
Following Jesus -- Course B

Instructions:

Please take all courses in order as listed on our home page (the computer will ask!). If you have not done all the lessons of previous courses, please [click here to go to the beginning](#).

If you have not already done so, save this lesson to your computer using the "save" feature of your browser or PDF reader. Then print out the lesson (or at least open it in your browser or PDF reader **offline** – not on the Internet). Read the lesson and **study in your Bible the passages indicated >>> Scripture <<<**. Following each passage, study each question that has a number enclosed in asterisks (*1*, *2*, etc.), and **write down your answers on paper**. Some questions include more than one number because they have more than one blank to fill in. ("Think" questions should be carefully considered for your own benefit, but your answers will not be submitted to us.) Please take your time, study each passage carefully, answer the questions honestly, and consider the applications to your own life (John 12:48; 2 Tim. 2:15).

When you have studied the whole lesson and written down answers to all the indicated questions, return to the menu for this course on our web site at www.BibleStudyLessons.com and click on the link for the **answer quiz** for this lesson (or simply click on the link at the end of this lesson). Follow the directions to submit your answers and receive your grade. You will then be given an opportunity to see the correct answers to the questions. Please save this lesson and the correct answers for future reference.

Then move on to the next lesson or the next course in order. **Please study all lessons in all courses in order as listed in the menus on our web site.**

Thank you for your interest, and God bless your study of His word.

Other Human Relationships

Following Jesus, Course B, Lesson 2

Introduction:

Each person has relationships that originate, not because he is a Christian, but simply because he is a human being. Examples include the family, civil government, business relationships, etc. In our society these relationships are frequently troubled, so we should appreciate any means for improving them.

The purpose of this lesson is to examine the Bible teaching regarding human relationships other than the family. Most of these relationships were ordained by God, and since He is all-wise, His word offers the best instruction for how to treat other people in these relations.

The basic principle regulating all human relations is love.

Matthew 22:39 – The second-greatest command is to love your neighbor as yourself (cf. 1 Cor. 13:4–7).

Matthew 7:12 – Do to others as you would have them do to you.
1 John 3:16–18 – Love requires that we **do** what is best for others
Romans 13:8–10 – Never harm others to please self.

Biblical love motivates us to obey all God's commands with sincere concern for what is best for God and man (John 14:15; 1 John 5:2,3; 2:3–6). Love does not mean that we simply do what we think is best. Instead, we let God's word tell us what is best.

I. Civil Government

Civil governments face major turmoil. Often innocent people are penalized or treated unfairly while criminals escape punishment. How should a Christian act toward government in times like this?

A. Christians Should Obey the Laws.

Some people justify disobeying government when laws are unfair and officials are corrupt.

>>> Please read Romans 13:1–5. <<<

1 How should we act toward governing authorities? (a) rebel, (b) submit, (c) join a revolution, (d) assassinate them, (e) all the preceding. Answer: _____.

Think: What does it mean to obey "for conscience' sake" (v5)?

>>> Please read 1 Peter 2:13,14. <<<

2,3 Why do governments exist? Answer: They should punish _____ and praise _____.

4 How many laws must we obey? (a) all, (b) none, (c) most, (d) only the ones we consider to be fair and reasonable. Answer: _____.

Think: Does this apply to income tax laws? Traffic laws? Other laws we consider to be unreasonable?

>>> Please read Acts 5:29. <<<

5 In what circumstances may we disobey civil law? Answer: We disobey rulers only when necessary in order to obey _____.

Note: First-century rulers were often corrupt and unjust. Often Christians were mistreated, but this did not justify disobedience. Laws could be disobeyed only when necessary in order to obey God.

[See also Titus 3:1; Dan. 3:1–29; 6:1–24.]

B. Christians Should Pay Their Taxes.

>>> Please read Matthew 22:17–21. <<<

6,7 When asked about paying tribute, how did Jesus respond? Answer: Give to Caesar what is _____, and to God what is _____.

Some people cheat on taxes or even refuse to pay, sometimes on grounds that the government is corrupt. But the Roman government was corrupt and hated by Jews, yet Jesus still taught His disciples to pay their taxes. We must return good for evil, not evil for evil (Rom. 12:17–21).

[See also Rom. 13:6,7; Matt. 17:24–27.]

C. Christians May Rebuke Sin in Government and May Appeal to Higher Authorities.

Though Christians must obey all laws except those requiring them to sin, yet this does not mean they passively accept mistreatment without recourse, never telling rulers when they are wrong.

Bible examples in which God's people rebuked rulers for sin.

Many Scriptures teach Christians to rebuke sin, wherever it occurs (Rev. 3:19; Eph. 5:11; 2 Tim. 4:2–4). This includes rebuking sinful rulers.

