



# Shiloh Messenger

October 2017

## *Relationships: How We Treat Others, Pt.1*

(The following teaching on relationships is taken from Putty Putman's excellent workbook, *Kingdom Ministry*) The kingdom at work in our relationships involves embracing a different *relational paradigm*. It means starting to use a different set of rules and measures to govern the way we relate to other people. Most people never give much thought to their relational paradigm—the values they use to make decisions about how to relate to others. As a result of this, most of us don't have a clearly defined relational paradigm, but that doesn't mean we don't have one. It just means we don't know what it is. Our relational paradigm is part of our worldview, just like our identity. Our identity is how we perceive ourselves within our worldview; our relational paradigm is how we perceive others. Our goal, of course, should be not just to articulate our relational paradigm, but also to bring it in line with God's relational paradigm. God relates to people as well, and if we're smart, we'll try to learn to relate to people the same way that God does.

Let's look at a story from John that illustrates Jesus' relational paradigm: *The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst they said to him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do You say? This they said to test Him, that they might have some charge to bring against Him. Jesus bent down and wrote with His finger on the ground. And as they continued to ask Him, He stood up and said to them, "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her." And once more He bent down and wrote on the ground. But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before Him. Jesus stood up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you? She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more." John 8:3-11*

Jesus is simply amazing here. What is the first thing that stands out here? Jesus is defending this woman from her accusers. Now, notice what happens after that, when the problem of what she's done is addressed: Jesus empowers her freedom and commands her to make good choices. There is a stark contrast that is painted here. The scribes and Pharisees are acting under a different relational paradigm here—one where what the woman has done is a problem for *them*, and so they have to punish her behavior. Jesus, on the other hand stands in stark contrast to that. He's not offended by her behavior. He doesn't try to control her behavior so she does what He wants. He doesn't threaten to punish her. He remains true to who He is, and He respects who she is.

This is so different from how many of us handle and process our interactions with other people. Jesus is clear about the fact that what the woman does cannot force His hand to the point where He will try to control what she does. In short, the externals of what she does can't control His internals. Let me be very clear about this point because our society seems majorly confused about it. You are responsible for what you do. No one else is responsible for what you do. Someone else is responsible for what they do, and you are responsible for what you do. You are not responsible for what someone else does, nor are they responsible for what you do. If someone makes poor choices, those poor choices do not determine what your response is unless you let it. If you let their choices influence your response, then in essence that means you're allowing yourself to be controlled by other people. You let their poor choices determine your choices (which are usually equally poor). In summation, then, let me point out what seem to be the values Jesus is representing in this interaction. This is really important to catch here; this is the kingdom relational paradigm: **1)** I will love you regardless of your bad choices. **2)** I'm responsible for my behavior. I'm not responsible for your behavior. **3)** What you do can't control the way that I interact with you. **4)** I won't compromise your freedom or responsibility for your own behavior. **5)** I will not punish your bad choices, but I will empower you to make good choices with your freedom.

This is so different from how we tend to interact with each other! Usually we fail on all these points; as soon as we see people making bad choices, we appoint ourselves as being responsible for fixing their behavior, let them control our inner dynamics (we get angry, frustrated, or otherwise), then we compromise their freedom and try to control what they do so they don't make stupid choices the next time. In this cycle, sin begets sin, and before we know it, we've partnered with control so much we're at least as much in the wrong as they are.

The Godly Wisdom here is to maintain our empowered status. I am empowered. What you do can't change that so I don't need to worry about what you do. We can fall prey to the mindset that what the other person does causes me to respond in criticism that causes divisiveness and then separation because of the conflict. But the Holy Spirit desires to empower me so I can lift you up even when you've fallen on your face, and I can always choose to not lower myself to partnering with control or other tools of the enemy while I do it.

The way we love people in relationships will attract them to The Heavenly Father, so they can encounter Him relationally. Our Identity (son or daughter of God) empowers us to be influential, because we are led by The Holy Spirit. (Romans 8:14)

## **Update: New Dorm to House More Men**

Over the past couple of years we have had a waiting list for potential students. With a waiting list comes consequences. Many men have to wait for 90 days & we often lose them after that period. We do have a referral list of other ministries, but most of them insist upon being put on our waiting list. They tell us it is our success in ministry to others they know or it is them visiting our website that they choose to wait. The Lord spoke to me last year and told me He wanted another Dorm built. We complied and began construction last fall. We now have a 45 by 75 Ft. exterior building, that needs completion on the inside. This includes, Ceiling Tile & grid, Hot Water Heater (50 gal.), 2 five ton Air Conditioning Units, & Stained Concrete flooring.

The approximate cost remaining for completing the Dormitory is \$7,325.00. We ask that you pray about what The Lord would have you do to help us in restoring His most valuable and precious asset, "People." With your financial gift, it will make possible for us to quickly complete the Dormitory project, so we can mentor more broken men, for The Glory of Christ!!!!

Thank you again, to everyone who co-labors with us in reconciling men with God, so restoration can begin.

We love you,

Rocky & Debbie Fondren

(Shiloh Ministries is recognized by the IRS as a 501c3 charitable organization. All financial gifts are tax deductible at the end of the year)

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## **Community Clean-up & Healing After TS Harvey**

Recently almost all of us were affected with loss by the destruction left by Hurricane Harvey, downgraded to a Tropical Storm when it hit us in South East Texas. We are blessed as a ministry to be empowered by the Love of Jesus Christ. It is because of His Great Love for us that we demonstrate love for our neighbors in the surrounding areas in which we call home. For most people it was totally overwhelming because of flood waters in homes rendering items that were purchased by wages thru toil and labor reduced to rubble on the side of a street. Very heartbreaking!!! Our response to this devastation brought some relief to the heartache, but now the reality of rebuilding. **James 2:15-17 says, "Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing, and you say, "Good-bye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well"—but then you don't give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do? So you see, faith by itself isn't enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless."** Jesus said, "you would know the true followers of Christ by the love we have for one another" (Jn. 13:35). Our love for God motivated us to respond to help others in rebuilding their lives. We sent the students and staff out to some designated homes to help with clean-up, remodeling of a kitchen & living room floors, food, water & clothing distribution and other acts of kindness. The help continues today and will go on because of God's Love compels us. We, with so many others who reached out to people in crisis are grateful to the Lord who placed us in such a great Nation that has a history of generosity. Our prayer is that even though a Nation responded in kindness & generosity "**it**" needs to repent of idolatry and turn to The God of Heaven & Earth for the saving of the soul and the healing of the Land (2nd Chronicles 7:14). Please stand with us in prayer for our Nation. 2nd Timothy 3:1 describes this time we live in as "perilous." We need to embrace the revelation given to us by The Holy Spirit that we have been given strength in our inner man to overcome, because Jesus has overcome and transferred His strength to us by The Power of The Holy Spirit (Eph. 3:14-21, 6:10-18). "**I have said these things to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world"** (John 16:33).

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