

Discipleship Training Course

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Chapter 19. Covenant relationships

Adapted from a teaching by Apostle Harry Das

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1. Preface: The need for deeper relationships

In one of His last prayers in John 17, Jesus prayed that as He and the Father are one in their relationship, so should we be one, or united in oneness in our relationship. **It is shocking to find that the main offenders to hindering Jesus' prayer are the ministers or the religious heads.** These people, because of spiritual ignorance to Bible teachings on the subject (Hosea 4:6) or shallow, selfish and carnal walks with God display a life more tied to worshipping their denominational positions. They so fear someone not fully honouring them

that they get into a nasty, hard and rocky shell that prevents millions in their congregations from uniting, fellowshiping and flowing with each other.

Jealousy, envy, pride, suspicion, fear, stand-offishness, racism, tribalism, etc. plague relationships in Christ from developing into the beautiful and pleasant ones spoken about in Psalm 133 and in John 13:35 where Jesus said, *“by this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another”* (WEBPB). And again Jesus said, *“that they all may be one, [just] as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be one in Us, so that the world may believe and be convinced that You have sent Me”* (John 17:21, AMPC). This is the main reason why the world cannot believe that God has an only begotten Son and sent Him to redeem them.

The restoration of the five major ministries in 1 Corinthians 12:28. Ephesians 2:20, 3:5, and mainly in Ephesians 4:8-14 where it says that of the seven major purposes of the five major ministries one was to bring us back to the **unity of the faith**. We are beginning to get into the unity of the Spirit, now we need get into the unity of the faith – by displaying much more divine love, etc. When the shepherds get united the congregations around the world will get united. This will help us to flow and grow in Christ into meaningful relationships.

We need several deep measures of being cleaned out and straightened out to get us in line for the help and visitation of God. This will cause us to spiritually see and press quickly in these Last Days into what God wants, so that we can quickly affect this sin-sick and troubled world. To fail to do so would cause us to fail on our purpose on earth and find ourselves **with blood on our hands** (Ezekiel 33:1-9).

A divided Church cannot unite a divided family, nation or world.

A person whose hands, feet and organs, etc. are divided from his body cannot make one step forward much more to accomplish a **world vision**. When our ranks are weak, Satan easily breaks through the relationships at home, church and training schools to destroy our effectiveness and shame Christ. Thus the work of Calvary will have no meaning and will be mocked around the world.

Godly, proven leaders who live what they teach are the quality of servants and sons of God who can help to prepare us to enter covenant relationships which can quickly and powerfully change the nations in which we live. We are His **salt** and **light** to this world. Let us salt our nation. Let us light our nations so that the **darkness** of witchcraft and every form of Satanism, crime, oppression of the poor, immorality, AIDS, drug addiction, racism and tribalism and cold and lukewarm Church life will all change into a **Holy Spirit revival**.

2. Seven levels of relationship

2.1 Introduction

The word **relationship** means ‘a connection or association; an emotional association between two people’ (Concise Oxford English Dictionary).

There are many types of relationships in the world, mainly on the **natural base**, that is relating to the natural family, or to the unsaved, or to the non-regenerate, non-born-again people who do not know of salvation by an inner experience.

In this way, unsaved people can be related in friendship, courtship, marriage, adulterously producing children or aborting them after they are conceived. They may relate to a fellow employee, or in a partnership. Alternatively they may form relationships in business, the military, the political arena, industry, society at large, the criminal sphere, and such like, without a clear-cut involvement of God's stamp or doings to divinely **knit** them together for God's glory.

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The relationship I am seeking to share about is the **Christian type**. In this type, somewhere, God by His Spirit is the author and finisher, or the architect of that relationship. Somewhere it of His birthing or doing and He is not ashamed to put His stamp or blessing on it.

