



January 05, 2025 Sermon Study Guide
Lee Towns – #Goals/Relationships

So then, let us aim for harmony in the church and try to build each other up. Romans 14:19 (NLT)

Then the Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him.” Genesis 2:18 (NLT)

Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. ¹³ Make allowance for each other’s faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. ¹⁴ Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵ And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful.

¹⁶ Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts. ¹⁷ And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father. Colossians 3:12-17 (NLT)

A Life Application Study Guide

James 1:22-25 tells us to put into practice what we are discovering in God's word.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Lee loves the concept of "*team*"

Question: What comes to mind when you hear the word and why?

- Describe some of the "teams" that you are a part of in both your personal, professional and church life.

Question: Why are you a part of those "teams" and what value do they represent to you and to others?

- If you are part of a team that serves others, who is benefitting? Small group leaders serve those in their group and a worship team serves the entire church body particularly on Sundays.

Question: Why are both equally important although different?

2. A new year often represents a time for goal setting or re-evaluating priorities and refocusing on where we are headed both in our professional life and in our personal relationships. A church community might consider taking a closer look at how they live out the passage in Roman 14:19.

Question: How do you live out this verse as you navigate your immediate family relationships? How do you live it out within your church community and those relationships? How will building others up benefit both them and you?

3. God created community. Isolation was never a part of His plan so, if working toward a healthy Biblical community is our goal this year, how do we get there? Consider a choir or a band playing and singing in *harmony*. We want to listen to the music, don't we? But singing off- key or playing out of sync creates discord and we cringe. This requires working together and allowing for the diversity of people and instruments to create a beautiful melody.

Question: How are you seeking harmony within your teams and in your individual relationships? When and how do you celebrate the uniqueness of the men and women around you?

*The biblical concept of **peace** (shalom) is far richer than our everyday connotations of the word “peace.” The webbing together of God, humans, and all creation in justice, fulfillment, and delight is what the Hebrew prophets call shalom. In English we call it peace, but it means far more than just peace of mind or ceasefire between enemies. In the Bible shalom means universal flourishing, wholeness, and delight—a rich state of affairs in which natural needs are satisfied and natural gifts fruitfully employed, a state of affairs that inspires joyful wonder as the creator and savior opens doors and speaks welcome to the creatures in whom he delights. Shalom, in other words, is the way things are supposed to be. Cornelius Plantinga, Jr., *Not the Way It’s Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995)*

Question: When and how do you pursue the peace or shalom spoken about here with both individuals and the teams that you are a part of? Where are you pursuing peace/shalom within the church community?

To live in harmony and peace we must also *care* for one another. In the parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-37 we see 2 men who culturally would have been enemies, but care and compassion are given to the injured man looking beyond their differences.

Question: Who are you committed to caring for within your church community despite the normal and expected differences? How will you remain committed to the CFC church community even when challenges arise that are simply an everyday part of navigating a diverse community?

4. Lee reminds us that Biblical community exhibits Christ-Like character.

Questions:

- How will you live out grace toward others?

 - How will you resolve conflicts in a Christ like manner?

 - How will you model forgiveness?

 - How will you grow and strengthen a genuine (brotherly/sisterly) love toward those in the CFC community who are different from you?
5. Allowing our relationship with Jesus to shape us and grow us is the only way to live in healthy Biblical community. So, what spiritual rhythms has He called you to weave into your daily and weekly living that will shape you as a Christ Follower?

Questions:

- When, where and how are you spending time with Jesus?

- How are you seeking to repair any broken relationships?

- How will you intentionally invest in the CFC church community in this new year?