

*James Crawford – “How to Heal a Wounded Relationship”
“The Total Health Campaign”*

“How To Heal a Wounded Relationship”

10-31-21

Satan is destroying relationships on a massive scale right now. This destruction is resulting in much emotional trauma. Today, we will see emotional trauma healed in the name of Jesus.

Jesus said that “cold love” would be a key sign of the end-times. So how can we be sure that we are used by God to heal relationships and not used by Satan to divide and damage?

If we are conforming and growing in the image of Christ we will never want to divide, but rather always seek to reconcile. For Jesus is the Reconciler!

1. All Relationships Are Like Gardens

A relationship is like a garden that must be cultivated by watering it (adding components that nurture it) and weeding it (addressing the factors that hinder it). We must do our part, and then God will do His part in blessing and healing our relationships.

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2. The Various Levels of Relational Woundedness

A relationship can be wounded at various levels, from being slightly injured to deeply broken. Be alert for the signs of a wounded relationship—they include having a closed spirit (no longer receptive), being guarded (unwilling to share freely), strained communication (defensive, argumentative, sarcastic) and resisting touch (a spouse or child with a wounded spirit often resists being touched or hugged). We should be alerted if we see these signs.

3. Our Words Are the Most Dangerous Weapon

A relationship is wounded long before it is broken, and a broken relationship requires much more skill and attention to heal. If we address the relational weakness, or “infection,” at the early stages, we can avoid allowing “gangrene” to set into the relationship. It is better to be proactive in the maintenance of our relationships, because an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Death and life are in the power of the tongue... (Prov. 18:21)

The most common way to wound the spirit of a relationship is through perverse, or corrupt, speech; this includes speech that is crooked

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(perverse), instead of being straight.

A wholesome tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit. (Prov. 15:4)

Corrupt speech injures relationships, rather than imparting grace to the one being corrected. Such words grieve the Spirit, as well as grieving both the speaker and the recipient of the words.

Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit. (Eph. 4:29-30)

Perverse, or corrupt, speech includes unfair criticism (accusatory), sarcasm (insulting), “sitcom humor” (jokes about faults), anger (with rejection), being condescending (self-exalting), etc.

We are to be careful with our words and diligent to repair any damage that we cause with our words, knowing that it is more difficult to win a brother once he is offended (Prov. 18:19).

The “offended brother” often includes those with whom we are in a familiar relationship, such as a spouse, child, sibling, extended family member, good friend, or a co-worker, pastor, employer etc.

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It requires wisdom, effort, and patience to get inside a fortified city and “win” our brother.

A brother offended is harder to win than a strong [fortified] city... (Prov. 18:19)

Complaining: We are warned not to allow our complaining to injure a relationship. Continual complaining makes others want to discontinue or draw back from the relationship and can cause children to leave home prematurely.

Better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and angry woman. (Prov. 21:19)

Better is a dry morsel with quietness, than a house full of feasting with strife. (Prov. 17:1)

The contentions of a wife [or spouse, parent, friend] are a continual dripping. (Prov. 19:13)

The wise woman builds her house, but the foolish pulls it down with her hands. (Prov. 14:1)

Make a godly appeal: What do we do when a relationship is wounded? We make a godly appeal. Since the wound occurred over a period of time, the

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healing of the relationship will often take time too, involving a process of godly appeals and more.

We must not be naive in thinking that a wounded relationship will heal by itself over time. If we do not take action to heal the relationship, it will grow worse over time as we get more familiar with each other.

4. How To Gently Restore by Confronting

Matthew 18

15 “Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother.

16 But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that ‘by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.’

17 And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.