Such relationships are formed when a Christian believer, who is truly spiritually born again, and has grown to love and reverently fear God and has learned to walk or live under the divine control of God's Holy Spirit would seek to acknowledge the Lord in all his ways. By so doing the Lord Jesus can direct his path and can place His divine hand in all that the believer has to do.

This is applicable to relationships, where we do not only relate to works or Christian goals and activities but we begin above all to value our relationship with God through Christ enough to want to keep in unbroken sweet flowing union and communion with Him. It is from here that one begins to value his or her relationship with the family of God and sees that it cost God the sacrifice of His Son for our sins to bring us into a new divine and eternal family. These souls (by faith) were washed in the blood of Christ to make us part of a holy, heavenly family in Christ or in the **body** of Christ. We shall never know most of these spiritual family members until we see each other in heaven. They are from every race, tribe, colour, creed, and denomination.

A small percentage we will know and it is those that I am seeking to place into the seven levels of Christian relationships. Bear in mind that the universal ones are those which, one day, you will meet – the pure-hearted and victorious in heaven; but it is those who you were allowed to meet that will fall in other six levels or categories.

Now, seeing that our association or relationship must be spiritually born of God for His glory and purposes, let us look at the seven levels listed below.

2.2 Level 1: Universal relationships

A universal relationship is the one where we are connected in Spirit like the other levels but we have not seen or known them. In other words, we are generally connected.

Saved people are already related to God and Christ and His Church, or body of believers around the world in some level of love and meek understanding. Imagine that we are to love each other as Christ loved us and gave His life for us. Millions of us who have this general relationship are so shallow that it is shameful to know how little we love, trust, serve, understand, forgive and help each other. Our relationship levels are shallow and weak so that the least amount of pressure and problems usually weaken, break, hurt, or sever them, sometimes for life. Those who foolishly die not forgiving others will never make it heaven but will burn in hell forever. There is an urgent need for pure and selfless, strong and constructive Christian relationships to be watered by love, prayers, kindness and deep interactions in fellowship and Christian service until they mature and culminate into some meaningful form of **covenant relationship** as **workers**. It may well take six steps to get us nearer. We had better start to climb these steps or we may be eternally sorry.

2.3 Level 2: Passing relationships

This is where we relate with those we have met one or more times in a distant way but have never got too close to them in interactions and they never stayed in our activities in God or socially. They simply passed on.

2.4 Level 3: Casual relationships

Casual relationships are those who we somewhat brushed shoulders with or interacted enough to see, to talk to, were introduced to and know each other by face and names,

workplace or home address and so forth. However, we did not feel drawn together to work on God's special projects or activities.

2.5 Level 4: Shallow friendship relationships

At this level you have interacted with each other, just like in the casual relationships, but now it has gone further. You begin to love each other, not just as brethren, but somewhere you feel that you understand each other and can do little things for and with each other and that an early stage of a friendship has begun, but it is not too deep.

2.6 Level 5: Deeper friendship relationships

This is the level that has gone past the shallow or light sense of a relationship. By the drawings, impressions, and knitting of the Holy Spirit between your spirits there is a hidden sense which tells you that this person is not just a Christian family member but someone who also feels drawn to work with you and help you. They will feel a burden to pray for you, to go out their way to serve you and to support you in crisis or sorrow. They will feel happy when you are successful and not jealous, envious, or needing to broadcast their help or kindness to you. You never had to beg or worship them to that inner care or burden to bless you; they do not seem to associate with you or serve, help and sacrifice for you because of any ulterior motives which plague most of the shallow friendships of this life.

The person just feels led, urged, impressed or moved by the Holy Spirit to be in fellowship with you, not because of anything they can get or buy favours but they are moved by pure unselfish love of the Man of Calvary. Before we fell in love with Him or knew how to do so He called us friends and was settled in heart to die for us. You in turn have felt the same way and without any pretence or putting on of a hypocritical set of good and kind behaviour you feel or sense God's favour, His stamp of His peace and the warmth of His approval that this relationship will succeed. You feel it will not be ending in a state of bitter, sour and sad disappointments. This is unlike so many others that looked real but were all built on the basis of sentiments of the **soul** and not the knitting from the **Spirit** of God, like those of David and Jonathan, Ruth and Naomi and Jesus and the apostles.

