

July 5, 2015

"Our Lives Under Construction"

A series on building healthy relationships in our marriages, our homes, our workplaces, our friends, and our world!

"What's in a Frame? – A Healthy Framework for Relationships" Part 2 – Framework

"Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." John 8:32

A. Build on the foundation with a solid belief system...

"I will show you what he is like who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice. He is like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built." Luke 6:47-48

1. Jesus is the Truth.

"Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'" John 14:6

2. His truth is written for our belief system.

"But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." John 20:31

3. His truth is made to affect our actions.

"Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth." 1 John 3:18

4. His truth is given to bring us into light.

"I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness." John 12:46

"The issue of the heart is the question, 'Who or what rules me?'"

B. Don't believe the lies of the enemy...

"You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies." John 8:44

1. Our mind is not to be controlled by the enemy but by the Spirit.

"The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God." Romans 8:6-8

2. When we believe the lies of the enemy, we exchange truth for lies.

"They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen." Romans 1:25

3. When we believe the lies of the enemy, we run the risk of self-deception.

"They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness."

2 Thessalonians 2:10b-12

4. We must take captive these thoughts as they will control our actions.

"We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ." 2 Corinthians 10:5

"The NIV Study Bible defines the heart as the 'center of the human spirit, from which spring emotions, thoughts, motivations, courage, and actions.'"

C. Actions + beliefs = conclusions...

"He went on: "What comes out of a man is what makes him 'unclean.' For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly." Mark 7:20-22

1. Whatever is in the heart (or our belief system) will come out in our actions.

"The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks." Luke 6:45

2. Whatever belief system we set our hearts on will determine our actions.

"And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it." Luke 12:29

3. Whenever we allow doubt to control our thoughts, it will limit our ability to see change.

"I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours." Mark 11:23-24

4. Whenever we acknowledge our weakness, God is able to help us overcome!

"I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" Mark 9:24

"We don't always live what we profess, but we always live what we believe." – Wilson (1995)

D. Develop a healthy belief system based on the Word of God...

"For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." Hebrews 4:12

1. We are to be transformed in our thinking.

"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will." Romans 12:2

2. We are to develop a healthy mindset.

"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things." Philippians 4:8

3. A healthy mindset is filled with faith!

"And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him." Hebrews 11:6

4. God is able to transform our minds and present us blameless in Christ!

"May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.²⁴ The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it." 1 Thessalonians 5:23

(Following B.) Don't believe the lies of the enemy...

The Lies We Believe

The following is a list of the more common lies and falsehoods that people often believe and live out (with varying degrees of commitment) – usually with painful consequences. (Thurman, 1989)

- *I must be perfect.*
- *I must have everyone's love and approval.*
- *It is easier to avoid problems than to face them.*
- *Things have to go my way for me to be happy.*
- *My unhappiness is caused by other people and events.*
- *I can have it all (and if I don't, life is not worth living).*
- *I am only as good as what I do and accomplish.*
- *Life should be easy; life should be fair.*
- *I want it now; I shouldn't have to wait for what I want.*
- *People are basically good; it's society that corrupts us.*
- *My marriage problems are my spouse's fault.*
- *My spouse should meet all my needs.*
- *My spouse owes me for what I've done for him or her.*
- *If marriage takes hard work, we must not be right for each other.*
- *My spouse should be like me, think like me, and believe like me.*
- *I shouldn't have to change to make my marriage/relationship better.*
- *I refuse to admit being wrong; I often make mountains out of molehills.*
- *I tend to take things too personally.*
- *Most issues are black and white for me.*
- *The past predicts the future; people don't really change.*
- *I tend to reason with my feelings rather than with the facts.*
- *God's love can be earned.*
- *God hates the sin and rejects the sinner.*
- *If I do the right thing, God will protect me from pain and suffering.*

- *All problems in life are caused by sin.*
- *It's my Christian duty to meet all the needs of those around me.*
- *Painful emotions – anger, anxiety, depression – are signals that my faith is weak or that sin exists somewhere in my life.*
- *God can't or won't use me unless I'm spiritually strong.*
- *If I can't be good, at least I can always look good.*
- *I've arrived; most of these ideas do not apply to me.*
- *I'm hopeless; all of these lies plague my life.*

(Following D.) Develop a healthy belief system based on the Word of God...

The Truth System: Developing the Mind of Christ

The acronym TRUTH is used for analyzing the dysfunctional process of unredeemed living and for learning a new process of biblical, Christ-centered evaluation and right living (Thurman, 1995). It works this way:

T – Trigger event: something that happens to you. (Your child spills milk in your lap at breakfast.)

R – Reckless thinking: unredeemed and automatic self-talk. ("I can't stand and will not tolerate any mess interfering with my morning routine.")

U – Unhealthy response: pain-causing behavior to you and your relationships. (You scream at your child, who breaks down and cries. Your spouse intervenes, angry about your reaction. Exasperated, you blame it all on spilled milk, as if perfect behavior by your child is the right cure.)

T – Truthful thinking: God-honoring beliefs and biblical thinking replace the lie you believe. (You tell yourself, "I don't like my routine being interrupted, but my relationship with my child is more important.")

H – Healthy response: right actions and controlled emotions maintain right relations. (You feel the flash of anger, stop and pray to control it without erupting, and tell your child, "Oops, we've got a mess to clean up!" Then you jump up to get a rag for cleanup with that angry energy properly redirected.)

In a nutshell, it simply works like this:

1. **Recognizing the T-U fallacy:** Our false belief that one's unhealthy behavior and ugly feelings are caused by unwanted trigger events. ("Spilled milk makes me angry.")
2. **The T-R-U train:** Our unhealthy reactions are actually a function of reckless thoughts and wrong beliefs that mediate our responses—what we call self-talk. (My intolerance of morning messes makes me angry.) These mediating beliefs are usually automatic and unconscious—one reason most of us get trapped in the T-U fallacy.
3. **TRUTH intends to make us aware of the lies we believe so we can evaluate them biblically, renounce them, and replace them with God's truth.** ("I love my kid and can't control spilled milk—it happens. I can control my attitude and change my demand for a perfect morning.")
4. **T-thinking (developing the mind of Christ) will yield life in all its variety—the H-healthy responses desired and worked for in TRUTH.** ("I still don't like spilled milk, but it no longer makes me go ballistic. In fact, I'm more relaxed in the mornings and enjoy them more. That's good for me and my children.")