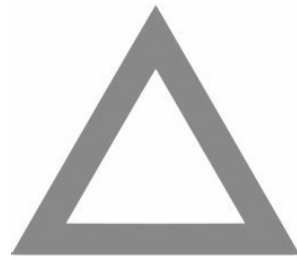


# THE VERTICAL AND THE HORIZONTAL



*1 John 1:1-2:2*

The vertical refers to our relationship with our Saviour and Lord. “God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord” (*1 Cor. 1:9*). The horizontal refers to our relationship with other people: believers in Christ, loved ones, family members, neighbors, etc.

*The key to the horizontal is the vertical.* If we are to relate in a proper way to our fellow man, then it is essential that our hearts be right with God. The foundation of our fellowship with other believers is our relationship with God: “...that ye also might have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ” (*1 John 1:3*). Our union with God Himself makes it possible to enjoy oneness with fellow believers (*Eph. 4:1-3*).

The vertical relationship must ever be our priority. Only as we keep our hearts right with God can we be all that we should be to others. Those around us may have no vertical relationship (unsaved) or a broken vertical relationship (carnal). We cannot fix their problems, but we can make sure there is nothing between us and the Saviour so as to be a testimony to them.

In the marriage relationship and in other relationships between two believers, it’s helpful to think of a triangle. ▲ God is at the top, the two believers are on either side at the bottom. As each one proceeds upward toward God, they will find that not only are they drawing closer to the Lord, but they are drawing closer to each other.

Again, our God-ward relationship is the key to every human relationship. Many will be offended by our vertical relationship (*John 15:18-20*); yet may that drive us even closer to the heart of God.

**Declare war on anything that hinders the vertical!**

~George Zeller: [www.middletonbiblechurch.org](http://www.middletonbiblechurch.org)

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