No relationship of a Christian and godly type can be said to be deep until it is **tested**. Even in Christ, God wants a people who are tried, as by **fire**. God allowed Job to be tried to basically make him more mature so as to be capable of being doubly blessed. He said, "*when He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold*" (Job 23:10b, NKJV). One only knows a relationship in Christ is deep when it has been tried by the winds of adversity and blown like a tree in a hurricane. Finally, as swayed and shaken from its roots that it may be, it has never been uprooted, for it was birthed and founded in the principles of God's word and was watered by the Holy Spirit's anointing through the years of fellowship and Christian service.

The hurricanes of life may leave us rocked and bent like a palm tree but soon afterwards we straighten up remains the same. A deep friendship gets deeper after a storm or a test or a misunderstanding. Christians under such tests find from the source of birthing of that relationship the Christ who can finish what He started when He drew us together for His eternal purpose and not just a human relationship in which one feels a soulish sense of being loved.

When people break apart after a deep friendship they may be left with deep scars and life-long hurts. If so, they must question if the friendship was just a soulish connection but had nothing to do with Christ or God's divine leading in knitting people together for heavy spiritual operations which can help to change the nations of the world.

We may weep, grieve or bleed in one's spiritual heart over a wound from a true friend. But we should draw grace, forgiveness and strength from the source of the birthing of that Christian friendship relationship and the powerful example of Christ Himself and how He

loved Peter who denied Him and all the others who forsook Him. The hurting friend soon begins to find **inner healing** to regroup to a life joined to you by God.

When a relationship was born of the Holy Spirit and not of the flesh, as seen in John 3, it gets back together, sometimes in tears on each other's shoulders only to love each other with a deeper unselfish, godly love. Such a love is never too quick to judge or too loose apart like a trailer from a truck.

Most Christian people may be clear on the subject of Christian relationships but are shallow in God. They are often carrying hurts from their unsaved years of childhood or family life in which they were wounded by friends, foes or family members, or even by the friendships that they developed among church people who themselves have shallow roots in God's grace and Bible teachings. They left scars and hurts on the ones with whom they were in a friendship relationship.

Those who are hurt once again link their hurts that they carry. Many times they are not spiritual enough to know that there are hurts secretly buried in them. Hence, in hurt, they react to a strain in a Christian friendship by dropping something born of God that may still be young and tender (but, as a seed or baby plant, not fully developed). They do not know the difference in the relationship between the old hurts and the new. They cannot distinguish an old non-God-born relationship for the one that is ordained of God.

Even in this level of friendship relationship, although it may have measures of commitments or weak levels of covenants, it may not end up in the covenant type of relationship. This is described in the next level that we shall deal with.

2.7 Level 6: Covenant friendship relationship

This is similar to what was developing in the (somewhat) deep friendship relationship. It differs in that this stage of a relationship in Christ is more developed and settled in the strength of assurances that it is of a godly birthing. It is built deep on Godly principles, tested by trials, soaked by prayers, proven by fruitfulness in Christian service, where many souls were blessed, healed, saved, rededicated, trained or churches or children's works or youth works were built or helped. Hence it can be seen that this deeper form of relationship has born godly fruits and can *prove* itself. It is of God and is not soulish (of the flesh) or of the human ego and its fleshly making. This form should be able to stand up to testings and be kept together by Godly inner strength of character and spiritual understanding.

It is now ripe to culminate such a relationship in a **covenant**. This is not just a light form of commitment or agreement that many times will melt away like butter when it has to stand the heat of the sun or fade like clouds and is blown away with the winds of adversity.

