

# Heart Attitudes

*Enjoying  
relationships in a  
group*





## The Bridge is committed to **knowing, loving and following God** and **making His love known**

*Matthew 22: 37-39*

*Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'*

**Jesus taught us to love God and others in all the ways that we live.** It is our desire to bring glory to God, and because He is love the best way we can glorify God in our lives is to let His love live in us. It is not easy to love God let alone loving others, but that is something we are continuing to build into our lives. As we learn to love others we are making choices and setting patterns into our lives that bear good fruit in our relationships. These patterns will become the preferential way of living because experience the blessings God desires for us and we discover our lives are truly bringing glory to God

**People live out of who they are.** The image of a person is the culmination of his or her value set, and it is out of those values that a person acts, dreams and responds to life situations.

**Our values determine how we relate to one another within our church and how we relate to the community around us.**

To guide us, we have a common set of values that help us achieve becoming the people God is calling us to be, we call them the:

## HEART ATTITUDES

- We pursue a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ
- We live an open and honest lifestyle
- We place the success of others ahead of ourselves
- We seek to build and maintain healthy relationships
- We are willing to give and receive spiritual correction
- We are committed to faithfully being together
- We support this ministry financially
- We follow spiritual leadership within scriptural limits

# Heart Attitudes



## Pursue a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ

*Colossians 2:6-7*

*So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.*

### **Living in a way that we can know God and experience His love for us requires we enter into and maintain a personal relationship with His Son – Jesus.**

**Foundational to our encounter with God.** We live in the hope that Jesus brings into our lives. Restoring our relationship with God required our salvation and that is what Jesus came to provide. Apart from God we were spiritually dead, the only life we can hope in is the physical circumstances of our lives which are inadequate and impotent. Through faith in Jesus' death and resurrection we are able to move beyond our physical circumstances and become spiritually alive.

**Our relationship with Jesus brings freedom from our past, strength for our days and hope for our future.** Jesus' death on the cross is the single only event that truly frees us from the guilt of our sins and we are able to experience real freedom. Jesus begins to live in our lives and he teaches us through Scripture and the Holy Spirit how to encounter God in the midst of our daily lives. Our spiritual strength grows as we allow Jesus to have authority in our lives. We discover God's purposes for our lives as we let Him set the directions and pace for our lives.

## The Bridge: a church that connects

### **Our relationship with Jesus grows as we pursue Him.**

As with any relationship, it takes time and energy to establish and maintain. We have to want this relationship as badly as He wants it. As we pursue a relationship with Jesus it will grow and become a vital aspect of our life.

### **Practical suggestions:**

- **Spend time in God's Word daily.** The Bible is God's revelation to us of His presences, His purposes and His ways. As we spend time in God's Word we discover the relevance and life that it offers. God will speak into our lives through His Word and we experience His Truth come alive in us.
- **Discover the power and purposes of prayer.** Through prayer we have access to God through Jesus. Jesus teaches us how to pray and we begin to communicate directly with God.
- **Allow Jesus to shape your attitudes.** Our thoughts, desires and ways are very different from God's thoughts, desires and ways. Jesus' examples of how to respond to life begins to challenge and change our own attitudes and we begin to act more like Christ. These changes begin to effect all the other relationships and aspects of our lives.
- **Commit to become part of the fellowship of a local church.** No one can do this alone. We need the encouragement and accountability of a local church to help us walk with Jesus over time.

Living to know, love and follow Jesus  
and making His love known

# Heart Attitudes



## Promoting and protecting unity by living an open and honest life

Ephesians 4:25

*Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body.*

**Living truthfully** is the best way to follow Jesus faithfully and demonstrate our trust in Him.

**Trust is the essential element for any relationship to be successful.** Because we are a part of one body it is crucial we speak truthfully with each other. A body can not function properly if there are mixed messages being sent or received. For the promotion of a healthy, growing body, all the parts must be committed to the whole and truthfulness will be necessary to sustain its health.

**Lies will isolate.** When someone lies, they separate that area of their life from other people and begin protecting the lie instead of relationship. Their lie begins to isolate them and make the person more vulnerable to destructive patterns of deceit which will isolate them even further.

**Honesty promotes strength.** Life may not always be the way we want it to be, but exposing the weaknesses provide the opportunity for strength to be provided. Even exposing a weakness builds trust in the relationship in the midst of restoring strength to the individual. 1 John 1:7

## Practical suggestions:

- **Present life as real.** You don't make life look better than it is or worse than it is, but be committed to living authentically.
- **Be willing to expose even small weaknesses.** It is easier to deal with weaknesses before they become costly.
- **Remember honesty is a path to humility.** My problem is my sin. I am committed to living in righteousness and truth flowing in my relationships.
- **Integrity with discretion.** Allow a few people access to the private areas of your life. This protects your privacy, the privacy of those closest to you and protects the integrity of the whole.

**Truth promotes healthy growth** – When our lives are healthy then we are able to produce fruit that is beneficial to others around us and is the evidence of God's work within our lives. Truth develops trust, when we feel weak individually; "truthing" in love helps strength to grow in our relationships so our lives can bear fruit as we make His love known.

