

June 19, 2009

ChickChat with Pastor Colleen

Getting the best from relationships

Relationships are very important to us as women. However, we sometimes do things in relationships to sabotage them. To illustrate this, we watched a clip from the movie *how to lose a guy in 10 days* with Kate Hudson (*Angie Anderson*) and Matthew McConaughey (*Benjamin Barry*).

We viewed the scene where Angie went to Benjamin's office with her dog. She walked in unannounced with a new Chinese crested dog she'd purchased, was quite distracting and loud, calling him pet names, and acting overly domineering and territorial. After watching this clip, Pastor Colleen asked us to point out some of Angie's mistakes:

- She came unannounced to his place of work
- Disrespected his friends
- Called him by her made up nickname for him
- Tried to dress him up in front of his friends
- Verbally suggested and implied an instant family involving the dog, herself, and him
- Brought up marriage

Although this was a comedy, for some of us our relationships have ended unfortunately due to wrong decisions and actions.

The good news is if you lose positive influence in your relationship, it can be regained.

Romans 12: 16-18

Live in harmony with each other. Do things in such a way that everyone sees your honorable behavior. Do all you can to live in peace with others.

Love is a major theme in the Bible. We are to live life influenced and driven by love, and in an attitude of humility. Live with a mindset that you can make room for all types of people in your heart, and you can make friends without people fitting in your "mold."

What does it mean to live in harmony with each other? We will consider the following areas or factors:

1. Understand matters that are beyond your control and matters that you are not responsible for. When we know that people are not always going to do things our way, it takes the pressure off of us and others. Sometimes women can live with a sense of responsibility that doesn't belong to them. One commonly mistaken responsibility of married women is the thought that we can change our husbands. This results in constant frustration and nagging, which in turn, pushes our husbands away.
2. Remember that there will be no matter more important than your relationship. Things could come and go, but the relationship shouldn't be jeopardized. Things will try to push their way front and center in your relationship with a purpose to divide. When you have a

vision for your relationship and are committed to love, this will keep you going even when obstacles come.

3. Be intentional about loving, and stay motivated to love. Love your husband and understand your love for your husband and his value in your life even in the midst of challenges.
4. Keep your priorities in mind. Which is more important: this thing or your husband? Be intentional about not allowing things to get in the way of your relationship
5. Rightfully differentiate between influence and dominance. When you try to dominate another person, you are putting them in a defensive position. Instead, honor your men. Women naturally have a God given influence over men in their lives. You can use your influence effectively in the place of humility instead of controlling your husband. Furthermore, the greatest place of humility is in the place of prayer.
6. Create an infrastructure for peace in your relationship. “Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone.” (Romans 12:16-18)

There are four steps in which the enemy tries to hinder us in relationships, and consequently, there are four steps in which God equips us in order to have relationships that flourish:

Tactics of the Enemy	God’s approach towards us
1) Pull you away into isolation (i.e. loneliness begins to set in)	1) Draw you into intimacy with Himself. You need to learn how to be alone with God. The more you learn how to be alone with Him, the more you learn about intimacy with Him.
2) Point out your inadequacies, imperfections, to cause you to feel insecure and wallow in guilt and shame.	2) The Spirit of God will show us our hindrances in our relationship with Him. He disciplines us and corrects us in love. God’s ways are not to condemn us and make us feel guilt and shame.
3) Place others before you to blame. The more people buy into these lies, the tighter the devil’s grip is on them and thus the more they feel constrained and feel the need to blame others.	3) Covers you with grace.
4) Pushes you out in offense.	4) Releases you with a purpose, sense of security, understanding that you are loved, and feeling empowered.

Food for thought for women

“To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted.” (Titus 1:15)

- **Live a life of Love:** Purify your mind (by reading and meditating on God’s word for application in your life). Live without resentment. “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” (Romans 12:2). Live your life in a way always ready to love and serve others, instead of being offended and ready to fight.
- **Regain control of your life:** Are you easily hurt? Angered? Feel guilty? Are others able to manipulate you easily? Do you easily feel inferior? If you are hurt easily, you are giving people the power to rule over you and dominate you. It frustrates us as women when people have the wrong opinion of you? The truth is does that change anything? Can you control how people feel about you or the things that they say? If you don’t want people to control you, then don’t let their opinions bother you or get to you.
- **Uniquely You:** Be free to be you! Don’t let other people squeeze you into their mold of who you should be. Instead, focus on fulfilling God’s expectations of you and living the life that He has called you to live. God has skillfully crafted you and made you who you are. So don’t let people choke you, control you, or box you in.
- **Being memorable:** Throughout our lifetime, we come across about 10,000 people. What will you do with the encounters you have with people? When you show love to others, you become memorable to them. “Let your light so shine before men so that they will see the good that you do and praise your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16). Seize every opportunity that you have to glorify God and be fruitful. Ask yourself “*What type of experience will I give others today?*” When you do things for people, in love and in service, you get their respect and trust.

After Pastor Colleen spoke with us, we had a brief time of **Q&A**. The audience asked questions and Pastor Colleen answered them.

Q1) How do you walk in a place of influence towards your husband when all you have known is dominance?

Answer: Maintain an attitude of prayer before the Lord that seeks to know how to glorify Him in every area of your life. *Lord, what does it take for me to be more useful to you? God, how can I be more useful to you and doing your will in all situations?* In this place of seeking God’s ways and meditating on His word, He changes your way of thinking and enables you to stay in a place of godly influence.

Q2) How does a person not walk in offense, especially towards family, when they have the greatest tendency to offend us?

Answer: Walk in mercy. Last week’s message (*God is...Forgiving*) discussed the topic of mercy.