

## Royal Family Relationships

What we are studying is meant to help us understand why we have our patterns of thinking & feeling & why we act the way we do toward one another. The following helps us put together the building blocks of our experiences and the ideas we have accepted because of our personal journey.

## The Unavoidable Idolatry Trap

Made with an emptiness that only God can fill, yet cast away from Him by the terrible inheritance from Adam's sin, we inevitable attach our needs/desires to man, believing (**faith**) that through human relationships that we can find happiness, expecting (**hope**) our connection with others will meet our needs & developing relational strategies (**love**) to make our human relationships work.

**Desire**, by John Eldredge: We all have a deep, secret desire that we seldom are aware of, it is the "desire for life as it was meant to be." George Elliot, famous Christian writer who said that while we live we can't give up our longing and wishing, hungering for what we feel is beautiful and good. Hunger unsatisfied drives us to escape the trap

### Case Study: Fred & Wilma Flintstone

Wilma had been coming to the counselor for a while to find help in her marriage. For much of her married life, she felt like her and her husband had mostly gone through the motions of being married without real intimacy. When asked by the counselor how she felt about her life and marriage, she said "disappointed." She was sure that her husband feels the same and angry because some time back she developed and aversion to sex with him. She wants to understand where this negative feeling about sex came from & unravel the layers of developed beliefs & behaviors in her soul.

### Her story:

Wilma: when I was a girl, my parents really stressed sexual purity and me being a virgin when I married. I sensed that my mother was fearful for me about this issue and so I came to believe the same thing. Based on what my mother told me and the general idea from Sunday school, I came to believe that if I maintained my sexual purity, then I would be able to find a great guy and have a wonderful

marriage. Remaining a virgin was the key. This idea was not openly discussed, it was more of a subconscious acceptance of the religious, legalistic view about sex. When I was in my teen years though, I gave in to temptation and had sex.

After I had sex, I felt like I had given away my true value and that I was now damaged goods & worthless. I had thrown away my worthiness as a female and in doing so, all rights & chances to have a good marriage. I began to feel bad about myself & hopeless about my future in love and marriage. Because I felt hopeless, I just gave up & began to give in to other sexual temptations. I became sexually careless & promiscuous for a while. If I was ruined, then why not, I might as well enjoy myself. None of this was thought out consciously, I was much too wounded & hurt to face any of this honestly. I was saved but had no spiritual understanding or strength to face the pain being caused by the lies I was telling myself.

Finally, when my marriage came along, for a time I was hopeful again about love. But as soon as we began to have problems, even as a Christian, I subconsciously blamed my past sins even while I was consciously blaming my husband. As our relationship struggled, our sex life became more difficult & unfulfilling for both of us. I think my guilt, shame and hopelessness from the past convinced me to give up on love again. It was my own false thinking and shame but I couldn't see it nor did I have the tools to face it, so I blamed it all on my husband Fred. For the next 25 years I felt angry & hopeless about my marital difficulties & I continued to blame the situation on Fred. I know that he certainly contributed to our problems, but I really believe I blamed him to avoid facing my own shame & unworthiness. For the longest time & even now, whenever he tries to touch me sexually, I have an involuntary reaction, a negative feeling I can't describe.

Mr. Counselor, what do you see in all of that.

Counselor to Wilma: let's pull all of that apart a bit, point out some false beliefs you initially adopted and then those you chose in reaction when your human strategy failed to produce the happiness you expected.

You told yourself a series of lies.

**First**, like all, like everyone born in Adam, you believed that the most important relationship you would have in your life was with a man, a human being instead of God. The emphasis was on staying pure so that you would be worthy to have the best in that all important relationship. The belief in the idea that your relationship

with any other human being was that important & the key to your happiness was what initially set you up to fail and live in guilt/shame.

Second, you believed that if you **had** managed to say no to sexual temptation & remained a virgin when you married, that your marriage would have been the joyful experience that you expected it to be? That the piece of flesh called a hymen was the issue in your worthiness & the difference between a good marriage & a difficult one. That choosing to give in to sexual sin, in spite of the work of Christ to forgive your sin was the cause of your inevitable marital discord. Avoiding sexual sins clearly enables a person to be free of scars, guilt and shame but the solution to sin is forgiveness in Christ. Because purity is impossible and even if you had waited, your marriage would have still had problems like all of them do.

