



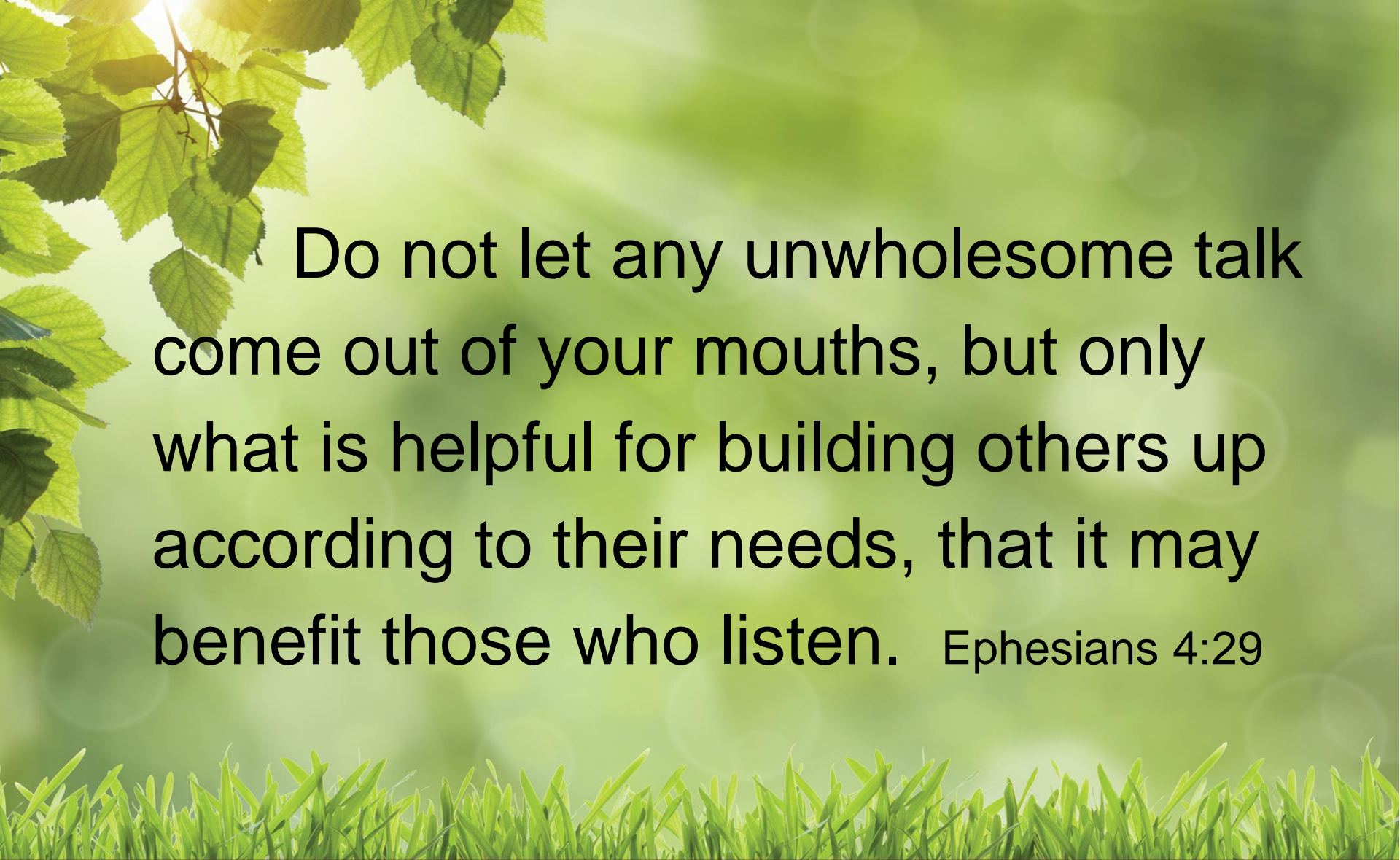
Bible Study Discussion

2013 -2014

Ephesians 5:21-6:9

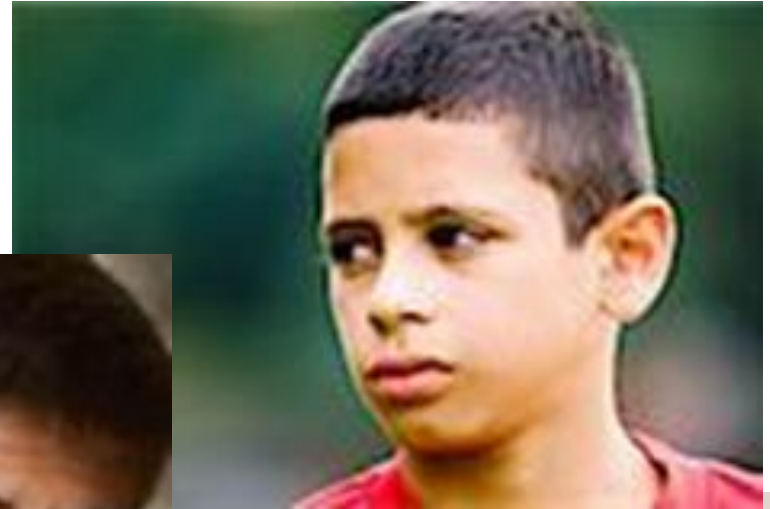


Lesson 8  **Gift of Healthy Relationships**



Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. Ephesians 4:29

Memory Verse





In Chapters 4-6, we start our
Operations Manual for the New Humanity.

