

# Equipping Thoughts for Leaders



November 01, 2019

We can't imagine the Godhead ever having relational "issues" among Themselves. They walk in perfect relational oneness. They have complete honesty, transparency, and unity. Their lives center around promoting and participating in the Other's good. It is perfect selflessness. As they live for the Others, the Team is exalted.

This sounds unattainable for leadership teams to walk in on earth. After all, most teams don't seem to live anything close to the relational life of the Godhead. The problem with that perspective is that it goes against the last prayer Jesus prayed on earth!

Three times Jesus prayed that the relational life that He walked in with the Godhead would be among His leaders. Is it possible? It is hard to believe it is with all the immaturity, betrayal, hidden motives and self-promoting agendas we often find among teams. It seems like some of the most challenging problems leaders face is distrust and disunity among their teams. Yet Jesus prayed for it, and we follow Him towards answering His prayer.

***John 17:1-22*** *Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said... (11) ...Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, **that they may be one even as We are...** (20) "I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; **(21) that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also***

*may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. (22) "The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one.*

## **What do most teams need and too few have... "Redemptive Honesty"**

When Paul described God's design for His people being part of each other he immediately quotes from Zechariah 8:16 about what it takes for this common life to be lived out together.

*Eph 4:24-25 and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. (25) Therefore, laying aside falsehood, SPEAK TRUTH EACH ONE of you WITH HIS NEIGHBOR (speak honestly with one another), for we are members of one another.*

To walk in His design for relational oneness we need honesty among us. It is what I call redemptive honesty. It means that for the sake of our joining in the Lord and the life He has called us to walk together we must be honest so His unity will be maintained. Even when issues come up among us that cause relational strain, we deal with them honestly in a redemptive way (Redemption: *Delivered from the effects/bondage of sin*). It isn't using unfiltered speech that hurts others (speaking the truth and loving it), it is being honest in a way that helps deliver us from the relational gaps/strain of immaturity and sin (speaking the truth in love).

**There are often two wrong approaches to facing relational challenges among teams.**

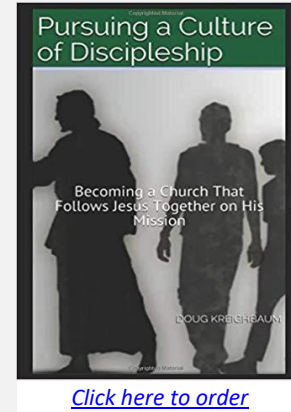
- Never address questions or touchy areas to avoid conflict.
- Address the questions or touchy areas in an inappropriate way.

## **8 Essential Truths that will help us have redemptive conversations**

- 1. In the presence of God affirm His covenant with us and from that posture affirm your love for each other.** Covenant love is commitment for the good of another because we are joined in Christ's covenant.

**2. Understand spiritual warfare involves wrong patterns of thinking sown in our minds that destroys relationships.**

God's word instructs us to not believe them. As a matter of fact, we are to "take them captive, pull them down, and destroy them." *2 Corinthians 10:3-5 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh...(5) We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.*



**3. Watch out for the 3 key relational killing stories that are sown in our minds and "put them to death" (Rom 8:13, Gal 5:16).**

"It's not my fault."

"It's all their fault."

"There's nothing else I can do."

**4. Approach all issues in a spirit of inquiry and not judgment or accusation.** The enemy is the "accuser of the brethren" (Rev 12:10). If you approach anything in that spirit it will have the nature of the enemy in it. It is good to remember that if we listen to the lies of the accuser of the brethren then we will always become an accuser of the brethren.

**5. Ask for forgiveness and forgive others** (John 17:3-4, Mark 11:25-26 etc.).

**6. Overcome all evil by doing good** (Rom 12:21, Lk 6:27-31, 1 Pet 3:9). We need to practice living in the opposite spirit/attitude from the one that caused us pain or relational conflict. This is one of the tools in spiritual warfare.

**7. Remember one of the most important facts about Biblical forgiveness. Never let anger carry on to another day.** Deal with issues in God's presence as soon as possible.

*Ephesians 4:26-27 In your anger do not sin: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.*

Each day we must get things right with God and with others. One provision God has made is the communion table. Whenever we partake of the Lord's Supper together, we are instructed to make sure we are not holding anything against a brother or sister (1 Corinthians 11:27-31).

8. **Walk in the *continuing debt of love*.** We are not owed anything by others, but we are obligated to love. *Romans 13:8 Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another...*"

When Jesus died for you, he took the judgment you deserved. Because He so loved us, out of gratitude and obligation, we owe a debt to love others the way He loved us.

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*1 John 4:11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.*

We now express our love for God by loving others. We cannot be close to God while harboring hatred or unforgiveness.

*1 John 4:20 If anyone says, 'I love God,' yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen*

We do not have to yield to the things that destroy relational oneness among God's people. Teams can live in answer to Jesus' prayer in John 17 by following His ways and living in redemptive honesty.

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