Examples of covenant relationship:

- David and Jonathan
- Ruth and Naomi
- Moses and Joshua
- Joshua and Caleb
- Christ and His apostles

These relationships were meant to stand the test of time and leave blessings and examples for the generations to come.

Usually, after proving the endless blessings resident in and under a joining from the covenant making God of the Bible who blesses covenant relationships, the Christian person must be very slow to rush into making such covenants in our modern day. One reason for me to give this caution is that I have seen even ministers who make these covenants but cannot keep

them because they are undeveloped in the character of Christ. They are boys in God and not men of God. Our God as we see Him in the Bible is a covenant making God. We need to wake up and press into the sonship relationship into which we are destined. He then would be able to entrust or bestow on us the double anointing which He has for the matured sons of the End Times so that they may reap the End Time Harvest of souls.

If this covenant friendship relationship lies with the opposite sex it is dangerous if it is not protected by marriage or by flowing in a team setting of other men and women. One can easily fall into the works of the flesh although with good intentions. Back off and keep a little distance because we have this treasure or spirit operation in a vessel of clay, or a weak physical body, which can give in to temptations. Otherwise, if they are married, work through the person's spouse if it is not a team setting, like Paul's team.

2.8 Level 7: Covenant workers' relationships

The covenant workers relationship is not just for friendship sake but for the work of the Lord's and His eternal Kingdom, although a deep covenant friendship may be involved here. Christ and the work of the harvest field of the world with all its dangers, testings, stresses, strains, ups and downs, needs and plenty, tears and prayers, etc. Yes, Christ and His work must have pre-eminence over friendship and personal pleasure.

You must have the dedication to go on when the covenant Judas or the covenant Demas leave you, although it should never take priority over a marriage covenant. The workers covenant should be buried in God and only be for the glory of God.

The covenant workers' relationship is then classified into three subcategories:

1. Church membership
2. Discipleship
3. Minister-to-minister relationship

The **minister-to-minister relationship** is the greatest among the three, because:

- a. Like others, it is born of God
- b. It is nurtured by the Holy Spirit
- c. It is shaped by the Word
- d. It is confirmed by experience
- e. It is approved by godly men and women
- f. It bears spiritual fruits
- g. It builds God's kingdom, and hence brings God glory

3. Covenants

3.1 Introduction

According to the Bible, a **covenant** is a **divine contract** or **agreement** which, when honoured by both parties and viewed as **sacred**, can bring blessings to many generations.

Abraham's covenant brought blessings to Jesus and the Gentiles for thousands of years.

Covenants can be proven:

1. By adversity
2. By trials
3. By Scriptural bases
4. By correction

5. By discipline
6. By appreciation for correction

The God of the Bible honours God-glorifying covenants between man and God and between man and man.

The seven major covenants in the Bible:

1. The Edenic covenant
2. The Adamic covenant
3. The Noahic covenant
4. The Abrahamic covenant
5. The Mosaic covenant
6. The Davidic covenant
7. The New Testament covenant of Jesus and His apostles

3.2 Biblical covenants honoured by God

Between leaders and people:

- Joshua (Joshua 24:1-8)
- Jehoida (2 Kings 11:17)
- Hezekiah (2 Kings 29:10)
- Josiah (2 Kings 23:3)
- Ezra (Ezra 10:3)

Between God and man:

- Adam (Genesis 2:16-17)
- Noah (Genesis 9:1-17)
- Abraham (Genesis 15:1-8)
- Isaac (Genesis 26:3-5)
- Jacob (Genesis 28:13-22)
- Israel (Exodus 19:1-5)
- Levi (Malachi 2:4-9)
- Phineas (Numbers 25:11-13)
- David (Psalm 89:28,34)

Between man and man:

