

Relationship Success

Lesson 1: Bless Those Who Curse You

This course follows Jim Tucker's Relationship Success class audio found on the Relationship Success page of Connect the Nations. Please read this lesson while listening to the audio, or just listen and answer the questions.

Vocabulary: (yellow = vocabulary; green = idioms)

glad	to beat someone over the head (idiom)	to avenge (n. vengeance)	courteous
to fulfill (adj. fulfilling)	to grieve (adj. grieved)	to heap	harsh (n. harshness)
to challenge (adj. challenging)	to rejoice	sphere	waitress
to creep into (idiom)	to discipline	antagonistic	realm
to depend (adj. dependent)	depth	overwhelmed (-ing)	to intervene
constructive	to forsake	reward	vindicator
to impress	holiness	merciful	dime
to belittle	sarcastic	to revile	gravel
mature	cynical	to threaten	despitefully
wrath			

Discussion:

Hello everybody. Good to see you. Is anybody sitting beside anybody very important? All right, Okay, tell them real quick. Just tell them, "You are just so important!" If you owe 'em [them] money, pay 'em back now. This is the time. Glad you're here. It's so good to have everybody here. Our teaching tonight is what to do when you're pretty sure somebody you work with was sent from the devil. Okay, how many of you are glad you came tonight? You're glad? Alright good. By the way I'm Jim. This my wife Tracy, right here. How many of you have relationships that are very fulfilling for you? Do you? How many of you have relationships that are challenging? More hands went up on that one.

God gives us ways to deal with relationships. He wants our relationships to be fulfilling. He wants them to be an expression of his kingdom on earth. That's Gods heart. But sometimes the world – the world's attitude creeps into the way we relate, and they don't turn out to be the way God really wants them to be. So, we're going to be talking about that. Agree with me in prayer:

Lord, thank you that you are the lover of our souls. You are love. You don't just love. You are love. And we thank you for our relationship with you. Holy Spirit, come into this place. Help me, help us to do what you want tonight – that, Holy Spirit, we're so dependent on you. I ask you to heal broken hearts. I ask you, Lord, to give us tools to help us, to equip us, to relate better with people around us, in Jesus's name. Amen.

Okay, take that little thing that says, "Because God Loves You." We're going to read it out loud here for just a minute. And, uh, if you would just read this with me, just line by line:

Because God loves me, he is slow to lose patience with me. He takes the circumstances of my life and uses them in a constructive way for my growth.

Because God loves me, he has no need to **impress** me with how great and powerful he is because he is God. Nor does he **belittle** me as his child in order to show me how important he is. He is for me. He wants to see me **mature** and develop in his love. He does not send down his **wrath** on every little mistake I make, which there are many. He does not keep score of all my sins and then **beat me over the head** with them when he gets the chance.

Because God loves me, he is deeply **grieved** when I do not walk in the ways that please him because he sees this as evidence that I don't trust him and love him as I should.

Because God loves me, he **rejoices** when I experience his power and strength and stand up under the pressures of life for his name's sake.

Because God loves me, he keeps on working patiently with me even when I feel like giving up and can't see why he doesn't give up on me too.

Because God loves me, he keeps on trusting me when, at times, I don't even trust myself. He never says there's no hope for me. Rather, he patiently works with me, loves me, and **disciplines** me in such a way that it's hard for me to understand the **depth** of his concern for me.

Because God loves me, he never **forsakes** me, even though many of my friends might. He stands with me when I've reached the rock bottom of despair, when I see the real me and compare that to his righteousness, **holiness**, beauty, and love. It's at a moment like this that I can really believe God loves me.

When we are talking about relationships with people, why is it important that we remember how much God loves us?

What I want to get across tonight – the main thing: In our culture, how many agree that there are a lot of people walking around with this posture: "Don't mess with me." Would you agree with that? In life, you're going around with either this kind of a posture, like, "Just don't hurt me." And so often, our culture – how many agree that we are **sarcastic**, **cynical**, and there's a lot of hurt? There's just a lot of hurt. I want to emphasize tonight one particular verse of scripture: "Bless those who curse you" – the power of blessing people who really curse you.

