



Goals & Key Concepts

1. To learn how Christ is your foundation for all relational connections.
2. To learn biblical strategies for discerning relational connections.
3. To understand the purpose for a relationship.
4. To help you increase and manage your relational connections that are godly and to learn strategies to connect or reconnect with others i.e., inviting others, expanding your circles, stepping out in faith to relate well.
5. To help you decrease or manage your relational connections that are ungodly or to appropriately disconnect when the season is over i.e., confronting behaviors, creating healthy distances, initiating a farewell, and moving on in your life.
6. To understand the role of conflict in your life and use it to become a better person.
7. To learn skills on how to connect with others i.e., making new friends, reconnecting with family members, increasing connections in your career, church, or other communities with any type of relationship.

Hello Ladies of STWCI,

Welcome to STWCI Women's Bible Study "Discerning Your Relational Connections" Part 1. What does the Bible say about discerning relationships? Did you know it is important to know the purpose of your relationships in this season of your life? Relationships are such a huge and vast topic, and you need discernment from the Holy Spirit to reflect His kingdom principles in the way you connect with others. Relationships will include family members such as your spouse, parents, siblings, children, and extended cousins. Relationships can include a potential fiancé' or maybe you're experiencing heartbreak from a recent break-up or divorce. Relationships can include friendships in terms of connecting or disconnecting from peers in your life or completely rearranging relationships based on the amount of connectivity that you believe is best for you right now. Relationships impact your career with your colleagues, supervisors, or other business associates. For example, do you need to hire or fire some people in your life based on their behaviors? Relationships will include a certain level of interactions with people who will heavily influence your life such as a doctor, lawyer, teacher, or coach. Did you know that you are being relational when you have small encounters with a restaurant staff

member when you are ordering food? What about when you hold the door for the stranger who is walking by, and you make the choice to extend godly kindness? We all need discernment in our lives to help us have the most satisfied, fulfilling relationships. If you need more discernment and have questions about relationships, I am glad that we are in this journey together as we seek the Lord for His discernment in our relationships. It is a fact that relationships will change and maybe it is time for you to change towards Christ and have more discernment in your life.

Sincerely,
Pastor DeRelle Morrison

#1

RELATIONSHIPS 101:

CHRIST IS YOUR FOUNDATION FOR ALL RELATIONAL CONNECTIONS.

Did you know that Christ is the foundation for ALL your relational connections? There is nothing that will happen in your life without Him knowing about it. Is He the foundation for your relationships? Have you ever had a bad relationship? Did the outcome not go well? Have you ever had a relationship that went so well, and you are still thanking God for that person or group of people as a blessing in your life? A relationship with Christ makes all the difference in the world. Without Him, our relationships will not succeed. Do you believe this? How is Christ the foundation for our relationships? What does the Word of God say about this truth? Let us look at Colossians 1:15-20

Scripture # 1 Colossians 1:15-20 Amplified

15 He is the exact living image [the essential manifestation] of the unseen God [the visible representation of the invisible], the firstborn [the preeminent one, the sovereign, and the originator] of all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created in heaven and on earth, [things] visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities; all things were created and exist through Him [that is, by His activity] and for Him. 17 And He Himself existed and is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. [His is the controlling, cohesive force of the universe.] 18 He is also the head [the life-source and leader] of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will occupy the first place [He will stand supreme and be preeminent] in everything. 19 For it pleased the Father for all the fullness [of deity—the sum total of His essence, all His perfection, powers, and attributes] to dwell [permanently] in Him (the Son), 20 and through [the intervention of] the Son to reconcile all things to Himself, making peace [with believers] through the blood of His cross; through Him, [I say,] whether things on earth or things in heaven.

Did you know that when you look at Christ as the exact living image of your identity then you are able to accurately see others through Him correctly? Jesus gave us the correct perspective to see others how He wants us to see them. Think about the terminology of within this verse and how it is used to describe how powerful Christ is in terms of his influence over the universe—there is none higher! Words in this scripture such as “created”, “visible”, “dominion”, “authority”, and “existed” indicate that He is in control of your life. He is holding your relationships together. How do you want to be involved in your own process of discerning what He wants to do with you and the people in your life? Do you believe that he stands supreme and that he has preeminence in your life? Do you believe that He Loves you so much that he will take care of you and all the relationships that you encounter?

Scripture # 2 Psalm 139:15-18

My frame was not hidden from You, when I was being formed in secret, and intricately and skillfully formed [as if embroidered with many colors] in the depths of the earth.¹⁶ Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; And in Your book were all written the days that were appointed for me, when as yet there was not one of them [even taking shape. ¹⁷ How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How vast is the sum of them! ¹⁸ If I could count them, they would outnumber the sand. When I awake, I am still with You.

Did you know that your life has a plan, and all your written days are appointed for? This indicates that your life has a plan that includes your relationships and there is a written plan for them as well. It is up to you to discover what has been written about you and others. Be challenged and learn what relationships are required of you in this life. When relationships change, when people change, when you change, Jesus will still say to you “I am still with you”.

S.O.A.P REFLECTION POINT:
USE THE “SOAP” (SCRIPTURE, APPLY, OBSERVE, PRAY) BOXES TO HELP YOU PROCESS THE INFORMATION YOU RECENTLY READ.