>>> Please read Matthew 14:1–4. <<<

8 Why did John the Baptist rebuke King Herod? Answer: Herod took his brother Philip's _____.

>>> Please read Acts 24:25. <<<

9 Paul reasoned with Felix about what? (a) righteousness, (b) self-control (temperance), (c) judgment to come, (d) all the preceding. Answer: _____.

Think: Should Christians speak out when rulers permit or promote immoral conduct such as abortion, homosexuality, pornography, divorce, and gambling? [Cf. 1 Kings 13:1–5; Dan. 4:1–37; 2 Sam. 12:1–15.]

This does not mean churches, as such, should endorse candidates or support political campaigns. And although people of God in the Bible protested immoral laws and evil conduct by rulers, yet they did not participate in violent revolutions nor try to assassinate the rulers. They obeyed the laws except when the laws required them to disobey God.

Bible examples in which God's people used their rights as citizens to seek protection from mistreatment.

>>> Please read Acts 22:24–29. <<<

10 How did Paul avoid being beaten by the Roman authorities? Answer: Paul appealed to his rights as a _____ citizen.

>>> Please read Acts 25:10–12. <<<

11 To whom did Paul appeal for justice? Answer: He appealed his case to _____.

While Christians must obey law, they may use their rights as citizens to seek protection by the government or to appeal decisions to higher authorities. [Acts 16:35–40; 23:12–33; Esther 7:1–6]

D. Christians Should Pray for Rulers.

>>> Please read 1 Timothy 2:1,2. <<<

12 What should we do for rulers? Answer: We should make _____ for kings and all in authority.

One of the strongest forces a Christian has for the good of his country is the power of prayer. We should pray that government will allow us to serve God in peace, not hindering our spiritual service.

II. Business Relationships

Serious problems exist in business. Employers sometimes underpay employees or treat them unfairly. And employees often neglect their work or even steal from the company. Some companies are dishonest, misrepresenting their product or charging for work not done.

How should Christians act in such a business environment?

A. Christians Should Work Diligently and Obey Their Supervisors.

>>> Please read Ephesians 6:5–8; Titus 2:9,10. <<<

13 How should servants serve those they work for? (a) negligently, (b) indifferently, (c) as serving the Lord, (d) rebelliously. Answer: _____.

14 How should servants not act? (a) don't answer back, (b) don't steal, (c) don't slack off when unsupervised, (d) all the preceding. Answer: _____.

Think: If our employer treats us poorly, are we justified in being lazy or rebellious (1 Peter 2:18)?

Employees should work as diligently when not being watched as they do when being watched, because they are really working for God Who always watches. Diligent workers may be rewarded by their employers; but even if not, they will be rewarded by God.

>>> Please read 2 Thessalonians 3:10. <<<

15 What should happen to one who will not work? Answer: One who will not work should not _____.

Businesses should not pay people who refuse to work, unions should not defend them, and no one should provide for them.

Are you diligent on your job, working as for the Lord?

[Ephesians 4:28; Colossians 3:22–4:1; 1 Thessalonians 4:11,12; 1 Timothy 6:1,2; 5:8; Luke 3:12–14; Matthew 20:1–16]

B. Christians should treat their employees fairly.

Some companies and supervisors are selfish or so profit conscious that they are unkind or unfair to their employees.

>>> Please read Colossians 4:1. <<<

16 How should masters treat those who work for them? Answer: Give them what is _____.

>>> Please read James 5:1,4. <<<

17 How did these rich people mistreat their workers? Answer: They fraudulently kept back their _____.

[Jer. 22:13; Eph. 6:9]

C. Christians Should Pay Their Debts.

People often borrow money or property or buy a product on payments, but then they refuse to return the item or to repay the loan.

>>> Please read Psalm 37:21. <<<

18 Who is wicked according to this verse? Answer: We are wicked if we borrow and then do not _____.

>>> Please read Romans 13:7,8. <<<

19 What should we render to others? (a) nothing, (b) everything, (c) that which is due them, (d) all the preceding. Answer: _____.

Note: The Bible does not absolutely forbid borrowing or lending. It does, however, command us to repay our debts on time. [Luke 11:5–8; Exodus 22:14; James 5:12; Romans 1:31,32]

D. Christians Should Deal Honestly in All Financial Matters.

>>> Please read 2 Corinthians 8:20,21. <<<

20,21 In whose eyes should we be honest? Answer: Be honest in the eyes of _____ and of _____.

>>> Please read Deuteronomy 25:13–16. <<<

22 How does God view unjust dealings? Answer: Those who cheat others are an _____ to God.

Often people use unfair measures or keep inaccurate records so as to cheat others. Some deceive customers about the quality or abilities of their product. All such dishonesty violates God's word.

