

TRANSFORMED



RELATIONAL HEALTH “Facing the Fears That Ruin Relationships”

Genesis 3:6-19

October 5, 2014

HOW OUR FEARS RUIN RELATIONSHIPS

1. _____
“God called to Adam, ‘Why are you hiding?’ Adam said, ‘I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.’”

Genesis 3:9-10 (LB/TEV)

“... they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness”

Vs. 7a (NLT)

“So they sewed fig leaves to cover up themselves.”

Vs. 7b (NIV)

“Then they hid from God among the trees.” Vs. 8 (NIV)

2. _____
“God asked, ‘Did you eat ... what I told you not to eat?’ Adam answered, ‘YOU gave me this woman and SHE gave me the fruit!’” Genesis 3:12 (NIV)

“Then Eve said, ‘The SNAKE tricked me into eating!’”

Genesis 3:13 (TEV)

3. _____

The Result of Their Sin:

“... You’ll have yearning for your husband, but he will lord it over you...” vs. 16 (NJB) “... he will dominate you ...” (Berkley Version)

THE ANTIDOTE: _____

“Wherever God’s love is, there is no fear, because God’s perfect love drives out all fear.” 1 John 4:18a (NCV)

“It is the thought of punishment (negative consequences) that makes a person fearful.” John 4:18b (NCV)

1. EVERYDAY SURRENDER _____

“Surrender your heart to God, turn to him in prayer, and give up your sins— even those you do in secret. Then you won’t be ashamed; you will be confident and fearless. your troubles will go away like water beneath a bridge, and your darkest night will be brighter than noon. Then you’ll rest safe and secure, filled with hope and emptied of worry!” Job 11:13-18 (CEV)

2. EVERYDAY REMEMBER _____

✓ I’M _____

“Jesus made us acceptable to God.” Titus 3:7 (CEV)

✓ I’M _____

“My love for you will never end says the Lord.”

Isaiah 54:10 (NIV)

✓ I’M _____

“There is NO condemnation for those in Christ Jesus!”

Romans 8:1 (NIV)

✓ I’M _____

“You’ve been bought and paid for by Christ’s death.”

1 Corinthians 7:23 (NIV)

3. EVERYDAY OFFER _____

“Accept one another just as Christ accepted you.”

Romans 15:7 (NIV)

“Love never stops being patient, Love never stops believing, Love never stops hoping, Love never gives up!” 1 Corinthians 13:7 (GW)

TRANSFORMED Emotional Health

“Facing the Fears That Ruin Relationships”

Genesis 3:6-19

October 5, 2014 AM Worship

The Bulk of this Message is from Rick Warren however I edited and added other elements and my own personal illustrations as well as other extras.

I want to welcome you to 50 Days of Transformation. We've been looking at transforming seven key areas of your life. We've looked at your spiritual health. We've looked at your physical health. We've looked at your mental health. Last week we looked at emotional health.

This week I want us to look at relational health. Transforming your relationships. How to make your relationships better.

I want us to **look at diffusing the fears that ruin relationships**. To do that we're going to go all the way back to the [book of Genesis](#), the very first book of the Bible, and look at the first couple Adam and Eve because that's where all the problems started. Thank you Adam and thank you Eve!

You know the story that God created the entire universe because he wanted to create earth because he wanted to create a sustaining environment for human beings because God wanted a family. If God hadn't wanted a family he wouldn't have created the universe. But he made it all because he wants you to be in his family.

So he made Adam and he put him in the Garden of Eden, a perfect paradise. Adam had everything he could possibly want **except he was lonely**. Because he noticed that animals had mates but there was no mate for Adam.

I think that God did this intentionally. Two reasons: He wanted Adam to realize what he would need in his own life. Second, I think God made Adam and then thought, “I could do better.” And then he makes woman!

So God makes Adam out of the dust, out of the dirt of the earth. **He creates Adam out of dirt. And he creates woman out of Adam.**

This by the way is why men don't mind getting dirty and women do. Because men are made of dirt. Okay? We were created out of the dirt so we like dirt. We don't mind getting muddy, messy. But woman wasn't

created out of dirt. The Bible says that they were taken from a rib of Adam.