<p style="text-align: center;">A. SCRIPTURE :</p> <p style="text-align: center;">How does this scripture minister to me?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">B. APPLICATION:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">How does this apply to my life?</p>
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<p>C. OBSERVATION: What have I observed from this text or about what was stated in the Bible study tonight?</p>	<p>D. PRAYER: What do I need prayer for? What have I been praying about?</p>
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#2

ABIDE IN MY LOVE

Since we know that Christ is the foundation for all relationships, it is necessary that we are rooted and grounded in His love. His love is what sustains you. His love will teach you how to love Him. His love will teach you how to love yourself in Him. His love will teach you how to love others. Relationships will not work unless you have a strong foundation in His love. That goes for any relationship you encounter. We serve a jealous God, and he wants no idols before Him and that includes relationships. We must be careful that we are not raising any relationships with people higher than who He is in our lives. It is very easy for women to be involved in so many relationships and take so much responsibility by caring for others and the upkeep of the relationships, but we must remember to keep Jesus as our first love!

John 15:1-9

15 "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. 8 By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so, you will be My disciples. 9 "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. 10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. Jesus is the true vine, and the Father is the vinedresser.

Look at the details of what Jesus is telling you in this scripture. He is providing a framework for relationships that includes how He wants you to relate to Him, yourself, and others. When a woman has a foundational framework of abiding in His love, she has the ability to see her relationships through Christ. Joy comes from abiding in His love. Did you know that people and relationships are limited, and they cannot fulfill *all* of your needs? A woman must seek the Holy Spirit for discernment for a greater understanding of what God wants to do in her life and the lives of others. Imagine how many women are operating in life without the foundation of Christ in their relationships. There is so much more in store for you!

PRINCIPLES OF ABIDING IN HIS LOVE TO DISCERN YOUR RELATIONSHIPS:

1. I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.

MY NOTES:

1.1

1.2

1.3

2. Your life will be pruned by the Father. (John 15:2)

MY NOTES:

2.1

2.2

2.3

2.4

3. Cleanliness comes into your life as result of the Word of God.

MY NOTES:

3.1

3.2

4. Abide in the Vine.

4.1

4.2 Abiding is about productivity towards development, growth, and maturity.

Exercise # 1 Development:

Exercise # 2 Growth:

Exercise # 3 Maturity:

4.3

5. Casting, withering, and burning will occur in relationships.

5.1

6. Godly desires must be cultivated in relationships.

6.1

7. God is glorified when your life produces fruit.

7.1

#3

DISCERNMENT IN THE BODY OF CHRIST

The Body of Christ 1 Corinthians 12:12-26

Where does discernment come from? Why is it needed in the Body of Christ and how does it support you in terms of your relationships?

4 There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit [...] 10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits [...]

12 For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. 14 For in fact the body is not one member but many.

15 If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body,” is it therefore not of the body? 16 And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body,” is it therefore not of the body? 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? 18 But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. 19 And if they were all one member, where would the body be?

20 But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. 21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you”; nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” 22 No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. 23 And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty, 24 but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it, 25 that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. 26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.

We have access to spiritual gifts that stem from being a part of the body of Christ as the church and the purpose of the gift is to bring forth God's kingdom agenda. The church is His corporate body consisting of relationships. Therefore, we have a responsibility to manage our relationships well according to the Word of God. This indicates that there is a gift of discernment that helps to identify the spirit of a person and whether they are in alignment with the Word of God for the benefit of the church. In addition, we have access

to the wisdom of God, His knowledge, and His understanding to help us in our multiple personal and corporate relationships.

#4

WHY DO WE NEED DISCERNMENT IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS?

Ephesians 4:11-16

11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, 15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— 16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

1. Equipping
2. Edifying
3. Maturity
4. Doctrinally sound
5. Growth in love

How does the body of Christ help you to discern relationships and to connect with others who have God's best interest in mind?

- ❖ Equipping:
- ❖ Edifying:
- ❖ Maturity:
- ❖ Doctrine:
- ❖ Growth in Love:

Colossians 2:6-9

6 As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, 7 rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.

8 Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. 9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; 10 and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.

1. Have you ever experienced deceptive cheating or empty deceit in a relationship because of the lack of the word of God in a situation? How did the relationship proceed forward?
2. What are the traditions of men? What are basic principles of this world that are not according to Christ?

#5

RELATIONSHIPS IN THE WORD OF GOD

Matthew 7:15-20

15 "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. 16 You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? 17 Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Therefore by their fruits you will know the

The Fruit of the Spirit

Galatians 5:22 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

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CONFESSIOIN OF JESUS AS LORD

1 John 4:1-16

4 Beloved do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, 3 and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.

4 You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. 5 They are of the world. Therefore, they speak as of the world, and the world hears them. 6 We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9 In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. 10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

12 No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us. 13 By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. 14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world. 15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. 16 And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

1 John 3:7-8

He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. & He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose, the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

S.O.A.P REFLECTION POINT:

Use the "soap" (scripture, apply, observe, pray) boxes to help you process the information you recently read.

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THE END

Join us next time as we continue to discern our relational connections!

Thank you for your continued participation.