

Wisdom IN RELATIONSHIPS

Speaker: Ernie Baker, Pastor of Counseling and Discipleship
First Baptist Church Jacksonville, FL

Friday, March 15th: LAYING GOOD FOUNDATIONS FOR RELATIONSHIPS

6:30-6:45pm Check-in
6:45-7:45pm Session 1: Wisdom Built on Relationship with Christ
8:00-9:00pm Session 2: Wisdom in Understanding the Heart's Attractions

Saturday, March 16th: RESOLVING CONFLICT IN MARRIAGE

8:45-9:00am Check-in
9:00-9:45am Session 3: The Goals of Conflict Resolution (Part 1)
10:00-10:45am Session 4: The Goals of Conflict Resolution (Part 2)
11:00-11:45am Session 5: Negotiating as a Servant: PAUSE
11:45-Noon Q&A

Child Care:

Nursery care will be provided for children 3 years old and under.

<u>Cost:</u>	<u>Friday</u>	<u>Saturday</u>	<u>Total</u>
Adults, collegians & teens	\$5	\$5	\$10
12 and under	Free	Free	Free
Family maximum	\$15	\$15	\$30

Dr. Ernie Baker

Ernie has the privilege of serving as Pastor of Counseling at First Baptist of Jacksonville where he helps oversee pastoral care and the Grace Center for Biblical Counseling.

He received his M.Div. from Capital Bible Seminary, and his D.Min. in Pastoral Counseling from Westminster Theological Seminary. Dr. Baker has been in ministry since 1980. Twenty-five of these years were spent in pastoral ministry which included training and equipping pastors and laymen in the skills of discipleship counseling and conciliation before serving as Professor of Biblical Counseling at The Master's University and Seminary. He is thankful to return to pastoral ministry now.

He is a Certified Conciliator with The Institute for Christian Conciliation and teaches a number of conflict resolution courses along with doing conciliation. He is also a Fellow with the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors, a Council Board member of the Biblical Counseling Coalition. At The Master's University and Seminary, he oversees the on-line Bachelor of Arts in Biblical Counseling degree and serves as an adjunct professor in the graduate degrees at the University and seminary. It has been his privilege to teach biblical counseling and conciliation in numerous foreign countries.

He and Rose have three sons and three daughters (five of whom are married, and eight grandchildren). Ernie is the author of: *Marry Wisely, Marry Well; a blueprint for personal preparation* (Shepherd Press); *Help! I'm in a Conflict* (Shepherd Press); contributing author to *Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling* (Harvest House); *Scripture and Counseling, God's Word for Life in a Broken World* (Zondervan); *Men Counseling Men* (Harvest House); *Biblical Counseling and the Church, God's Help Through God's People* (Zondervan); *What Happened in the Garden, the Reality and Ramifications of the Fall* (Kregel) and numerous journal and magazine articles. Along with enjoying relationship with the Lord and his family, Ernie enjoys gardening, hunting and studying the American Civil War. His favorite verse is Romans 11:36.

Dr. Ernie Baker
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The Path of Wisdom and relationship choices

Introduction: The necessity of wisdom—the days we live in demand it!

I. Proverbs 24:3-4; Wisdom is the paradigm not a particular methodology

A. The foundation is wisdom, understanding and knowledge

- Principle: We must start earlier with marriage preparation given the days we live in. In other words, no 7 sessions or even 14 sessions of premarital counseling will be adequate unless the single already had good heart and relational discipleship.
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B. The blessings of building wisely—wisdom makes great claims

II. Proverbs 2: Wisdom and its fruits in relationships (this chapter is about relationship choices).

A. The grueling procedure (vss.1-4)

1. Attitudes

2. Actions

Why is it such hard work?

B. The predictable outcome (vss. 5-11)

Verse 6--Defining wisdom: Knowledge + understanding =

Biblical wisdom is both religious and practical. Stemming from the fear of the Lord (Job 28:28; Psalm 111:10; Proverbs 1:7; 9:10), it branches out to touch all of life, as the extended commentary on wisdom in Proverbs indicates. Wisdom takes insights gleaned from the knowledge of God's ways and applies them in the daily walk (Jack Lewis, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 1980, 1:66).