There's a symbolism in this. That God created Adam's helpmate, his partner for life. His wife out of his rib. He didn't take her from his feet where he would lord over her. He didn't take her from his head where she would lord over him. But he took his wife from his side where she would be his equal, his partner and he took her from a rib close to the heart as a symbol of she is to be deeply loved.

There's a lot more I could say about that but that's not where we're going this week. But God puts Adam to sleep; he creates woman. When Adam wakes up he sees Eve in her full glory. Adam wakes up and he's never seen a naked woman before. And he wakes up and goes Whoa! Whoa! Man! Man O man! Woman!

And that's where the word came from. Woman!

Things went along really great for a long time between man and woman because there was no sin. So there was no sadness, no sickness, no sorrow, no suffering, no deceit, no lying, no manipulating, no jealousy. None of these things in their relationship. **They were the only couple who had a perfect relationship!** The only one. Because since sin entered the world everything else was broken.

Then you know the story. Satan comes to Eve and he lies to her and he says **"Didn't God say that you can't eat from any of the trees in the garden?"** Of course God hadn't said that. He said you can only not eat from one. That's the minimum temptation. Everything else is within limits. Do whatever you want to with it. Just one tree is off limits. To give you a choice. Because I want you to choose to love me.

Then he says, **"God's lying to you. You're not going to die if you eat of the fruit of that tree. In fact, you'll be as wise as God. You'll be god!"** **Every temptation comes to that basic issue. I want to be God. Satan never tempts us to be like himself.** He never says, do this temptation and you'll be like me. You'll be evil. Nobody would do it. But Satan says do this because you know better than God. Because God is old fashioned. Because God is out of date. God doesn't want you to be happy. You should do this because you know what will make you happy more than God. **You're a god!** And Eve fell for that line.

Let me read you the story. It's in Genesis 3. We'll pick up the story about verse 6. "... so Eve ate some of the fruit. Then she also gave some to her husband, Adam, who was with her, and he ate it. Immediately, their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. [This is where shame enters the world. There had never been any shame and never any guilt, never any fear prior to this.] So they sewed fig leaves together to cover up themselves. Then they heard the Lord walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from God among the trees. But God called out to Adam, 'Where are you?' Adam replied, 'I heard you coming and I was afraid [notice fear again] because I was naked; so I hid.' Then God asked, 'Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?' Adam said, 'You gave me this woman [You see the humor in that] and she gave me the fruit, so I ate it.' Then God said to Eve, 'Why did you do this?' Eve replied, 'The serpent deceived me, and I ate it.' ...So God said to Eve, '(Because you disobeyed me. In other words because you didn't do what I told you to do, there's going to be a curse now. Everything's broken. One of the things that's going to be broken is childbirth. He said...) you'll have greater trouble in pregnancy and great pain in childbirth. [How many of you are mothers? Anybody want to give a testimony on this verse? You can thank Eve for all that pain! He said you'll have trouble in pregnancy and great pain in childbirth] And though you'll desire your husband, [In other words you're still going to love your husband] he's going to lord it over you. [In other words there's going to be conflict. There's going to be domination issues. There's going to be distractions. There's going to be a power struggle in your relationship from now on.] Then God said to Adam, 'Because you also disobeyed me and sinned with your wife, the ground you work is now cursed. And though you'll get to eat what you planted, your fields will have weeds, and thorns and thistles, [Thank Adam for all the weeds in the world] and for the rest of your life you'll have to sweat and work hard to get your food until you yourself are returned to the dirt that I used to create you.'"

This is a fascinating story, filled with enormous amounts of spiritual truth in it. But I just want to point out the relational truths. Because in this story we see the three basic fundamental fears that pop up in every single relationship.

You can use what we're going to look at today in your Lifegroup. You can use it in your marriage. You can use it with a boyfriend or girlfriend. You can use it with friends. You can use it at work. These three fundamental fears that started in the first relationship when sin entered are still present in your life and everybody else's life and they damage and they destroy potential in the relationship.