- Abraham and Abimelech (Genesis 21:27-30)
- David and elders (1 Samuel 5:13)
- Ahab and Ben-Hadad (1 Kings 20:34)
- David and Jonathan (1 Samuel 18:3) – effects seen with 1 Samuel 20:8, 42
- Moses and Joshua (Deuteronomy 31:7-8)
- Elijah and Elisha (2 Kings 2:9-10)
- Joshua and Caleb (Joshua 14:10-15)
- Jesus and Apostles (Matthew 26:27-28)

- Paul and Silas (Acts 15:40)
- Paul and Timothy (Acts 16:1-3)

Between a woman and men:

- Rahab and spies (Joshua 2:8-14) – effect seen in Joshua 6:22-23

Between a woman and a woman:

- Ruth and Naomi:

*Then Naomi said, "Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; turn back and follow your sister-in-law." But Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave you or to turn back from following you; **for where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people will be my people, and your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD do the same to me [as He has done to you], and more also, if anything but death separates me from you.**"*

Ruth 1:15-17 (AMP)

Covenants are designed for:

- Mutual protection (Genesis 31:50-52)
- Securing peace (Joshua 9:15,21)
- Sealing a **friendship** (1 Samuel 18:3)
- Promoting commerce (1 Kings 5:6-11)

Requirements of Covenants:

- Witnesses (Genesis 23:16-18)
- Confirmation by an oath (Genesis 21:23-31)
- Specification in words (1 Samuel 11:1-2)
- Written and sealed (Nehemiah 9:38)

4. Attributes of a good father

The father and son relationship in Christ should have some measure of covenant bonding for it to bring blessings to others effectively. The image and character of a **father** speaks of the following character traits and attributes that we see in God our Heavenly Father:

1. **Maturity:** *Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; yet in evil be infants, but in your thinking be mature.* (1 Corinthians 14:20, NASB1995).
2. **Age:** *When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways* (1 Corinthians 13:11, ESVUK).
3. **Reproductiveness:** *You didn't choose me, but I chose you and appointed you, that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain* (John 15:16a, WEBPB).
4. **Creativeness:** *God said, "Let there be light," and there was light* (Genesis 1:3, WEBPB). See also Exodus 28:3, 31:3-6, 35:25-26, 35.
5. **Author of visions:** *Where there is no vision [no redemptive revelation of God], the people perish* (Proverbs 29:18a, AMPC).
6. **Author of ideas:** see Proverbs 20:18, 24:2-4
7. **Author of purpose:** *He made known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure* (Ephesians 1:9a, AMP). See also Daniel 1:18, Acts 11:22-23.
8. **Author of Love (Lover):** loves and cares – Ephesians 5:28-29

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9. **Educator (teacher):** Genesis 18:19, Deuteronomy 6:7, Isaiah 28:9
10. **Provider:** *So Abraham named that place The LORD Will Provide. And it is said to this day, "On the mountain of the Lord it will be seen and provided"* (Genesis 22:14, AMP). See also 2 Corinthians 12:14, 1 Thessalonians 5:8.
11. **Pattern setter:** 2 Chronicles 17:3, 2 Timothy 1:5, 1 Peter 5:3
12. **Proves by example:** *Before they are appointed as deacons, let them be closely examined. If they pass the test, then let them serve as deacons* (1 Timothy 3:10, NLT). See also Ephesians 3:17, 1 Peter 5:3.
13. **Studies his family:** Proverbs 24:3-4, 1 Peter 3:7
14. **Relates well with his family:** Luke 11:13, 1 Peter 3:8
15. **Understands his family:** *Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers* (1 Peter 3:7, NIVUK). See also Proverbs 24:3-4.
16. **Communicates to his family:** Luke 11:13, 1 Peter 3:7.
17. **Shows patience with his family:** 1 Corinthians 13:4, Colossians 3:19
18. **Shows graciousness to his family:** 1 Corinthians 13:4, 1 Peter 3:8
19. **Shows gentleness to his family:** Ephesians 4:32, 1 Peter 3:8
20. **Shows longsuffering to his family:** 1 Corinthians 13:4, Colossians 3:21
21. **Shows forgiveness to his family:** Ephesians 4:32, 1 Peter 3:7
22. **Administers discipline to his family:** Proverbs 23:13-14, 1 Timothy 3:4
23. **Chastens his family:** Deuteronomy 8:5, Proverbs 19:18
24. **Lives for (and labours for) his family:** Luke 15:31, Ephesians 5:25
25. **Suffers for his family:** 1 Corinthians 13:4, Ephesians 5:25
26. **Covers his family and bears their shame:** Luke 15:23 and 1 Corinthians 11:3
27. **Helps his family members to fulfil their divine destiny:** Genesis 49:1-2
28. **Never competes with his family members, but complements them in their gifting, aims and aspirations:** 1 Corinthians 13:4, Ephesians 4:6
29. **Lays down his life for his family:** Ephesians 5:25
30. **Like Jesus, he would have built himself, with all his virtues, into them to fulfil their destiny:** *Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it* (Proverbs 22:6, NHEB). The same principles are involved when training a disciple or a young minister.