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## Promoting and protecting unity by putting the success of others ahead of myself

John 13:34-35

*"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."*

Philippians 2:3-4

*Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.*

## When we love others we show we love Jesus.

**Jesus gives us a new standard of living – loving sacrificially.** It is normal to put ourselves first, to look out for ourselves, to consider our needs, wants and desires; but Jesus calls us to love others as he loved us. The earlier command was to love one another as you love yourself, but He raised the bar and loved us by giving His life for us, and He expects us to give our lives for each other.

**Make room in my life for others.** I can become my own roadblock to honestly loving others. I will have to be willing to move myself out of the way and make room for them. There will be a 'conflict of interest' – my interests or someone else's.

**Jesus knows that loving sacrificially will lead us to the road of humility.** Living sacrificially sets us apart as people who follow Jesus

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**By putting the success of others ahead of ourselves we build strength into those around us and we grow stronger too** – Our ability to follow Jesus grows when we live and love like He did.

### Practical suggestions:

- **Decide to be inconvenienced.** I must choose to be interested in someone else. Putting someone else's interests ahead of my own will mean I will have to do something I did not plan or want to do.
- **Look away from myself.** I must move my attention off myself and on to someone else
- **Notice what is happening in others lives.** I can not meet a need I do not know about and if I don't look I won't see the others needs or interests.
- **Defer to one another.** Make the first move, step out to serve each other in love.

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## Promoting and protecting unity by building and maintaining healthy relationships.

Matthew 5:23 -24

*"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.*

**As we live to know, love and follow Jesus, we are reminded of the value He has placed on our relationship with Him.**

**Relationships are at the center of everything God is doing.** He sent His son to reconcile and restore a relationship that had been severely broken. As we each live in real life we experience the pain of relationships that go from strained, to broken and even demolished. We know the emptiness and alienation that comes as a result of such failed relationships. But, that is not what God desires for each of us to experience in our lives.

**Because we are all alive, we assume we will sin against each other.** None of us are perfect and we live around imperfect people, so the opportunity to do something stupid is high. And when we do something against someone else we seek to clean things up, to make things right.

## Practical suggestions:

- **Initiative always lies with you.** You can take the responsibility to make things right, because the relationship is worth it.
- **Explore when you're not sure.** I remember many occasions when I thought I had offended someone only to find out that was not the case at all. Every time that relationship was strengthened because the person knew I cared deeply about them and our relationship.
- **Ask forgiveness without blaming them** My problem is my sin. Take responsibility for the relationship.
- **If they won't forgive you, then accept that, and pray for them** Sometimes time is necessary for healing to happen.
- **Don't damage others in the way you confess your sin.** We often will try to rationalize our actions as a way to lessen our responsibility. Don't do it.

**Unity is crucial** – it is the evidence of God's work within our lives, how He is changing us and making us into His people. Unity brings strength, when we feel weak individually it is the unity of our community that steps in to bring real help. We need each other to see and experience the reality of Jesus in the midst of real life.

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## Promoting and protecting unity by giving & receiving spiritual correction.

Hebrews 3:13

*But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.*

### No one follows Jesus perfectly and from time to time we each need course corrections.

**No one has it all together.** We desire the best for each other and are looking for one another's success, so we will encourage each other to live in scriptural freedom. It is difficult to give or receive correction when we focus on the correction and not the direction. Success lies in living as Christ; wisdom and freedom are found on His path (Prov 9:8). We want to help each other succeed so we help each other stay focused on the direction. Scripture provides us the consistent direction for living as Jesus.

**Friends help friends live.** *Sin is deceitful*; we can head in a direction and think it is the right way and only the eyes of a trusted friend can blow a whistle before trouble strikes. Sin will also harden our hearts, it is one of the enemies tools to isolate and alienate. To help a friend sometimes requires us to take a risk for their good and the good of the whole, but be committed to warning the other in an encouraging manner.

## The Bridge: a church that connects

**Promote an environment of encouragement.** By encouraging one another often, *daily*, we build trusting relationships that provide an opportunity to blow a whistle when it is needed. Through consistent and true encouragement (not flattery) we can help provide positive corrections while they are small before issues become big.

### Practical suggestions:

- **Maintain your own intake of scripture.** You can not give to someone else what you do not have; scriptural help can only come from knowledge of the scriptures. Your intake of scripture is not only for your own good but for the good of those you care about.
- **Promote the 90/10 rule.** Try to provide 9 words of encouragement to one word of correction. Catch each other doing things right and speak up about it.
- **Build 'whistle blowers' into your life.** Give trusted friends permission to speak into your life when it is needed. Decide in your heart that they are helping you succeed. When someone gives you permission to speak into their life, realize they have given you a precious trust, don't abuse that trust.

**Be committed to living honestly and trust others around you** – We need each other to “watch our backs” because sin can creep up on each of us (Heb 10:24-25).