The proper rule in all business dealing is to treat others as you yourself would want to be treated (Matt. 7:12).

[Rom. 12:17; 1 Peter 3:15,16; Luke 3:12–14; Prov. 11:1; 19:22]

III. Relationships to Other Races and Nationalities

Racial conflicts are another concern in society. Alienation between people of different races and nationalities has existed throughout history, including in Bible times.

We can expect God's word to guide us in dealing with proper relations of races and nationalities. What does it teach?

A. People of All Races Should Be One in Christ.

Under the Old Testament, Jews were God's special nation. They separated themselves religiously and socially from Gentiles. When the gospel came into effect, some Jewish Christians still believed they should not preach to Gentiles nor associate with them.

>>> Please read Acts 10:28,34,35; 11:17,18. <<<

23,24 What did Peter learn about those whom God accepts? Answer: God accepts all who _____ and _____ righteousness.

>>> Please read Matthew 28:19. <<<

25 To whom should we preach the gospel? (a) all nations, (b) Jews only (c) white Americans only, (d) all the preceding. Answer: _____.

>>> Please read Revelation 5:9. <<<

26 Whom does Jesus redeem? People of every (a) tribe, (b) tongue, (c) people, (d) nation, (e) all of the preceding. Answer: _____.

Think: If people from all these groups will be saved by Jesus, will they all be in heaven? If we are going to live forever with them in heaven, why should we refuse to worship with them on earth?

>>> Please read Galatians 3:28. <<<

27 Who should be one in Christ? (a) Jew and Greek, (b) slave and free, (c) male and female, (d) all the preceding. Answer: _____.

People of all races and nations need the gospel. It is our duty to take it to them. When they are converted, we are all one in Christ and ought to work together in unity in the local church, even as first-century Jews and Gentiles were taught to do. To refuse or object is to oppose God's plan.

[Rom. 10:12,13; Matt. 28:18,19; Eph. 2:11–18; 1 Tim. 2:4; Tit. 2:11; 2 Peter 3:9; Rom. 1:16; 2:6–11; Acts 15:9,11]

B. Christians Should Be Hospitable and Helpful to People of All Races.

Some passages

>>> Please read Genesis 1:26,27. <<<

28 In whose image was man created? Answer: People are created in the image of _____.

Think: People of all races and nationalities are descendants of Adam, therefore all are in God's image. We can all be His spiritual children. What right do we have to refuse to treat one another with decency and respect?

>>> Please read Luke 10:25–37. <<<

29,30 When the Samaritan helped the man in need, what principle did this illustrate? Answer: You shall love your _____ as _____.

Note that Samaritans and Jews were generally enemies, but Jesus showed that everyone is your neighbor, regardless of race or nation. We ought to be kind and helpful to all people who have a genuine need.

>>> Please read Galatians 2:11–14. <<<

31 What did Peter do that led Paul to rebuke him? Answer: Peter refused to eat with _____.

When we refuse to be hospitable or show common courtesy to people, because of race or nationality, we are "not straightforward about the truth of the gospel" and are "to be blamed."

[John 4:9; Acts 6:1–6; 1 Tim. 5:20,21; Gal. 2:5,6; James 2:1–13]

Some conclusions

Biblical love is violated whenever we treat any people with cruelty, unkindness, or mockery because of their race or nationality. Instead we should show care and kindness to all people.

Think: Does this make it right to mistreat someone simply because he does **not** belong to a minority group? Should minority groups be favored to the harm of majority groups? Is respect of persons justified in either direction?

Note: The New Testament church lived in an age of alienation between races as great as any that exists today, yet Christians never rioted, looted, stole or destroyed the property of others, or disobeyed civil law in the name of "civil rights." Even if they felt they had been mistreated, they were taught not to return evil for evil. Two wrongs do not make a right (Rom. 12:17–21).

Christians today should want people of all nations to be saved. So we should teach them, be kind to them, and willingly work and worship side by side with them in Jesus' church. We should preach the gospel and change the hearts of men so they will want to treat others right.

Conclusion

Christians should worship God, study His word, teach the gospel, and avoid immorality. But being a Christian is not just a matter of acting properly toward God, nor just a matter of living a morally upright life. No person can be right with God unless he is also treating other people right. As a result, faithful Christians will be the very best of family members, citizens, employees or employers, and members of society.

Personal application questions:

(These questions are for you to ponder. Your answers will help us understand your thinking, however they will not affect your "score.")

32 Under what circumstances would you disobey civil law? _____

33 If Jesus were your supervisor, would He be pleased with you? _____

34 How do you treat people of other races and nationalities? _____

When you have carefully studied this lesson and written down answers to all the questions, [click on this link to submit your answers.](#)

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