

# Dropping Your Guard: The Value of Open Relationships

Getting Closer, Growing Stronger

DEUTERONOMY 6:1–13; ECCLESIASTES 4:9–12



## The Heart of the Matter

We can draw some relevant analogies between the ancient Hebrews and our modern-day churches. In the process, we will discover that even though centuries separate us, some of the same struggles, solutions, attitudes, and principles fit our situations perfectly. The people who entered the land of Canaan—the “new generation” of wilderness wanderers—were forced by the sheer determination of survival to pull together, to lock arms and link hearts, as they took on the challenge of invading the land under Joshua’s leadership. Sufficiently prepared by Moses before his death, the people committed themselves to the tough task of conquering Canaan, which they accomplished with the sovereign assistance of Jehovah. Divided, they could never have done it. Unified, they were strong. The same is true for churches today.



## Discovering the Way

### 1. Crucial Issues in a Ministry Like Ours (Ecclesiastes 4:9–12)

If modern-day church ministries are to survive, they must learn about the unhealthy consequences of isolationism, the essential benefits of relationships, and the absolute necessity of assimilation.

### 2. Some Dangers That Inevitably Occur (Deuteronomy 6:1–13)

Watch out for these dangers in ministry: falling more in love with the leader than the Lord; fixing our eyes on our immediate convenience rather than our ultimate objective; assuming that because we are large, we are strong; and living in the glow of yesterday instead of the challenge of tomorrow.

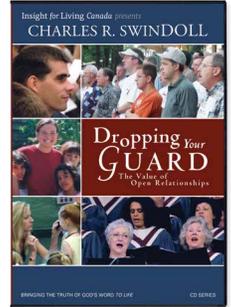


## Starting Your Journey

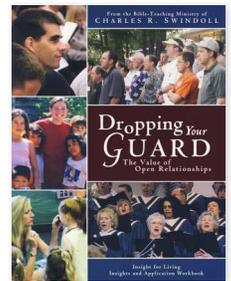
To go on we must get closer to others. To get closer means we pull together. And to pull together we must grow deeper in relationships.



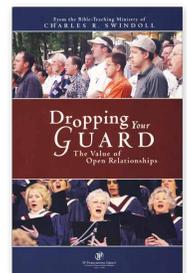
## Tools for Digging Deeper



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