In most organisations there is a great need for a deep repentance between fathers and sons.

5. Brothers

5.1 Characteristics of a brother

When relating to each other, their love is normally not developed as that of a father. It is usually weaker, shallow, less enduring and sometimes infected with:

- a. Competitiveness

- b. Envy
- c. Jealousy
- d. Fear of his brothers getting ahead of him
- e. Suspicion
- f. Selfishness
- g. The fulfilment of his own dreams and ambitions
- h. 'Chips on his shoulder' – for what has happened through years, even at childhood

A leader or a pastor should not lead except he has fatherly heart!

5.2 Lessons from the twelve sons of Jacob

Scripture reference: Genesis chapter 37, chapters 42 to 45 and 50:15-21.

- 1. Joseph's dream gave him much joy
- 2. Joseph's sharing gave him much sorrow
- 3. Joseph's brothers were envious, jealous, fearing he would get ahead of them. They wanted him to die or to be murdered except for one loving brother who said, 'take him out and sell him to strangers'.
- 4. Their evil plans set him on the right way for training to be the greatest, for leadership and for rulership
- 5. Your brothers' schools are the hardest learning institution. Most students never graduate because of their hurts, wounds, anger, and unforgiveness that kill all God's deposits for their victorious lives.

Some leaders give young ministers a difficult time to rise up, to the point, at times, of crushing all their zeal for God and turning them away into the world or Christian forms of service which are far below their full potentials. Their youthful faultiness is not normally overlooked by patience and prayers with the agape love that believes all things, hopes all things and endures all things. Thus many leaders display a harsh big brother's attitude.

Maybe those leaders do not have fatherly hearts.

6. Sons

6.1 Striving to be a servant-son as well as a servant of God

Scripture reference: Luke 15:11-32.

Lessons from the father, prodigal son and the son at home:

- a. One was lost at home. He appeared so well behaved and righteous, only to find that he could not love or see his brother as his own. He could also not see his inheritance, etc.
- b. One was lost away from home. After the pig pen experience born out of his impetuous choices he returned home deeply repenting.
- c. Fathers should not go hunting for their prodigal sons, only for the son (sheep) that went astray.

Yet he loves and prays for his wayward and rebellious son

Jesus was a pattern son: a servant son, who lived to do the Father's will and brought the Father pleasure.

You are worthy, our Lord and God,

*to receive glory and honour and power,
for You created all things,
and by Your will they were created
and have their being.*

Revelation 4:11 (NIVUK)

Jesus' final statement before His death was, "*it is finished*" (John 19:30b, WEBPB).

