

Message Series: ALL IN – A Relationship Series

Message Title: The Death Spiral Every Relationship Faces and How to Pull Out

Date: February 6&7, 2016

Message Summary: Nearly all of life involves learning how to navigate relationships. Every relationship that matters to us will face the “death spiral”. During this teaching we learn the Biblical principles that apply to all relationships and how we pull out of the death spiral to survive to the other side so we can keep climbing to the place of “rich reward”

Leaders: The questions that follow are designed to stir reflection and discussion. Please read through them prior to your meeting, so you can be prepared to prayerfully pace your group well. Feel free to write your answers down and make notes so you are prepared to lead your group. And remember, as leader, your goal is to promote increased *biblical* awareness, as well as individual *self*-awareness – a combination that with the help of the Holy Spirit, results in revelation and...transformation!

Below you will find questions that relate to the primary scripture and additional scripture. There will be other reflective questions intended for group discussion and application.

1. Pastor Ken described a chart that compared levels of commitment combined and time invested. Talk about the chart and describe where you've seen this truth in your life and in your relationships with others.
2. Read Romans 5:8 and talk about what an ALL IN relationship looks like to you. "ALL IN" in a relationship means I am committed to this no matter what because there is a greater reward in store here that has a lot more to do than what's best for me.
3. Using Pastor Ken's example on the chart, describe how our level of commitment directly effects what we receive from our relationship with Christ.
4. Do you agree that the challenge is not so much learning to love and trust God (He is perfect and loves us perfectly) but the real challenge is learning to love one another because we are all imperfect?

➤ **The Death Spiral**

1. It often starts when someone says or does something or someone doesn't say or doesn't do something and someone gets hurt.
2. When hurt and negative emotions well up inside of us (frustration, hurt, confused, angry), protective barriers begin to form. Can you relate?

3. Sometimes we “keep the peace” by avoiding and not talking about the hurt but by doing so we are suffocating hope for the relationship to grow.
4. All this causes relationships to keep drifting apart, connection is lost, bitterness creeps in, love is lost and the downward death spiral keep spiraling.
5. Pastor Ken said there are 3 basic options to deal with hurt in a relationship:
 - a. Do nothing & hope something changes
 - b. Do what comes natural (most of the time what was modeled in your home growing up)
 - c. Do what the Bible says
6. Talk about how conflict / hurt was dealt with in relationships in your home growing up. Do you have the tendency to be a stuffer or a blower? How has that impacted your thinking and dealing with hurt or conflict in your life and relationships?

➤ **Dealing with conflict & hurt requires a certain skill set & mindset**

Describe the difference between skill set and mind set. Which one comes easiest for you? (Skill set = what to do Mind set = describes the spirit and approach to which we do it)

1. Step 1 when dealing with conflict and hurt - when you sense it you must RISK it and GO

Read Matthew 18:15

Between the offended party vs. the offending party... where does Jesus put the responsibility to initiate the first step of dealing with relational hurt?

When we are hurt the biblical principle is: don't delay dealing with it. Why?

Read Ephesians 4:25-27

When we are about to have a tough conversation... what seems to work best text, email or face to face? Why?

When we go, we are to go in a spirit of...

Love ... I Corinthians 13

Humility... Philippians 2:1-8

Having talked to God about it... bathed in prayer

To get right, not to be right... that's the goal!

Read Matthew 5:9

What does it mean to be a “peacemaker”?

Do you think it's passive compliance or actively working towards peace?

2. Step 2 when dealing with conflict and hurt - when you go, own your part, express how you feel, extend & seek forgiveness when needed.

3. Step 3 when dealing with conflict and hurt - seek reconciliation

Pastor Ken talked about how Steps 1 & 2 require 1 person, while Step 3 requires 2 or more people. Where have you seen this play out in your life?

4. Read Romans 12:17-18

Where does our responsibility rest based on this passage?

How effective are we when we try to control how other people think and act?

5. Do you have an "Olive Garden" friendship in your life?

Have you given someone permission to speak into your life truth even though you may not want to hear?

6. Read Ephesians 4:25-27 again

Discuss the difference between being hurt vs. sinned against.

Discuss how hurt can quickly become sinful if not dealt with in a quick, biblical manner.

Read Proverbs 6:16-19

➤ **Why dealing with relational conflict is important**

1. It's a part of our spiritual maturing process. We must learn how to deal with conflict the right way.

2. Our relationship with God has a direct impact on our earthly relationships. We are to be shining examples to the world of how to deal with hurt and conflict.

3. This is an impossible task to do on our own... seek God first. Being "right with others" is impossible without first striving to take steps to be right with Christ.

"Ask God to do a work in your life first. Then He will do a work in your relationships."
Pastor Ken

What's your next step?