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Chapter 1: Appropriate Behavior

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The World of the Jews, Greeks, and Romans

What was the occasion for Paul to get into marriage, parenting, and workplace relationships?

Jewish World

- Jewish men gave thanks that God had not made them “a Gentile, a slave, or a woman.”
- In Jewish law, a woman was a “thing” with no legal rights.
- She was her husband’s possession.
- Divorce was easy.
- Women had no rights in divorce



Greek World

- Prostitution was part of Greek life.
- Women of the respectable classes in Greece led a secluded life.
- Greek husband expected his wife to run his home and care for his legitimate children, but they found pleasure and companionship elsewhere.
- Greek home and family life were near extinction.
- Fidelity was non-existent.



Roman World

- Divorce was commonplace.
- Marriages were often influenced by money.
- Some women committed suicide.
- For Children, the father was in complete control.
- Fathers chose to keep or throw away their newborns.
- Fathers often drowned or killed sickly or deformed children.
- For Slaves, Roman citizens thought it was beneath them to work, and therefore they owned slaves.
- A slave was a living tool.



In the believers' neighborhoods, there was no unity, few were able to use their diverse gifts, and no maturing.

United States Today

- Divorce stats are indicators of broken marital relationships.
- Cohabitation is increasing.
- Child abuse is present.
- Child pornography is prevalent.
- Prostitution exists.
- Human trafficking exists despite anti-slavery laws.



Operations Manual
Chapter 6:
Relationships With Others

*Living the Life...
Together*

Paul said that the Church is a New Humanity. The Church is not like its neighbors. Believers should live in unity, with diversity, and growing toward maturity.

Jesus and the Church as the perfect relationship.

Jesus is head of the church and loves the church immensely. In total submission, Jesus willingly gave himself up to save her. The Church willingly submits to Jesus' authority and loves him. They are selfless in devotion to each other.

Mutual Love - Mutual Submission
Mutual Obedience - Mutual Willingness - Mutual Humility

Harmony Needed

Wives/children/slaves were to be
submissive to husbands/parents/masters.



- Despite becoming believers, the social order of hierarchy was to be kept at that time.
- Our Lord is impartial. Everyone has a role and none are better than others.
- Everyone is a responsible partner who is expected to do what is right.
- The marriage of a husband and wife is within the divine purpose for humankind.
- The harmony of the Christian marriage, family, and work place is an essential element of unity.

Functional Hierarchy

What does the hierarchical social order in a marriage look like?



- Within the family unit, there are different roles, but all of equal dignity, and all made in the divine image.
- Because God designed husbands and wives to be “one flesh” (Genesis 2:24), they should *not* function as “two autonomous individuals living together”.

Wife was urged
to be submissive to her
husband
as to the Lord.

- Submission willingly given
- Functional subordination
- Motivated “as to the Lord”

Husband’s duty was
to love his wife.

- Unceasing care
- Loving service for his wife’s well-being
- Total response not just sometimes
- Wholehearted response but not in an overbearing manner
- Willingly serve in a sacrificial, selfless nature
- Marital exclusivity

Children



Obey! Obey! Obey!

- Obedience to a godly parent means safety and security.
- Children belong to Christ and are members of the body.
- Parental authority is necessary for a harmonious family and stable society.
- Adult children need to have a respectful attitude and loving care for aging parents.

Parents

Parents should perfect:

- Showing love and telling their children they are loved
- Self-control
- Hearts to nourish their children in the Lord.
- Gentleness and patience in raising children
- Encouraging their children.



Workers



Workers should demonstrate:

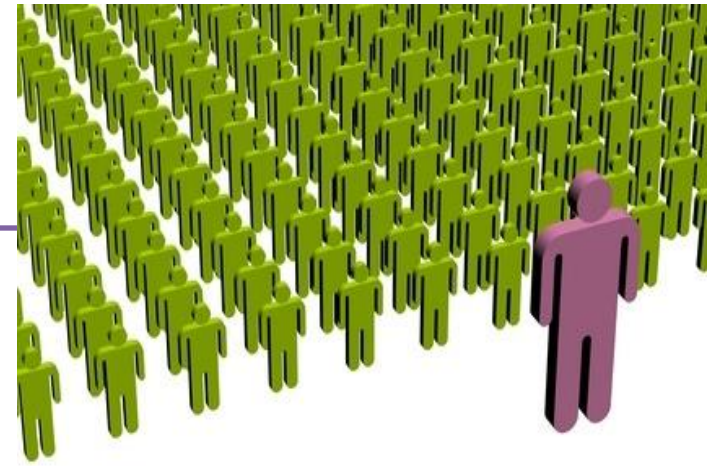
- Willing obedience to their earthly masters or supervisors
- Genuinely receptive to the Holy Spirit's transforming work
- Actively modeling the wise and godly lifestyle
- Proudly demonstrating integrity

Supervisors

Supervisors should perfect:

- Unconditional love and caring
- Being fully self-controlled
- Openly seeking opportunities to witness
- Genuinely encouraging
- Actively providing a secure environment
- Proudly modeling the godly lifestyle

We are all underlings to someone while at the same time, we also look after others. We need to promote harmony, unity, diversity and maturity.