I haven't been able to get away from the Lord telling me, "Emphasize this!" Here's what it says. Some of you know this by heart:

Romans 12:19 – Beloved, never **avenge** yourself, but leave it to the wrath of God. For it is written: '**Vengeance** is mine. I will repay,' says the Lord. 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him. If he is thirsty, give him something to drink. For by doing so, you will **heap** burning coals on his head. Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good.'

Have you read that before? Now, the burning coals is not so you burn somebody's head. Some of you got really excited right there. "Thank you, Jesus, for that scripture!" What it's talking about there – it's blessing your enemy. And in that day, when somebody was in their home, when they were running out of hot coals, there was nothing they could do. And the best gift that you could give somebody would be

to run to someone's house, and they would give them burning coals, which they would run back, and it would be on the top of their head so that they could have a fire immediately. The other way that it was used is people would walk through the street with burning coals on their head, and it would be a sign of repentance. This was from Romans 12, and it's also talked about in the book of Proverbs. In Proverbs, it had to do with repentance. It meant they're saying, "I am changing." "I've changed my mind." And so, what this verse is talking about is what happens when you bless people.

In our culture is the opposite. Our culture is, "If you hurt me, I'm hurting you. You curse me, I'm cursing you. You come at me, I'm gonna (going to) come at you." And so, there's no healing. How many of you know there's no healing in that? There's just no healing in it. Let me ask you this real quick. How many of you are thinking, "I'm kinda [kind of] glad we're talking about this"? Just raise your hand, you are thinking, "I'm kinda glad." Alright.

Describe your personality. Are you "Don't mess with me?" or "Don't hurt me"? Explain.

Are you kind of glad that we are talking about this topic? Explain.

Right at the top of your manual there – it says...

Jesus said, "A new command I give unto you. Love one another as I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this, all men will know that you are my disciples: That you love one another. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no man than this: that he lay down his life for his friends."

Everybody in the room has a **sphere** of influence. Do you agree with that? At your work or wherever you are – at home – you have a sphere of influence. Everybody here sets the spirit around them. The spirit around you is often **antagonistic**, and I believe one of the things that God has called us to do is to change that. And the other thing is to understand that healing comes by doing the opposite of what's coming at you.

The other day, I was just about to leave the house and my precious wife mentioned a name. She had read something, and this is from a long time ago, and she mentioned the name of somebody that had really, really hurt us. And this, "Ah..." The pain came back up. Have you had that happen? The pain of that just came back up. And there had to be an answer, "What am I gonna do?"

I left the house. And I'm driving around and just absolutely **overwhelmed** with the pain. And I could see this man's face in front of me, cursing at me, yelling at me, using all kind of foul language, and the pain was just **overwhelming** in my heart. And I thought, "What am I gonna do here?" It was just overwhelming. And as I began to take this verse, and I just began to bless him, and speak words of blessing, healing came! Healing came out of that. And what I want to encourage tonight is that demonstrating the opposite spirit... the healing that comes. The power of blessing those who curse you. This is so valuable. This is from Matthew chapter 5, Luke chapter 6: Jesus said, "Love your enemies. Do good to those who hurt you. Your **reward** shall be great. And you shall be children of the highest. For he is kind to the unthankful and to the evil. Be therefore **merciful** as your Father is also merciful."

I want you to see these scriptures in 1 Peter 2:23. Here's what it says: "He who committed no sin, no deceit was found in his mouth. When he was **reviled**, he did not **revile** in return; when he suffered, he did not **threaten**, but committed himself to him who judges righteously, who himself bore our sin on his body." So, Jesus did not repay evil with evil.

Look at the next page there. Verse eight of the next chapter. "Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another, love as brothers, be tender-hearted, **courteous**, not returning evil for evil, reviling for reviling, but on the contrary" – blessing, "knowing that you were called to this, that you would inherit a blessing." And the point I want to get across there is the inheriting of blessing when we bless those who curse us.

Are there people in your life who are antagonistic? Are there places where you go and experience this? Describe.