**Summary:**

- a. Your false belief that a human relationship could be your happiness,
- b. That your loss of virgin status made you believe that you were dirty and shameful, persuading you to choose to call yourself worthless,
- c. Causing you to lose hope about any worthiness or happiness in your future,
- d. Gave you permission to be careless about your sexual life.
- e. From here, the unconscious self-hatred kicked into high gear, producing even a physical reaction to the act of marital sex.

**Third – defense mechanism - blame**

- a. inability & or unwillingness to confront your shame & self-hatred,
- b. Pain of thinking your life was hopeless and happiness unreachable
- c. Suppress self-hatred while blaming your marital problems on Fred.
- d. You linked the sexual challenges in your relationship with your shame and self-hatred so that every time he tried to initiate normal sexual relations, you felt a reaction that you associated with Fred.
- e. Fred's false thinking reacting with yours contributed to tangle it all up into a knot in your life.

The belief that another person is God's plan for our happiness is the initial trap into which we all fall. Adam's sin & separation from God forces us to choose it. CL with a person always fails to produce the happiness, joy or pleasure that we expect from it, no matter which human relationship we are discussing. Because it

always fails, we have to come up with a reason why God's plan isn't working for us. We always think that it is working for most everyone else. **We almost always conclude that it is because something is wrong with me (low self esteem).**

We tell ourselves, I gave up my sexual purity and that disqualified me from having a happy life, or I wasn't attractive enough to get the mate I wanted so I settled and because I settled, our marriage has been bad.....

We use our flaws, we compare ourselves with other people, we use our sins & failures to explain to our self why we are unable to turn God's plan of CL with a mate into happiness. We don't know that CL with another person was never God's plan in the first place. But seeing that the entire premise and logic we develop to explain our experience is a misunderstanding, we hang onto our belief that if we just get it right, the other person can make us happy and we can make each other happy. We come back to the hope of fulfilling our self through CL over and over, no matter how many times it fails.

Let us put together more of the building blocks of thinking so that we can begin to trace our own thinking pathway back into our past, to understand how to walk ourselves back out the holes we create for ourselves.

### **Layers of Thinking**

**Isa 28:10 For precept *must be* upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, *and* there a little:**

- a. Isaiah is trying to teach the word to people of his generation.
- b. He teaches a precept & then adds another precept to form a concept
- c. He places precepts and concepts upon one another – line upon line
- d. The image is one of building blocks built together to form a building
- e. The word edify literally means to construct a building – an edifice.
- f. Our beliefs are formed in this same way, ideas upon ideas, belief on belief
- g. All present evaluations & conclusions are based on previously accepted beliefs.
- h. What we conclude and believe today becomes our frame of reference for evaluating the events & experiences of tomorrow.

**Learning:**

- a. We are born without ideas but with instincts & tendencies inherited from our parents – their behaviors cause genetic transfers to children.
- b. As we grow, what we experience, see & hear becomes the basis for the ideas that form our beliefs (faith), expectations (hope) & relationships (love).
- c. Life Experiences:
  - Evaluation – seek an understanding of the event or situation, what happened, what does it mean, how does it impact me?
  - Conclusions – considering the situation produces a conclusion
  - Influence – we naturally accept our own conclusions (true or false), believing them to be true so that they become a part of our belief system, forming our frame of reference by which we evaluate all new experiences.
- d. Every new experience, moment by moment follows the same pattern of evaluating, concluding and deciding to believe or not believe – learning.

**Edification** – Building your beliefs, expectations and relational strategies

Oikodomeo – **to build** a physical structure or to build a belief & thought structure

**Matthew 7:24-26** "Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine, and acts upon them, may be compared to a wise man, who **built his house upon the rock.**

<sup>25</sup> "And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded upon the rock.

<sup>26</sup> "And everyone who hears these words of Mine, and does not act upon them, will be like a foolish man, who **built his house upon the sand.**

- The analogy of building a physical house to the building of a belief system
- Just as a brick is built on another, so is one idea built on another

**Matthew 16:18** "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will **build My church;** and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it.

- The church is built, adding one believer at a time – living stones 1Pt 2:5

**1 Cor 3:10** According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building upon it. But let each man be careful how he builds upon it.

- As a teacher, Paul builds the truth into those who hear/obey his words
- He uses basic doctrines to build a foundation of Christian beliefs in the soul
- Other teachers build more advance concepts upon the basic foundation.