* #44) or "Praise God the Lord, Ye Sons of Men" (*TLH* #105).

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