I want you just to see... Now, this kind of began in my life years ago. I think one of the first times, I was at a church. I was ministering at a church in New York. And I went out afterwards with a group of people, and I paid for the meal, which is of course the right thing to do. They were there because I was there. They went out – this is New York, you understand? Long Island...New York. Sometimes people in New York can be **harsh**. Has anybody been there? It can just be harsh. But we went out, and this **waitress** was so mean, we're just sitting there, we're eating, except we haven't eaten yet. She literally walked over to our table, literally walked over there, and said, "What do you want?" And my first thought was "new waitress." And she just kept that same attitude all the way through and went to each person. We had ten people. She went around and said, "What do you want?" "What do you want?" And there was just this **harshness**. And then when she did bring our food, she literally dropped the plate on the table – mean, just "attitude." It was just terrible.

And so, what I decided to do, and I still do this today, I've learned that this is a part of how God wants us to operate. I left her a tip that was almost as big as the bill. It was just a huge blessing, and she wasn't expecting that. But what I did, I just blessed her. I just said, "I'm gonna bless those who curse." Now how many know, our culture would just come at that, right? I wanna (want a) new server. Tell the manager. Do something! But in the kingdom of God... The ripple effect of this...

Everybody had walked out of the restaurant. I paid the bill, left her this huge tip and a little note saying, "God bless you," "God cares about you," and just a couple of things. She just started crying. And she just said, "Thank you so much." She said, "I don't understand why you did that, but let me tell you what is going on in my life." And she just began to open up and tell me all the pain, and all the stuff, everything that was going on. Now she was blessed. I was really blessed. Now what that did that day – it opened up something in the spirit **realm**. From that day, Tracy and I are still amazed at how many free meals we get. It's just amazing. I mean, now I haven't met anybody yet that agrees with this. Every time I get really bad service, I just double the tip. And some of you are looking at me like, "This is not a good class." I just double it because I know there's something in there that God wants to do. And I'll leave a note and just bless them.

There's something that happens when we bless people that are insulting us, hurting us. There's something that God begins to do to bring healing for us. Most of the world is going around operating in a different spirit. There's just an antagonistic thing, "Don't mess with me" thing.

Describe a time when you had a similar experience in a restaurant. How did you respond, or how did you want to respond?

For some of us, tipping is not part of our culture, or we simply don't have the money to leave a large tip. What are other ways we can practice what Jim is encouraging us to do?

Another time, our kids were very, very small, and I bought a boat. I love boats. I love being on the water. I just like boats, but I didn't have enough money to buy a real boat. I bought a little Jon boat. And you can look at me, and you can tell that me and my family would not fit on a Jon boat. It was just a dumb move, but I could afford it. It was seven hundred and fifty dollars. I got this Jon boat, took the kids in this little lake, and said to the kids, "We're gonna go boating today. Yeah!" And we go out there, and the boat looked like this on the water. It was just going like this. So, I had to sell the boat, took it to a consignment, a place in Conroe where we lived at that time, close to there. The man sold the boat. Seven hundred and fifty dollars, he sold it for what I paid for it. Wouldn't give me the money. So, I called him. He said, "Yeah, yeah, I'll give it to you." A week goes by – I can deal with a week – two weeks go by, three weeks go by, nothing. And I couldn't get my money – month went by, two months go by, no money. How many think that by this time, you might be upset? Okay, raise your hand if you think you might be upset. Alright, so don't look at me so spiritual. I mean, I was really angry 'cuz, at that time, seven hundred and fifty dollars was just a huge amount of money.

So, I called him and kept calling him, kept calling him, and then I said I'm gonna come there, and I'm gonna get my money. I didn't tell him when. One day after three months, I showed up, go walking down the road... All the boats and everything were at the end of this long gravel road. Now, I'm walking down there. He saw me coming and he got two men with him. And they come down, but what he didn't know was the last time I talked to him, I hung up, and I began to pray for him. And I said, "Lord, I don't know what's going on with this man, but he owes me seven hundred and fifty dollars, and I want it. And I ask you to **intervene**." And right in the middle of that kinda prayer – How many of you have ever prayed like that? "God, would you intervene? You're my **vindicator**, God. So, I'm asking you to vindicate me. Vengeance is yours! You said vengeance is yours, so I want you to get it, and I want you to give it to me. Help me, God!" And the Lord spoke to me and said, "Pray for him." And I just began to pray for him and speak blessing over him. And then the Lord said, "Give him the boat. Give him the money."