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## Personally Participate in the ministry by faithfully being together

Hebrews 10:25

*Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another-and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*

1 Peter 4:10

*Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.*

## As a follower of Jesus it is natural to regularly be with other followers.

**You bless God and others by participating.** You have an important role to play in the ministry that God has fit you into. You are the only one with the unique mix of gifts, talents, experiences that God wants to use through your life to bring Him honour and bless others with. Everyone's mix is different and unique and as a result everyone has something to offer. When you don't participate you are withholding what you have to offer, and everyone misses the blessing.

**Give where you have received.** There is great fulfillment in giving, especially in the areas or ways that your life has been impacted. When you have received a blessing, you know best what the significance of that particular ministry has meant to you. Just like your needs were met, others will have the same type of needs. Because of the blessing you have received, you will be able to also be a blessing to others in the same way. As you do this you will find fulfillment and God will be honoured through your life.

## The Bridge: a church that connects

**A volunteer spirit will make life better.** When you give of yourself, you will discover more about yourself, others and what God is doing around you. The best way to discover your spiritual gift is to begin serving – anywhere.

### Practical suggestions:

- **Think through where you have been served and look for ways to serve too.** If you have been blessed to have refreshments while visiting with a friend or guest, perhaps you could be a blessing to someone else by helping provide or prepare refreshments. Or childcare, or night out in your group...
- **Ask a church leader for ideas or opportunities to serve.** One of the hardest things leaders do is to recruit volunteers. Perhaps you could ask for a place to serve, then do it, whether you like that job or not. If you have proven to be a faithful servant, when the better fit for you comes along you will be in a better position to engage with it.
- **Plan to come early and stay late.** When you make your heart available you will discover the opportunities to be involved. Then help out beyond your specialty, that is when you truly become a blessing.

**The king's servant who was always on hand was the one to receive the blessings.**

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## Personally Participate in the ministry by supporting the work financially

*Matthew 6:21*

*For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

*2 Corinthians 9:6-7*

*Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*

## God is looking for the heart that will trust Him in everything – including finances

**Everything we have is from the Father.** God has entrusted us with material and financial resources. We have no more than He has entrusted us with. It is not the amount of what we have that He is interested in but what we do with it. How we manage our finances reveals the relationship we have with Him. A portion of our income is holy, set apart and belongs to God.

**We give to that which we believe in.** There is great fulfillment in giving when we believe God desires to involve us in His work. As we live with open hands, God is able to turn our lives and resources into streams of blessings for others. In giving, we demonstrate that we are trusting in God's strength more than our own financial strength or earning capacity. As you help out financially the work God has given His people moves forward.

## The Bridge: a church that connects

### **We give because we trust God and desire to obey Him.**

When you give of your resources, you will discover more about yourself. God's Word teaches us the importance of giving regularly to God's work and experiencing the blessings He desires to bring into our lives.

### **Practical suggestions:**

- **Commit in your heart to trust God with your finances.** Tithing, the act of giving regularly to God's work, can be a big step. Ask God for the faith to begin giving and commit yourself to trusting God. If you can trust God with your life, you can trust Him with your money.
- **Share your desires and struggles with another Christian.** Financial challenges hit everyone and we are called to encourage each other. God can use the faith of others to help us walk in faith ourselves. The accountability of a trusted friend can help you stay faithful to the things of your heart.
- **Start.** If you need to, start with a small percent and let it grow with your faith.

**As we give to the God we know, love and follow, we see His love grow and be made known.**

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## Follow spiritual leadership within scriptural limits

*Hebrews 13:17*

*Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.*

## Following Spiritual Leadership makes it possible for the body of Christ to operate.

**Following leadership is important in any group.** God has entrusted us with leaders. Leadership is a godly and noble calling. The leadership style taught and demonstrated by Jesus was that of a servant, the one who consistently and faithfully put aside their own interests to lead others. Leadership is a demanding role and should be honored by those following.

**Godly leadership has the needs and interests of those following in mind.** Godly leaders lead in the directions God wants the group to go. They also are looking out for the best of those following. These leaders carry a big responsibility, there should be no reason to make their job more challenging by working against them. When godly leadership is in place those following will flourish.

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**Principle of Privilege and Responsibility.** Godly leadership is recognized because they have taken their responsibility to lead seriously and God is choosing to use them to lead His people in His ways. The privilege of leadership is forged in trust which is gained through performance over time. To have trustworthy leaders requires people following specific individuals who are paying the price to serve them by leading them to follow Christ's directions.

### Practical suggestions:

- **Accept direction from those leading.** Do not bow your neck to spiritual leaders or you will be fighting against God's direction. We should look for and desire godly leaders to put ourselves under.
- **Be willing to be easily persuaded.** Godly leaders are accountable to God and have your interests in mind
- **When differences occur, yield.** As leaders build trust, followers build unity. When individuals are looking for opportunity to break out from under a leader, they expose not only themselves but the body as a whole. By yielding and submitting to the leader it provides the environment for the body to move in strength together.
- **Godly leadership is always subject to scriptural boundaries.** Allow the Holy Spirit through the power of God's word to bring correction to leadership when necessary.

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