Verse 7--He is a shield

Verse 9--Every good course

Verse 10--Wisdom will enter your heart (mind, will, emotions, desires, affections)

C. The relational product (verses 12-22).

1. Male relationship choices (12-15)

2. Female relationship choices (16-19)

**III. Knowing you're on the path of wisdom (you can tell a wise person by the choices he or she makes).
What you choose to do or not do tells a lot about your life.**

How do you know you're marrying the right person? Have you been on the path of wisdom? What path are you on? If you're the discipler/parent/mentor, what path are you putting them on?

- Is the person a follower of Christ? He is the foundation of wisdom and knowledge. What is the evidence of his or her commitment to the Lord?
- What is the person's attitude and actions toward the word of God?
- Does this person understand that life is about the glory of God (Romans 11:36)?
- What is the "track" record of the person? What is his or her "way?"
- What is the trajectory of the person's life? Please also remember that it is about direction not perfection.
- Why were you attracted to the person?
- Has this person tried to get you to do perverse things?
- Does this person understand God's purposes for marriage, especially its covenant nature?
- Does this person understand the deep commitment and maturity that are necessary for marriage?
- Is this person your friend?
- See, *Marry Wisely, Marry Well, a blueprint for personal preparation* (Shepherd Press) for many more questions that can be explored.

Biblical Insight into Attraction

Introduction:

I. Scripture has a lot to say about attraction.

A. Song of Solomon 5 (you knew we would go here didn't you?)

B. Ezekiel 23

C. Genesis 3

II. Understanding the heart and its attractions.

A. Basic passages:

- Proverbs 4:23
- Mark 7:21-23
- Hebrews 4:12

B. Definitions of the heart and how they relate to attraction

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

C. Questions to help understand your own heart themes

When do you tend to experience fear, worry, or anxiety?

In what areas have you struggled with disappointment?

What are the situations in which you struggle with anger?

What things do you find yourself seeking to avoid?

Whose opinion really matters to you?

What occupies your mind on a regular basis? What do you find yourself dwelling on?

III. Understanding that the heart is about worship

A. All humans are religious

B. Matt. 12:34-35

C. Psalm 18:1-3 help us to understand

IV. Sample heart themes that influence relationships.

A. People pleasing and neediness

B. Control

C. Pleasure

Conclusions: Have you asked the Lord to help you understand your attractions?

What do suspect is going on your heart?

How about writing a prayer of commitment to the Lord concerning your attractions?

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The Goals of Conflict Resolution
Dealing with Everyday Conflict

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I. First G — Glorify God (everything in life is to be done as an act of worship).

A. KEY QUESTIONS:

- HOW CAN I GLORIFY GOD IN THIS CONFLICT?
- HOW CAN I APPROACH THIS CONFLICT AS AN ACT OF WORSHIP?

→ I Cor. 10:31

→ Rom. 11:36

→ Psalm 28:7

B. Understanding the source of conflict.

1. Definition of conflict—"A difference in opinion or purpose that frustrates someone's goals or desires."
2. In a fallen world conflict is inevitable and should be expected.
Dr. George Zemek, "We all live with a Genesis 3 hangover."
3. Conflict comes from a sin bent, worshiping heart.
 - a. Proverbs 4:23
 - b. Hebrews 4:12
 - c. James 4:1-2
 - d. Pleasures =
 - e. Wage =
 - f. Desires =

- Definitions of the heart from *Brown, Driver and Briggs Hebrew Lexicon*:

C. It's really all about worship (Romans 11:36).

1. Source (He is sovereign over everything—there are no accidents).
2. Sustainer
3. Specific purpose

Matthew 12:33-34—let's tie together that the heart is about worship!