6.2 Sons relating to spiritual fathers

Sons relate to:

- His **person** – as a father and head of the family
- His **personality** – as one who acts, reacts and is a little different to others, which places a lot of responsibility on him
- His **placement** – as a father over his family is mostly neglected or abused if he does not personally know Christ and bears the beautiful character of the Master. Some, with brutish authority, have damaged the concept or vision the child is to have toward their father. Neglect or harshness from non-spiritual fathers has caused many children to dislike parental relationships and turn away from home. Christian young people should learn how to forgive their parents and honour them so that God can bless them and lengthen their lives (Ephesians 6:1-3). This type of behaviour can be seen when ministers translate into their spiritual lives ways of handling their young sons in the gospel which are translated from their unsaved lives. They behave in such abrupt and rough ways, or they themselves, who were never trained as disciples or broken in, cannot lovingly train the sons under them.
- His **authority** – as given by God over his family

Administering this authority:

- Which is **designated authority**
- Which is **God-given** and revealed by the Holy Spirit
- Which is **God-directed**
- Which is **Word-constructed** or filled with divine principles such as love, patience, etc. (Galatians 5:22) with lots of wisdom, knowledge and understanding (Proverbs 24:3-4). The Bible shows us how to balance our authority and leave a place for God to work.

The authority of a father is:

1. Tempered by experience
2. Tempered by grace and love
3. Tempered by knowledge
4. Tempered by understanding
5. Tempered by wisdom
6. Tempered by counsel
7. Tempered by anointing

God is the essence of authority.

Sons relating to authority:

- With respect, reverence, obedience and appreciation

- By submission to those who rule over them (Hebrews 13:17)
- Like every natural seed, both natural and spiritual fathers should **bring forth sons after their kind**. It was Paul in 1 Corinthians 4:15 who proved that in Church work that most leaders, disciples relate as instructors and do not raise sons.

7. Nations

7. 1 The Gentile nations and Divine covenants

As we see from this teaching on relationships there are many other kinds and levels of relationship addressing the covenant level of relationship. We who are of the Gentile nations are finding that we need many years or have, in the past, taken many years to get the insight of what covenants are all about. We especially need to recognise the importance of godly covenants and how they are applicable to us today in our Christian lives. We also need to appreciate how they have worked for those of a Hebrew background, who for thousands of years were raised under and taught about covenants of godly sort.

Since the call of Abraham out of idolatry the whole existence of Israel has been based on the covenant with him. Thousands of years of prophecies have spelt out how their covenant relationship will unfold with perfect accuracy. We are seeing as we live in these Last Days of fulfilment how the Jews were scattered and suffered (but were later re-gathered to Jerusalem) for breaking their covenant with God. They did not purely represent Him among the heathen nations of the world and their priests rejected the Messiah by planning His death and saying *“let His blood be on us and our children”* (Matthew 27:25b, AMPC). They were blinded for a while and cut off for a while. Soon, when all the nations reject Israel and seek to wipe her off the face of the earth, Jesus will return to fight for His covenant people who are His natural seed (sons of Abraham).

After thousands of years, the covenant of Abraham still holds, although His children have gone through much suffering. This is because they have not lived up to their side of their covenant before God. As our spiritual eyes are being opened to see and understand holy covenants with God and man may we maturely and wisely prepare ourselves to move into this direction with clear Biblical teachings.

7.2 A divided church cannot unite a divided nation

The Apostle Paul saw the Christian Church as a **body** with many organs or parts that have to flow and function in harmony for its overall good. He warns that there should be no schisms or divisions.

Jesus taught that a house divided against itself cannot stand, as much as to say:

- A **family** divided against itself cannot stand
- An **army** divided against itself cannot stand
- A **government** divided against itself cannot stand
- A **business** divided against itself cannot stand
- A **friendship** divided against itself cannot stand

The world or a nation is waiting to see some thing, or example, or idea, or principle, or order or workable truth better than what they currently have.

