

God Uses Relationships

Participant's Guide

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God gives us relationships to mold and grow us.

Relationships can be our greatest joy or our bitterest burden. But no matter what the relationship, God wants to use it to mold us into the people he wants us to be.

Scripture: **Exodus 18**

Based On: **The Bible study "Must Reading for Revolutionary Thinkers: The Book of Exodus for Today's Mind,"** by Dave DeLuca



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Part 1 Identify the Issue

We often don't get to choose our relationships. We often get stuck in families that aren't what we'd like them to be. And in-law relationships can get even trickier.

Evidently Moses didn't have a problem in that area. His father-in-law appeared to be a confidant and friend. But even when our family members or friends aren't perfect, God can use them. Carmen Renee Berry says in *The Unauthorized Guide to Choosing a Church*:

Where human frailty once served as a reason for me to withdraw from the church, with its unruly and divergent congregants, this is now what compels me back to spiritual community. I had overlooked one essential factor—that I am as finite and flawed as everyone else.

Part 2 Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching Point One: God wants to use our relationships.

- ___ Moses' father-in-law recognized that the Lord was greater than other gods.
- ___ Moses told his father-in-law all that God had done.
- ___ Moses' father-in-law heard what God had done.
- ___ Moses' father-in-law offered sacrifices.
- ___ Moses kissed his father-in-law.

Teaching Point Two: Moses let God mold him through his relationships.

Part 3 Apply Your Findings

Joshua Wolf Shenk shares:

In 1937, a researcher at Harvard University began a study (originally named The Harvard Study of Adult Development) on what factors contribute to human well-being and happiness. The research team selected 268 male Harvard students who seemed healthy and well adjusted to be part of what is called a longitudinal study, which means that the researchers would study the lives of these men not just at one point in time, but rather over a period of time. In this case ... 72 years. ... For the last 42 years, the director has



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been psychiatrist George Vaillant. In 2008 someone asked Dr. Vaillant what he had learned about human health and happiness from his years of poring over the data on these 268 men. You would expect a complex answer from a Harvard social scientist, but his secret to happiness was breathtakingly simple: “The only thing that really matters in life are your relationships to other people.”¹

Action Point: What relationships are you struggling with right now? Ask the group to pray that you will be able to love those people and act with wisdom toward them.

—Study by Dave DeLuca, with JoHannah Reardon

¹ Joshua Wolf Shenk, “What Makes Us Happy?” *The Atlantic* (June 2009), pp. 36–53.