- Treasure =

D. Discerning the heart (Proverbs 20:5; Psalm 18:1-3))

1. Heart questions:
 - i. When do you tend to experience fear, worry or anxiety?

2. The fruit of the Spirit test: When do you struggle with loving others?
 - i. What robs you of your joy?
 - ii. When are you harsh?

3. Discerning if a good desire has turned idolatrous:

DESIRES -- DEMANDS -- JUDGING -- PUNISHING

Are you willing to sin to get it?

from **THE PEACEMAKER'S PLEDGE**

GLORIFY GOD --Instead of focusing on our own desires or dwelling on what others may do, we will seek to please and honor God -- by depending on His wisdom, power, and love; by faithfully obeying His commands; and by seeking to maintain a loving, merciful, and forgiving attitude.

II. Second G—Get the Log Out of Your Own Eye First.

- KEY QUESTIONS: WHAT HAVE I DONE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THIS CONFLICT AND WHAT DO I NEED TO DO TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT?

- Matt.7:1-5

A. Types of logs to remove

1. Sinful attitudes (Matthew 15:19; James 3:13-4:12; 1 John 2:15-17)
 - Cravings (desires that have grown into demands)
 - Judgments (condemning others or speculation on their motives) (See Ken Sande's "Getting to the Heart of Conflict" workshop tape set and study guide)
 -
2. Sinful words
 - Harsh or reckless words (Proverbs 12:18; 15:1)
 - Grumbling and complaining (Phil. 2:14; James 5:9)
 - Falsehood -- any deception or twisting of the truth (Ex. 20:16; Proverbs 24:28)

- Gossip -- revealing or discussing personal information about others with people who are not part of the problem or the solution (Proverbs 11:13; 16:28; 20:19; 26:20; 1 Tim 5:13)
 - Slander -- speaking false and malicious words (Lev. 19:16; 2 Timothy 3:3; Titus 2:3)
 - Any “worthless” talk (Ephesians 4:29)
3. Sinful actions
- Not keeping your word (Matthew 5:37; Ps. 15:1,4).
 - Not respecting authority (Mark 10:42-45; Romans 13:1-7 I Pet. 2:18-25)
 - Not treating others as you want to be treated (Matthew 7:12).
- B. Overlook minor offenses (Proverbs 19:11; Luke 7:36; Eph. 4:1-3).
1. Learn not to have such “big toes.”
- C. Count the cost
1. Is this really worth fighting over?
 2. What will this cost emotionally, physically, spiritually, or financially?
- D. Learn that rights are privileges given by God.
1. If you are practicing the “3 opportunities,” what happens to “rights?”
 2. (A Philippians 2: 1-16 attitude is key here)
- E. Examine yourself and get your attitude/perspective right (Psalm 139:23-24).
The LORD has sanctification/refining purposes for this conflict in your life (Romans 8:28; James 1:2-5)
- Suggested homework: *The Peacemaker*, chapter 5. Do all of the questions at the end of the chapter related to your specific conflict.

from **THE PEACEMAKER’S PLEDGE**

GET THE LOG OUT OF YOUR OWN EYE Instead of attacking others or dwelling on their wrongs, we will take responsibility for our own contribution to conflicts -- confessing our sins, asking God to help us change any attitudes and habits that lead to conflict, and seeking to repair any harm we have caused.

III. Gently Restore (Go and show your brother his fault)—Pursuing others toward reconciliation.

➤ **HOW CAN I HELP OTHERS UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THIS CONFLICT?**

- A. Why go? (Gal. 6:1) Confrontation is needed when someone is “caught” (*prolambano*) in a sin.
1. “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” [MATTHEW 18:15].

2. You may be able to clarify a _____.
3. You may learn that you were _____.
4. You may help to deliver the other person from the _____ of unforgiveness.

B. When someone's sins are too serious to overlook

"If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone..."
[MATTHEW 18:15].

1. Is it _____ God? [ROMANS 2:21-24]
2. Has it _____ your relationship?
3. Is it hurting _____ (including yourself)?
[LUKE 17:2-3; 1 CORINTHIANS 5:6]
4. Is it hurting the _____?

"Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins" [JAMES 5:19-20; see LEVITICUS 19:17; PROVERBS 9:8; 19:25; 24:11-12; 27:5-6; 28:23; LUKE 17:3; GALATIANS 6:1].

→ Two summary questions:

5. Not to be a "busybody" [2 THESSALONIANS 3:11; 1 TIMOTHY 5:13; 2 TIMOTHY 2:23].
6. Excuses not to confront:
"Judge not, that you be not judged" [see MATTHEW 7:1-5].

C. Communication principles:

1. **Speak only to build others up.**

"Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers" [EPHESIANS 4:29].

2. **Listen carefully**

3. **Waiting** [PROVERBS 18:13; MATTHEW 7:12]

4. **Concentrating**

5. **Clarifying**

- a. "Are you saying...?"

b. “Would you give me an example...?”

6. Reflecting

a. “From your perspective, I was wrong when . . .”

b. You really care about . . .”

7. Agreeing [PSALM 141:5; PROVERBS 28:13]

a. “You’re right. I should not have. . .”

b. A lot of what you say is true.”

c. “I can understand why you feel that way.”

➔ Let’s practice:

D. The elements of an effective confrontation [PROVERBS 12:18]

1. Pray

2. Choose the right time and place

3. Believe the best about others until you have facts to prove otherwise

a. [1 CORINTHIANS 13:7].

4. Talk in person whenever possible

a. [MATTHEW 18:15].

5. Plan your words.

6. Use a gracious tone of voice and friendly body language.

7. Be objective (facts vs. personal opinions or conclusions).

8. Use the Bible carefully

a. How can Scripture be used incorrectly?

9. Ask for feedback

E. Recognize your limits [ROMANS 12:18; 2 TIMOTHY 2:24-26].

1. Your job ➔ to _____ the truth in love as clearly and persuasively as possible.

2. God’s job ➔ to _____ people.

F. When and How Should You Involve Other People?

➔ “*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*” [MATTHEW 18:16].

from **THE PEACEMAKER’S PLEDGE**

GENTLY RESTORE -- Instead of pretending that conflict doesn’t exist or talking about others behind their backs, we will choose to overlook minor offenses, or we will talk directly and graciously with those whose offenses seem too serious to overlook. When a conflict with another Christian cannot be resolved in private, we will ask others in the body of Christ to help us settle the matter in a biblical manner.

IV. GO AND BE RECONCILED—The Beauty of reconciliation

- HOW CAN I DEMONSTRATE FORGIVENESS AND ENCOURAGE A REASONABLE SOLUTION TO THIS CONFLICT?

→ *First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift (Matthew 5:24).*

- A. Why is reconciliation so important? (see 2 Cor. 5)
- B. You will need to forgive (Eph. 4:31-32)

C. Reconciliation and replacement principle

1. Reconciliation means that your relationship is restored at least to its condition before the conflict arose [MATTHEW 5:23-24; 6:12; 2 CORINTHIANS 2:5-11; 5:18-21]

2. Or, maybe a more realistic, healthy relationship

3. Reconciliation usually takes deliberate work (consider how much God sacrificed)

4. The replacement principle

“But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you” [LUKE 6:27-28; see LEVITICUS 19:18; EPHESIANS 4:22-24].

- In _____ [PHILIPPIANS 4:8]
- In _____ [ROMANS 12:14]
- In _____ [ROMANS 12:20]

from THE PEACEMAKER’S PLEDGE

AND BE RECONCILED Instead of accepting premature compromise or allowing relationships to wither, we will actively pursue genuine peace and reconciliation forgiving others as God, for Christ’s sake has forgiven us, and seeking just and mutually beneficial solutions to our differences.

Conclusion: Of the four points you have heard which do you need to work on the most?

How will you do it?