Let me tell you what happened. So, I go. I'm walking down this dirt road. He brings two guys with him. I guess he thought I really was going to come and get my money. And uh, he comes walking down there, and these two guys are with him. And as he was coming, I just smile at him. The verse is going through my mind, "Don't repay evil for evil, or insult with insult, but with blessing." The next part of that verse says "...so you will inherit a blessing." Ok, say it with me, "...so you will inherit a blessing." All the verses are coming, and I reached out to him, and I shook his hands and said, "Hey, I just want you to know, I came by here today to tell you, you know the boat, the money and everything?" And he said, "Yes!" And I said, "I wanna (want to) give you that money. I just want you to have it. That's what I came for. I just want you to know, you don't owe me a **dime**. That's your money." And it was just that quiet. The two guys that were with him, they were like, "Well, what do we do now?" You know?

And I reached out to him, you know, just sat talking with him, and those two guys left. And I just said, "I want you to know, I'm praying for you. I was praying for you the other night, and I just want you to know

that God loves you. Whatever you're going through, he wants to bless you," and uh, the tears began to come. And he said, "I don't understand this." My wife left me three months ago. I'm losing my business. Everything is falling apart. 'Cuz when he said his wife left him, I kinda thought, "Mmm." Okay, never mind, don't think like that. But I just loved him. I said, "God loves you." And I prayed for him right there on that **grave** road without anybody else around.

When is the last time someone made you really angry? How did they respond? How did you respond?

Let me tell you what happened two years later. All I knew was that I was free. I was free. The blessing began to come. The blessing in my heart. The healing in my heart. I was violated, insulted. He had cursed at me on the phone. He lied. He had manipulated. I mean, it was just ridiculous. Two years later, just two years later, I get a call from a friend of mine. He just said, "Jim, I wanna buy your lunch." I knew that was God. So, I said, "Let's do it." And we met at this place for lunch. He said, "Look, I'm not here just to buy your lunch." He said, "The Lord spoke to me." He said, "But anyway, I have a gift for you. It's out in the parking lot." And I said "Oh, really? What?" And I couldn't imagine what it was. And he said, "I wanna give you a boat." And this wasn't a Jon boat. I said, "Really, a boat?" He said, "Yeah, I want you to have my boat." And right there: There is his truck and the boat. And this had a boat, a motor, a trailer, I mean, it was like a real 18-foot boat. And you know, it was wonderful. And my mind went back, "Bless those who curse you. Do good to those who **despitefully** use you...." How many can relate to this at all? Are you with me? The healing had already begun to happen. I could tell you story after story after story. It happens in little things. It happens in big things.

Three weeks ago, I was asked to do a conference, a business conference, a sale's conference, to speak. And to my amazement, guess who introduced me? That man. But he came up to me before, and he said "Oh, by the way, I've asked to introduce you." And I thought "Oh, gah, oh, wow." Because all I ever get from him is just insults. But he looked at me that day before and after, and he said to me, "I can tell you really are a Christian." And I thought, "That's what it took for you to know?" And he took five minutes to introduce me, and I had no idea that this stuff that was in his mind. And then what really blessed me was when he got in trouble with his kids, I was the one he called. "Would you help my kids?" So, my point is, you just don't know whenever you don't repay evil with evil or insult with insult, the blessing that would come.

Is there someone you need to bless? Write their name down. How could you put into practice what Jim is encouraging us to do?

Perhaps what Jim is teaching is difficult for you, especially in certain situations. Express how you feel about what Jim is teaching. Talk about any situations that you feel are especially difficult for you.

What are things we can do to help our hearts respond the way Jesus wants us to respond?

Go to the next page.

This Week:

Write in your journal:

1. Take some time this week to pray over a difficult relationship. Share with the Lord how you feel about the situation and this person (be honest). Speak the truths that you learned from this lesson over the situation and the person. Ask the Lord to bless this person who hurt you.
2. Think of a way you can bless this person who hurt you – really bless them! Make a plan to bless them this week.
3. In your journal, write about how blessing this person made you feel and if it helped the situation or your heart in any way.
4. Think of a person who needs this lesson and share it with them this week!