To promote **unity** in the Church,
we are to cultivate healthy harmonious relationships.

We are to show:



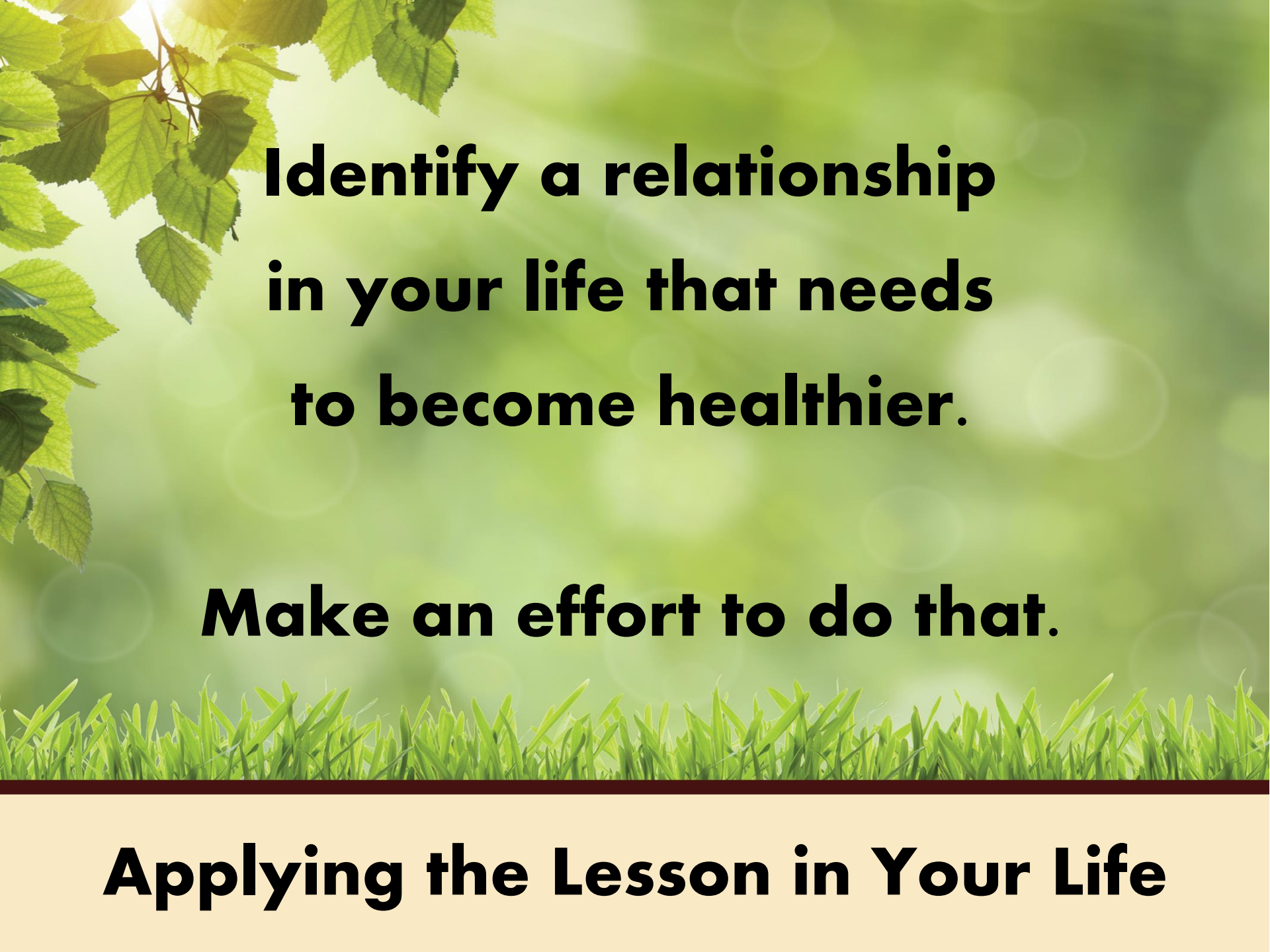
Humility

Gentleness

Patience

Forbearance

Love



**Identify a relationship
in your life that needs
to become healthier.**

Make an effort to do that.

Applying the Lesson in Your Life

Closing Prayer

