

Life, Family, Ministry and Witnessing Are All About Relationship

Many pastors and ministry leaders are much better at imparting information than they are at building relationships. They are comfortable in their studies. They love their books. They pride themselves on their sound doctrine. They come alive as they proclaim “the wisdom of God” through carefully-crafted sermons or articles. But when it comes to engaging their people—and even their own families—on a personal level, they are often seen as being aloof, insensitive, or unable to relate to the struggles of real life. What these leaders often fail to realize is that God’s wisdom is primarily *relational*, not *informational*. In this plenary we will study Jesus’ passion for relationships and apply his teaching to some of the challenging relational issues ministry leaders face every day (each principle is linked to an article that provides additional details).

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1. Jesus taught that [life, family, ministry and witnessing are all about relationship](#) (Matt. 22:37-39; John 13:34-35)
2. [Relationship trumps expertise](#) in almost every area of life (Prov. 22:11)



Soft skills can either magnify or diminish the value of our hard skills

3. Scripture teaches that relationships are [inherently three-dimensional](#) (Eph. 4:30-32; Phil. 2:1-11)



4. Relational leaders [build relational churches and ministries](#) (Luke 6:40; 1 Cor. 11:1)
5. Relational leaders know that [wisdom is relational not informational](#) (James 3:17)
6. Relational leaders [breathe grace](#) (Eph. 4:29)
7. Relational leaders are [always bringing the gospel to others](#), especially [their own families](#) (Rom. 5:1-11)
8. Relational leaders prioritize their families, even when it requires [sacrificing ministry](#) (Eph. 5:25)
9. Relational leaders are [constantly looking for ways to love and serve their spouses](#) (Eph. 5:25)
10. Relational leaders are always [building passport](#) (John 4:7-30; Can I trust you? Do you love me? Are you really able to help me?)
11. Relational leaders [tend their flocks like a shepherd](#) (Isa. 40:11)
12. Relational leaders are [skilled peacemakers](#) and train their people to [get upstream of conflict](#) (Matt. 5:9; James 3:18)
13. Relational leaders are inclined to [respond to sin with mercy before judgment](#) (Ps. 103:8-13)
14. Relational leaders view their people with [gracious eyes](#) (Phil. 4:8-9)

15. Relational leaders practice [clarity plus charity](#) (Matt. 7:12, Communicate so clearly that you cannot be misunderstood; Believe the best about others until you have facts to prove otherwise)

16. Relational leaders know how to use God's relational principles to [serve and witness to people who do not yet know Jesus](#) (Matt. 5:16)

17. Relational leaders know how to [defuse explosive meetings](#) (Matt. 7:3-5)
 - Briefly stated, how do you feel because of this problem?
 - What have you done that might have contributed to this problem?
 - What steps have you already taken to make things better?
 - What are you now willing to do to help resolve this problem?
 - What do you suggest others do to help resolve this problem?

18. Relational leaders realize that [sin can turn their greatest strengths into their greatest weaknesses](#) (1 Cor. 8:1)

19. Relational leaders are [teachable rather than defensive when confronted](#) (Prov. 15:32)

20. Relational leaders deliberately develop their capacity for [empathy and compassion](#) (Col. 3:12)

21. Relational leaders are both [approachable](#) and [accountable](#) (Luke 7:37-38; Matt. 8:9)

22. Relational leaders study their people (Mark 6:34; [Reagan, Lincoln, RW, and You](#))

23. Relational leaders convey solid theology through memorable, user-friendly principles ([SOG, GPS, READ, SERVE](#))

24. Relational leaders are kind (Rom. 2:4, [“Be kind for everyone you meet is fighting a great battle.”](#) Philo of Alexandria)
25. Relational leaders [don’t overlook every offense](#) (Prov. 19:11)
26. Relational leaders teach and model how to become [more gracious with age](#)
27. Relational leaders know how to [turn opponents into allies](#) (Luke 6:27-28; Rom. 12:20-21)
28. Relational skills are especially helpful for [church planters](#)
29. Relational leaders involve their people in [PURE church planning](#) (**P**rayer, **U**nderstanding, **R**esults, **E**valuation).
30. Relational leaders know that smooth leadership transitions are characterized by [TRUTH](#) (**T**ransparency, **R**eality, **U**nity, **T**imeliness, **H**umility)
31. Relational leaders develop their own relational skills and then teach their leadership teams and congregations to do likewise (www.rw360.org/online-training)