How about writing a prayer of commitment to the Lord:

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Learning to Negotiate as a Servant

P-A-U-S-E

(From Ken Sande, *Peacemaking for Families*)

“Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others” [PHILIPPIANS 2:3-4].

Introduction:

I. Negotiating that shows care for others is Christ like.

A. Consider Philippians 2:3-4

B. Consider Matthew 22: 36-40

“Love... is not self-seeking” [1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-5].

II. So, when you need to negotiate, PAUSE.

P _____

A _____ relationships

U _____ interests

S _____ for creative solutions

E _____ options objectively and reasonably

A. Prepare.

The atmosphere—Eph. 4:1-3 Is it safe to talk?

“The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way, but the folly of fools is deceit”
[PROVERBS 14:8, 22].

Pray.

Get the facts.

Get the log out of your own eye (Matt. 7:1-5)

Identify issues and interests.

Study the Bible.

Seek Godly counsel.

Anticipate reactions.

Pick a good time and place.

Plan your opening remark.

B. Affirm relationships (show concern and respect).

Communicate in a courteous manner.

Spend time on personal issues.

Exercise authority with restraint.

Submit to authority in a godly manner.

Earnestly seek to understand others' concerns and perspectives.

Look out for the interests of others.

Confront in a gracious manner.

Give sincere praise and encouragement.

C. Understand interests.

_____ - an identifiable and concrete question

_____ - a desired outcome or definable perspective on an issue

_____ - what motivates people and gives rise to positions; a concern
desire, need, limitation, or something a person values

Principle: The better you understand others' interests (as well as your own), the more likely you are to develop acceptable solutions.

Ask clarifying questions (Am I hearing you say? It seems like your fear is_____).

Repeat back to the person what you believe you are hearing and ask him or her to correct your misunderstanding (Please don't let me put words in your mouth but it seems like I'm hearing you say_____. Is that correct? Or, how would you state it?)

Try to concisely state what the issue is from each other's perspective and narrow it down to a sentence or two.

Now that you clearly understand each other's position on the issue or issues turn each issue into a question or questions to be answered. What is the most important question to be answered related to this issue?

See additional sheet on listening and question asking skills.

D. Search for creative solutions [PROVERBS 14:8; DANIEL 1:11-13].

Look to God's truth [PSALM 19:7; 111:10].

When brainstorming, separate inventing from deciding. This is time to be creative so **don't criticize suggestions.**

Continue to practice clarifying skills.

If things start to get "heated" take a break and then come back and pray together and start again.

E. Evaluate options objectively and reasonably (evaluate, don't argue).

"So Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, 'Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then let our appearance be examined before you, and the appearance of the young men who eat the portion of the king's delicacies; and as you see fit, so deal with your servants.' So he consented with them in this matter, and tested them ten days. And at the end of ten days their features appeared better and fatter in flesh than all the young men who ate the portion of the king's delicacies. Thus the steward took away their portion of delicacies and the wine that they were to drink, and gave them vegetables" [DANIEL 1:11-16].

Seek objective opinions from trusted advisors [PROVERBS 12:15; MATTHEW 18:16] or ask them to mediate (I Cor. 6:1-8).

Look behind others' positions and deal wisely with their objections and criticisms.

Conclusion:

How could you put this into practice? What is the biggest issue in your marriage right now?
Have you taken the time to understand your spouse's position?

Spend a moment writing a prayer of commitment telling the Lord what you have learned
and how you plan on using this principle.

F. Communication skills

1. Speak only to build others up.

“Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers” [EPHESIANS 4:29].

2. Listen carefully

3. Waiting [PROVERBS 18:13] [MATTHEW 7:12]

a. Concentrating

b. Clarifying

- “Are you saying...?”
- “Would you give me an example...?”

4. Reflecting

a. “From your perspective, I was wrong when . . .”

b. “You really care about . . .”

5. Agreeing [PSALM 141:5; PROVERBS 28:13]

- “You’re right. I should not have. . .”
- A lot of what you say is true.”
- “I can understand why you feel that way.”