



What are things that humans need to successfully live? (Air, water, food, shelter, etc.)

When you talk about the things that are necessary for humans to live, one of the things that doesn't often come to mind is that humans need interaction with one another. You need to interact with other people. I'm not saying that if you go a day without talking to people, you'll die. But, if you have lots of days without interaction, you'll begin to experience some bad things in your life: depression, loneliness, anxiety.

Have you ever seen a movie or show about prison life? In those movies, people are sometimes punished by being sent to solitary confinement. Their punishment is literally lack of interaction. One of the worst punishments they can give is simply not letting the prisoner interact with other people.

Some of you might be thinking, "Well, not me! I like being alone. I like the quiet. I'm an introvert." I'm not talking about being an introvert here. I'm an introvert, and there are definitely times when, in order to recharge or relax, I just need to be alone. But even introverts need interaction with people. They can't survive with no interaction.

You can see this human need for relationships displayed so clearly in babies. Have you ever taken a human growth class that talks about babies? Babies who don't get proper love and attention at an early age grow up with many social and psychological problems: self-destructive behaviors, poor impulse control, cruelty to others, habitual lying, difficulty with developing relationships, etc. Children who don't get the love and attention they need at an early age have the potential for lots of problems.

Why is that? Why is it that we need interaction? Why is it so vital to life? Because God designed us that way. He made us to need relationships. He designed us to need each other!

We sometimes like to think that we can do it on our own or be "self-made" or that we don't need anybody else's help. These are all lies. You might be

able to make it on your own for short periods of time, but you were made to need other human beings.

Once you accept that you need relationships, your life can be a lot better because you'll realize you need to try to have **good** relationships. All through this series, called *Relate*, we're going to see how to have good, healthy, God-honoring relationships.

Let's pray before we dive in.

Relationships make up a lot of your day. How much time per day do you think is spent in relationship with other people? Think through a regular day. For a typical teenager ...

You wake up and interact with family members. Then, you interact with friends or other students on the bus on the way to school. Then, you go throughout the day at school interacting with teachers, friends, other students, administrators, hall monitors. Then, you go to after-school activities where you interact with teammates, band mates, coaches, adult sponsors, etc.

Then, you go home and see your family throughout the night. Maybe you go out to dinner or go to the store and interact with the waiter or store employee. Most likely, at some point during the night, you are on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or Pinterest, or chatting online, or playing video games online where you interact with other people. Throughout all of that, you're talking and texting on your phone. Teens text an average of 167 texts a day.

When you think about it like that, a huge percentage of your day is spent in relationships, interacting with other people.

Thinking back over that schedule, how many different kinds of relationships did we list there? How many different kinds of relationships do you have?

Parents, siblings, friends, acquaintances, people you don't like, teachers, teammates, classmates, school admins, other Christians, non-Christians, strangers, people online that you've never met in person.

So, we see that relationships are very important, because they’re such a huge part of your life.

And that’s OK, because we see in the Bible that God planned for us to need relationships. He specifically made us to need them.

Genesis 2:4, 7–8, 15

4 This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, when the Lord God made the earth and the heavens ...

7 Then the Lord God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. 8 Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed ...

15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

So, God makes the first man. He purposefully creates the first man. Man being made was no accident. He put the man in the garden to take care of it. Man was put in charge of the Earth. God could have stopped there. He could have looked at all that He had done and said, “It’s good. Let’s leave it.”

But He doesn’t do that. In fact, we see the first time that something is called “not good.”

Do you remember that God was creating everything, and after every day of creation, He would look at what He made and declare that it was good?

Day one: God creates the heavens and the Earth and light. In verse 5, He says it’s good. Well, here we get the first time He looks at what He made and says something is “not good.”

Genesis 2:18

The Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”

So, what is the first thing that God says is “not good”? For people to be alone. We were NOT made to be alone. Loneliness was not part of the plan. So God decides to make a helper suitable for him.

Genesis 2:19–20

19 Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. 20 So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals.

So, God brings all the animals before Adam and Adam names them all, but at the end of all of that, no helper is found that is suitable.

Maybe it’s just me, but every time I read the account of Adam naming the animals, it brings a lot of questions to my mind. What was the original name of the animals, since they didn’t speak English back then? And how did Adam come up with some of the names? I mean, “anteater” makes sense, but what about “platypus”? Just questions I’ll ask when I get to Heaven.

But back to the point ... none of the animals is a suitable helper.

Genesis 2:21–23

21 So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. 22 Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

23 The man said, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of man.”

So, God makes another human being. Specifically, He makes a woman. From this moment on, humankind will be in relationship with one another. And, this is not only about a man and a woman romantically (although that is an important lesson here), but God gave woman the ability to reproduce children, so He designed them to be in relationship with their children. So, we see in this story of the creation of the world that God also created family relationships.

If God designed us that way, He probably has a plan for us to live in family and relationships with one another. And we see that’s true because the Bible is filled with instructions about how to wisely, correctly, and lovingly interact with others.

For the next five weeks, during this series called *Relate*, we’re going to be looking at relationships and God’s design for relationships in the family.

Because if God designed us for relationships, He probably has a plan for our relationships and wants us to live out our relationships in a way that honors Him.

Over the next week, I want you to prepare to talk about the different relationships in your life by examining your relationships. Ask yourself: “Of all the relationships I have, which do I think is the healthiest? Why do I think it’s the healthiest? The least healthy? Which relationship do I spend the most time on? For the relationship that I think is the least healthy, what would I have to do to make it more healthy?”

Examine your own life, and pray for God to reveal to you what He thinks about your relationships. Then, come back next week ready to talk about having healthy, God-honoring relationships.

Let’s pray.