

CHRISTIANITY IS ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS

SCRIPTURAL REFERENCE
Matthew 22:39

ADDITIONAL STUDY
Galatians 5:22-23
Acts 10:38
Romans 12:10

REFLECTION

What fruit of the Spirit are you lacking in and willing to develop?

And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'
- **Matthew 22:39**

Christianity is a religion of relationships. The very root of Christianity is in God's great love for humanity, which motivated Him to send His Son to die for them (John 3:16). In fact, looking at the Ten Commandments, one notices that six of them deal with relating with people, i.e. not steal, kill, covert their properties, etc., but rather, to respect and treat them right.

The heart of the New Testament church, likewise, is one of relating well with others, for Jesus made loving ourselves as important as loving God (*the second is like it...*) and said whoever does the two has fulfilled all the other commandments. John the beloved hits the nail on the head: "...for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?" ~ 1 John 4:20

Galatians 5:22-23 reveals the fruit of the Spirit; and just as a tree's fruits are not for itself but for the benefit of others, the fruit of the Spirit in a Christian's life is for others to enjoy in him. It's still about relating with others. Therefore, the ultimate test of Christianity is in our relationships with people – spouse, siblings, friends, relatives, neighbors, colleagues, etc. You can't be nasty to your spouse or neighbor and claim that you are a good Christian. You can't mistreat the people who work for you and claim that you are a good Christian.

Christianity is not a religion you practice in isolation. You can't isolate yourself from people, saying you are avoiding trouble. No! It is in the place of relating with others that you truly measure your Christianity... when there is trouble and you let joy, peace or self control flow through you. Truly, you can't say you have overcome anger if you are isolated from people – that can only be tested if you are offended, and who will best do that, human beings around you. Be like Jesus, He was amongst people and He lived as a shining example of God's love and nature.

Starting from tomorrow, we will be looking at different levels of relationships, and what the bible recommends we do in those relationships.

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