

Spring Cleaning

Spring Cleaning - Clean Your Own Back Porch - April 19th

Introduction

Believers are empowered with two approaches to relationships. We can live in *curse-full* relationships or we can live in *grace-full* relationships. The curse-full relationships are relationships lived out under the curse of sin and death; which is the consequence ushered in by Adam and Eve's decision to sin against God in the garden. When we live under this curse our relationships struggle through a tug-of-war like tension of dominance and control. This is not what God intended and so he made a way through Jesus Christ to restore all that was lost in the garden. By God's example through Jesus, we learn that grace-full relationships *make way* and *give way* providing us with opportunities to live peaceably with others in our lives.

Discussion Questions

1. Has anyone ever told you that *you need to worry about your own back porch*? What was going on that made them say this to you? How did you respond when they told you this?
2. In relationships, have you ever noticed how it's easier to focus on the wrongs of others than it is to focus on our own wrongs? Why do you think this is the case?
3. Please read [Romans 1:20-32](#). Make a note of each of the things that God points out as consequences of those who live in curse-full relationships. When evaluating the relationships in our own lives are any of the consequences being lived out currently in your life? For example: do you struggle with gossiping? What about arguing? How about jealousy or greed?
4. Have you ever said this to a person you were in relationship with: "If you will change your wrong behavior then my void would be filled and I will be happy and content"? Did they change? Did it fill the void you were feeling and did that last or did you find something else that needed to be changed?
5. When we consider the difference between curse-full relationships (relationships lived under the curse of sin and death) verses grace-full relationships (relationships live through and in Jesus Christ), why do you think it is so difficult at times to choose between these two? Obviously the grace-full relationships bring what we are all looking for but why is the choice not that simple?
6. When it comes to relationships, God makes the way through Jesus for all to relate with Him and then allows the rejection of that way to bring forth the inherent consequences in the life of the one who rejects Him. In other words, He gives the person their wish and leaves them to themselves. With His example in mind, what are some areas you can *make way* for others in your life to better relate to you and what are some areas you could *give way* to those who reject you?

Moving Forward

When we live in Grace-Full relationships...We are authentic and true with ourselves....We *make-way* for others to be authentic and true with us...We *give way* to those who reject the way that has been made. This week instead of approaching relationships in a curse-full way that condemns and blames and then attempts to control through guilt and shame; approach them with the idea that it's all up to you and then invite them to consider what they would like to do with your invitation.

Changing Your Mind - Commit this to memory

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.

- [Romans 8:1-2](#) (ESV)