

## **Bonds, Breaks and Repair**

By Dale G. Simpson, Ph.D.

When two people have mutually positive experiences with each other it creates a small bond. When these exchanges involve powerful emotions and life events, or when they are extended over long periods of time, they create deep bonds. Yet in relationships, human beings eventually create some hurt or break in these bonds. This is normal, though painful and a problem of life that must be addressed.

When wounds to the bond occur, there is a way to repair it and strengthen the overall bond. There are also many ways we fail to act reparatively and thereby doom the bond to slow erosion until the foundation cracks.

When proper responsibility is taken by individuals, and confession, commitment to change, and forgiveness is accomplished, the repair can be made. Sometimes just clarification with good, mutually respecting communication is all that is needed if no moral wrong has been done. Relatively small stresses, handled well, strengthen the bond and each person's ability to trust. There are some stresses that are too big to have confidences that they can be repaired, although some miraculously do. Abandonment, affairs, physical or emotional abuse, treachery, betrayal--these are some of the things so large that one does not want to be in a position of trying to repair this kind of damage to a bond. It may be too great.

It is imperative that we live our lives in such a way as to keep stresses small and always seek to take our responsibility to be reparative. Don't take the crystal vase of a person's heart and smack it to the ground and then call your pastor to put all the little pieces back together and make it as new. That's not the way life is.

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