



Title: Beyond the norm II – the way of peace
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Last week: What do we need? *Friendship is a gift that enables us to go beyond the norm.*

Today: What do I need to **be**?

There are no self-made men, only self-destroyed men.

The level of pain in our lives is directly connected with the quality of our relationships.

Proverbs 18:24 (NKJV)

²⁴ A man *who has* friends must himself **be friendly**, but there is a friend *who sticks* closer than a brother.

The way of peace

Definition of peace (shalom): wholeness man seeks, harmony and rest. Shalom is much more than the absence of war and conflict; it is the wholeness that the entire human race seeks.

Psalm 35:27 *God has pleasure in the wholeness (shalom) of His servant.*

:1 Peace with yourself (wholeness)

We need to be an **exceptional friend**, to have **exceptional** friendships.

We build walls within ourselves that push people away; we wound others, because we are wounded ourselves.

A person that isn't whole on the inside automatically **builds walls** between himself and those around him/her. The "wall" or unresolved issue becomes our filter to life.

Rather than blaming others, become a better you.

There is something magnetic about a person that is at peace with himself.

Being a friend:

(1) get a life

Desperation causes perspiration, and perspiration stinks on anybody. (Confucius)

Get a life. Desperation will destroy your relationships.

People can pick up desperation at a distance, and will run the other way.

(2) share your life – step out, let the walls down, and share from the heart.

We expect others to be vulnerable and open with us, but we don't want to be with them. There can be no meaningful relationship without sharing our lives.

1 John 1:7 (NKJV)

⁷ But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

The "way of peace" demolishes dividing walls and enables beyond the norm relationships.

:2 Peace between (harmony)

Ephesians 2:14-15 (NKJV)

¹⁴ For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, ¹⁵ having abolished in His flesh the enmity (hostility) ...*thus making peace*..

(1) False peace: ask yourself... am I building a wall or breaking it down?

Isolation – “researchers found that the most isolated people were three times more likely to die than those with strong relational connections. People who had bad health habits (such as smoking, poor eating habits, obesity or alcohol use) but strong social ties lived significantly longer than people who had great health habits but were isolated. In other words, it is better to eat Twinkies with good friends than to eat broccoli alone”

our soul prospers when we are in meaningful relationships with other people.

“crowded loneliness”

Not dealing with issues – wall becomes thicker, higher, wider, until you have no clue as to how you’re going to get through this.

Divorce – Our words build walls and leave a legacy

Responsibility comes with relationship

A whisperer separates the best of friends” Proverbs 16:28

Proverbs 22:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ He who loves purity of heart and has grace on his lips, the king *will be* his friend.

(2) True peace: Let down the walls

Conflict – Humble yourself.

Forgive – those who hurt you. *Let down the walls or there will be no relationship.*

Matthew 18:21-22 (NKJV) ²¹ Then Peter came to Him and said, “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?” ²² Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.”

Sacrifice comes with relationship -

The “way of peace” demolishes dividing walls and enables beyond the norm relationships.

:3 Peace from Above (Rest)

Ephesians 2:14-15 (NKJV)

¹⁴ For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, ¹⁵ having abolished in His flesh the enmity (hostility) ...*thus making peace*..

Let the wall down between you and God.

Jeremiah 6:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ Thus says the LORD: “Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; Then you will find rest for your souls... (But they said, ‘We will not walk *in it*.’)

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