Jesus teaches and expects us to be **His Body** – the Church that shall be the ones to reach the World with His teachings. We are meant to bring the answers to Mankind: to do that He describes us metaphorically as the **salt** and **light** of the World. He expects us to **salt** the people of the World and bring His **light** of truth to them:

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- Salt **adds taste** to tasteless food
- Salt **preserves** meats, etc. from easily spoiling
- Salt prevents cuts from quickly getting infected like a form of **antibiotic**

So, in a like manner, He wishes us to affect the World around us, including our homes, churches and work mates, etc.

As **light** He expects us to let His light of love, truth, mercy and grace to shine out of our lives, our teachings, our preaching and our examples of good deeds. Thus the World can see His good deeds in us and be drawn to Him and to the Kingdom of Heaven.

Jesus said light is not to be hidden under a bushel, or something that can cover it and not cause it to shine like the stars. Light has such power that its beauty and glow can be seen from thousands of miles away. He knows that it is a simple way to penetrate the hearts of lost souls that are in the deep darkness of wrong beliefs, concepts, understandings and the power of sinful habits and desires. Wrong, evil and demonic beliefs can be seen not as the way of life but the way of destruction in the broad way, or the way to eternal and burning Hell.

If we are not casting **light** we are casting shadows which make us part of this dark and evil world. We are told to be in the world but not of the world. We are also told to 'love not the world and the things of the world for those who love the world, the love of the Father is not in them'. We also must be unspotted from the world or its worldliness.

In our present day, a great part of the Church is weak, divided and carnal or in a weak baby stage of life. Why is this? If we know the reasons then we can be helped to come out of our defeated state to reach a sin-sick and dying World. We shall be lights that are shining and salt that has not lost its savour or flavouring power.

We see most parts of the universal Church are weak. This is sometimes because:

1. The converts were spiritually born weak by weakly anointed messengers with weak messages
2. We grew up in a church with a cold or lukewarm environment
3. The believers were not taught to practice heavy and fervent prayers which can prevail under hardships and demonic attacks
4. We do not practice periodical fastings
5. We do not fellowship with the true-hearted believers who live in victory from day to day
6. We do not prayerfully and regularly study the Word of God
7. We do not sit under spiritual and anointed ministers
8. We do not daily check our hearts for envy, jealousy, greed, lust, anger, unforgiveness, etc. which can block our spiritual pipelines, preventing revelation and fresh life from flowing in us from the True Vine, Christ Jesus
9. We have little faith so we cannot venture to witness or attempt things for God (most times we are powerless because we have an inconsistent walk with God)
10. We find it extremely hard to love people, brethren, enemies or to forgive those who have hurt us

We need to pray that God may raise up spiritual fathers who will in turn raise up many spiritual sons after their own kind.

These sons will in turn affect the nations of the earth as salt and light.

8. General offences between workers in Christ

8.1 Between a worker and a leader

1. Respect for leadership lacking
2. Communication lacking
3. Love lacking
4. Trust and confidence lacking
5. Appreciation for sacrifice lacking

8.2 Between fellow workers

1. Lack of love for each other
2. Trying to outdo or compete with each other
3. Impatience with each other
4. Not having a servant's concept
5. Hiding hearts from each other
6. Not respecting each others rights
7. Not praying for each other
8. Not careful to constantly eat at the other's table
9. Not working closely by sharing the blessing and problems
10. Not communicating properly to maintain the cohesion
11. Not covering each other's faults in love
12. Not being helpful by correcting you brother/sister in their personal faults

9. How to correct an offence

1. Go to your brother, if he has committed an offence
2. Take two witnesses
3. Tell it to the Church if he does not take correction (Matthew 18:15-17)
4. Make restitution if you have falsely taken something or you if have carelessly destroyed another person's property
5. Go and reconcile with you brother if he is angry with you, although you may feel that you are in the right
6. Repent to the person verbally, if it is the person you have hurt
7. Repent to the group verbally if it is a group that you have offended
8. Write an apology without stating blame on others
9. Prove that the correction is accepted by behaving lovingly and wisely