



our enemies because we feel like it, but because God has commanded it (and done so for our best).

Can you think of any examples?

In marriage


 **Never entertain negative thoughts about your husband or wife.**
Your feelings follow where your thoughts go. If you continually think negative thoughts about your partner, you will inevitably find barriers going up between you. If you think positively about your partner you will ensure that your love for each other remains strong.

 **Think of what is best for the relationship not what is best for either individual.**
In marriage, two become one. That means they have to think one, not two. In marriage we no longer do what is best of us, nor naively, what is best for our partner, instead we always do what is best for the marriage, the two together.

FREEDOM

Christian Church

What makes a person difficult to live with?

 There are some huge dangers involved in a study like this. The worst of which is that we start enumerating the fault of those that we live with. This does both them and us harm. Jesus once spoke about taking the plank out of our own eye before trying to remove a speck from someone else's. This study is about taking the plank out of our own eye, perhaps it should be called "what makes me difficult to live with?"


Human beings are social creatures, we live in societies. This means that we all deal with multiple relationships at home and work. We are surrounded by people with whom we interact. These relationships come in many varieties, some are governed by rules directing how we must behave, but most of them are not.

 **Which are the most important of these relationships?
Why is it important that these relationships work?**

*1 Peter 3v7
1 Peter 2v12
Proverbs 27v15.*

Life becomes miserable when they don't, it damages our spiritual life and destroys our witness. Who we are at home becomes a test of who we really are. It is in the home where the fruit of the Spirit is going to be matured in us. If you can show the fruit of the Spirit at home you can show it anywhere. To that extent home becomes a training ground for our maturity and spirituality. Without exception all of us need to work on our character. Our behaviour cannot be divorced from our maturity and spirituality.

Most of us would be horrified to think of ourselves as selfish. But our actions speak louder than our word. It is our actions that betray our true characteristics. We must evaluate behaviour, free from excuses and not our claims. We tend to think of ourselves as better than we are. If you think about yourself as a kind person, it would be good to have some actions that prove it.

 It has often been noted that those closest to us receive our worst behaviour.
**Do you think this is true?
If so why?**

We are now going to come up with a list of things that make you hard to live with. In this list we are looking for root behaviour rather than examples (examples would be a very long list). Not being on time for dinner, is an example not a root problem.

 **What would be the root problem?**

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✓	Selfishness
✓	Inconsiderateness
✓	Anger
✓	Thoughtlessness
✓	Moodiness
✓	Critical Spirit – Grumbling
✓	Lack of consistency
✓	Irritating habits
✓	Talking behind others backs
✓	Always needing to be right
✓	Nagging
✓	Being bossy
✓	Controlling
✓	Violence
✓	Lack of perception of others needs
✓	Laziness (no doing the things that need to be done)
✓	Unreasonableness (does any one ever think they are being unreasonable)
✓	Lack of forgiveness – bearing grudges
✓	Unreliability not doing what you say
✓	Failure to communicate of include
✓	Lack of sensitivity
✓	Refusal to compromise
✓	Lack of gratitude
✓	Habits that harm others
✓	Slovenliness
✓	Always negative
✓	Ego centric
✓	
✓	



For each item on this list:

Explain what it means

Think of an illustration,

Describe the attitude it is likely to create in the other person.

State what needs to be done to overcome the fault.



If your behaviour hurts those around you, what kind of environment will it create? If people do not like the way you behave, how will they treat you in return?

Most of us are blind to our own faults. We tend to make allowances for our own failings while being critical of others.

The disturbing thing about this list is that if we are honest it is not hard to think of examples of most of these things in our own life.



What should we do about it?

Is it good enough to say "accept me the way I am or not at all"?

Why-Why not?

What attributes make a person easy to live with?



Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Ephesians 4v32

Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Philippians 2v4-5

You cannot change another person. With the help of the Holy Spirit, you can change yourself. When you do, it is amazing the effect that this change elicits in those around you. Your behaviour has the ability to bring out the best or the worst in those around you.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Galatians 5v22-23

Some Suggestions.



Think about the effect of your behaviour on others.

No person is an island. Our actions directly or indirectly effect others. If we are aware of the effect our actions have on others, we will be more circumspect in our behaviour and easier to live with.

Is this the only consideration?



Try to understand things from the others point of view.

This is called empathy, it is the ability to see a situation though another persons eyes and to identify with their feelings, hopes and aspirations. When the other person is close to you, this should not be hard to do. It does require us to step outside our own world, something we are often reluctant to do. It is also something that we continually need to remind ourselves to do, it needs practice.

How is this going to help you?



Be controlled by the principle, not the feeling.

Our actions come from our feelings, if we want to do something we do it, if we don't want tot do something we don't. Often our feelings are good and lead us to do the right thing. But we cannot afford to allow our feeling total control of our behaviour. Instead we must behave in accordance what God has told us to do in Scripture. We do not love or forgive