

## **‘Helpful Guidelines for Any Relationship!’ Phil. 2:1,2**

**Introduction:** God’s Good Book is full of insights that can help make a relationship go the distance.

### **I. Encourage one another. 2:1**

Why can we encourage one another? Because we are united in Christ! He’s the source of this and all these great qualities. Pray for these qualities.

When was the last time you praised your mate with encouraging words? Do you praise him or her even in little things? Remember, he or she is a special gift from God to be praised and encouraged.

### **II. Comfort one another. 2:1**

Providing comfort draws people together like nothing else can. We need to keep relearning the power of comfort in our relationships. In this tough, selfish world, \_\_\_\_\_ one another.

### **III. Spend time with one another. 2:1**

One thing you need for participation or fellowship: time! Spending time together is vital for any relationship, with God and with others. In the debate of which is more needed: quantity of time or quality of time, the answer is both!

### **IV. Be tender to one another. 2:1**

A. What is tenderness? The word literally refers to our insides, the source of our tender affections, the NIV has tender, the ESV has affection, the idea is of tender affections, like \_\_\_\_\_. Kindness is so vital to relationships.

Remember to be kind to others, because you don’t know what heavy burdens they may be carrying.

B. Kindness is in short supply, yet so very needed. We as Christians are not to behave as the world does, but to live like Christ, and show the world a better way to act, a wiser and kinder way to live.

God is very wise when He says to be *‘quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger.*

Along with this is the idea of being thankful for what you’ve got.

### **V. Be compassionate to one another. 2:1**

A. Compassion conveys the idea of showing mercy and sympathy to the individual.

\_\_\_\_\_ can come alive when we show tender mercy to our mates and friends and not harshness.

B. Phil. 2:2: Unity speaks of going in the same direction. It’s not a superficial thing, but it comes from deep inside. Not uniformity, but unity. Mankind tries to bring unity through uniformity; but God can bring unity through diversity. Learn to celebrate your differences! As long as those differences are not immoral or illegal.

C. Each day we decide on whether we are going to enrich our relationships or let them flounder. Your relationships can stand the test of time. Pray and ask the Lord to help you develop these great qualities into your life. Don’t wait for the other person to take the initiative, you do it.

On this good Valentine’s week, what are you going to do to encourage others?