

# BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH MY NON-CHURCHED FRIENDS

The relationship between God and humanity won't happen automatically for two reasons:

- [1] Not everybody knows they need God
- [2] Not everybody wants God in their life. Our mission is looking for those who do!

Romans 5:11 [Paul writing to Christians] – *“Now we rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God--all because of what our Lord Jesus Christ has done in dying for our sins--making us friends of God.”* (Living)

Matthew 22:36-39 – [36] *“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”* [37] *Jesus replied: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’* [38] *This is the first and greatest commandment. [39] And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”* (NIV)

Two challenges with relationships:

First, relationships with God or other people are very fragile and can be damaged easily so they have to be cultivated and nurtured.

Second, most people have never been formally taught how to build good relationships.

2 Corinthians 5:18 – *“God has done all this. He has restored our relationship with him through Christ, and has given us this ministry of restoring relationships.”* (God's Word Translation)

General observation #1 – It's easy to forget that not everyone around us is automatically headed for heaven.

General observation #2 – In many situations, we have to earn the right to share God's Word.

## SIX ACTIONS STEPS IN BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEOPLE WHO DON'T KNOW THE LORD

ACTION STEP #1 – TAKE THE INITIATIVE TO START AND BUILD FRIENDSHIPS AS THE OPPORTUNITY ARISES

Luke 6:31 – *“Do to others as you would have them do to you.”* (NIV)

Key Thought: There are people around whom the Lord wants you to influence.

#### ACTIONS STEP #2 – BE AUTHENTIC, HONEST AND OPEN

2 Corinthians 1:12a – *“We can say with confidence and a clear conscience that we have been honest and sincere in all our dealings.”*  
(New Living)

General Observation: There’s no difference between the believer and the nonbeliever when it comes to having problems. One difference is where we go for inner strength and hope.

#### ACTION STEP #3 – EMPHASIZE COMMON GROUND

1 Corinthians 9:22b – *“...whatever a person is like, I try to find common ground with him so that he will let me tell him about Christ and let Christ save him.”* (Living)

How do you find common ground:

First, listen with your heart more than your ears.

Second, use common ground to establish the friendship.

#### ACTION STEP #4 – DEMONSTRATE GOD’S LOVE

Ephesians 5:2 – *“Live a life filled with love for others, following the example of Christ...”* (New Living)

1 John 3:18 – *“Little children, let us stop just saying we love people; let us really love them, and show it by our actions.”* (Living)

We demonstrate love three way:

[1] People need acceptance.

[2] People need affirmation.

[3] People need practical love.

1 Thessalonians 2:8 – *“Because we loved you, we were happy to share not only God’s Good News with you, but even our own lives. You had become so dear to us!”* (New Century)

## ACTION STEP #5 – ACKNOWLEDGE PEOPLE’S FEELINGS AND FEARS

Romans 15:2 – *“For we must bear the ‘burden’ of being considerate of the doubts and fears of others...”* (Living)

## ACTION STEP #6 – EXPECT GOD TO USE YOU

Matthew 10:19-20 [Jesus to His disciples. ] – *“...do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.”* (NIV)

2 Corinthians 5:9-11, 14 – *“Our only goal is to please God... for we must all stand before Christ to be judged... So we try to help people accept the truth. The love of Christ control us because we know that One died for all.”* (International Children’s Bible)

Prayer:

Father, I thank You for letting me participate in Your great plan of salvation. Thank You for saving me by Your grace when I didn’t deserve it. Use me to help others hear about Your plan. I want You to hear from me two words, “use me.” Use me anytime, anywhere to change the eternal destiny of people willing to submit to you. In Jesus’ name. Amen.