HOW OUR FEARS RUIN RELATIONSHIPS

1. The first fear we learn is this: It's the fear of exposure. The fear of exposure makes me distant.

Why can't I get close to people? I'd like to be closer to my wife. I'd like to be closer to my husband. I'd like to have that intimacy, that sole passionate intimacy of partnership. Why can't I get close to the people in my life?

My fear of exposure makes me distant.

Here's the truth. There's a lot in you that you don't like. You don't like it about you and because you don't like it about you, you certainly don't want anybody else to see it. The things that you don't accept about you, you have a fear will not be accepted by others so you want to keep your distance.

Because when people get close to you, they can see you, warts and all. The closer people get the more they see your blemishes, the more they see your mistakes, your faults, your failures, your weaknesses. So we keep people at a distance because of fear of exposure that people will know what we know about ourselves. Those things you don't like about you, you don't want them being shared by anyone else because they might reject it.

Verses 9-10 of Genesis 3 it says this, "God called Adam, 'Why are you hiding?' And Adam said 'I was afraid because I was naked and so I hid.'"

Whenever God asks you a question like this and he asked Adam two questions. First he said, Where are you? and, Why were you hiding? Whenever God asks you a question he already knows the answer. He wasn't asking those questions for his benefit. He's asking the question for Adam's benefit because he wants Adam to own up. He wants Adam to man up. He wants Adam to be a man and accept responsibility for the fact that he had run and he was hiding.

Any transformation in any area of your life including relationships only happens when you own up to the fact that they aren't what they ought to be. As long as you think, I've got a great marriage, it's not going to get any better. I've got great friendships – fine. As long as you're in denial there's no recovery, there's no transformation.

So it starts with you owning up and being honest to God and honest with yourself that my relationships are not what they could be. They could be a whole lot better than they are right now.

I want you to circle in that verse the phrase, “I was afraid and I hid.”

Because they go together. I was afraid and I hid.

Fear always causes us to hide. I wonder what you're hiding from today, because of fear. What are you pretending not to know? What are you pretending isn't a problem in your marriage? What are you pretending isn't a problem in your life? What are you pretending isn't a problem in your relationships because you are afraid of facing the truth.

God doesn't want you to fake it. He wants you to face it when it comes to fear. What are you pretending not to know? I was afraid and I hid.

Also circle the phrase “I was naked.” What does it mean to be naked? He's talking about **more here than just physical nakedness.** There's an **emotional nakedness** too. To be naked means to be **exposed.** It means to be **uncovered.** It means to be **vulnerable.** It means to be authentic. It means you're out in the open. It means you are unprotected. You are never more vulnerable than when you're naked. It's just all out there. There's nothing to hide.

When we are afraid of nakedness, afraid of vulnerability, afraid of being open, afraid of being honest, afraid of letting people see us as we really are, my fear of exposure makes me distant.

One of our deepest needs is to be loved. But **one of our deepest fears is the fear of being seen for what you really are.** You can live with a husband or wife for fifty years and keep secrets from them because you're afraid that they would not accept that part of your life. Living with somebody doesn't guarantee that they're seeing all of you because they're not.

I want you to notice the **damage that fear does to a relationship.** **There are three stages or Phases** and we see all three of them here in this.

Phase 1: SHAME

That's [verse 7](#). Once they disobeyed God the first thing that entered their relationship was shame. When you disobey God, shame enters your relationship. It says, *"They suddenly felt shame at their nakedness."* **Fear is often based in shame.**

When you carry shame you are **easily embarrassed**. When you carry shame you fear embarrassment almost more than anything else. And you will do almost anything in your life to avoid embarrassment. That is the symptom that you're carrying unresolved shame in your life.

Shame makes **me more self conscious**. Shame makes me **more nervous**. Shame makes me **fearful of being humiliated**. I'm going to avoid that at all costs. Shame means I'm easily mortified. Because if you have any of those things in your life it means there's some shame you haven't given to God and let him take away in your life.

Phase 2 is COVER UP.

The cover up. What happens is when we feel ashamed we try to conceal who we really are – our true selves. [Verse 7b](#) says *"So they sewed fig leaves together to cover up themselves."* If you've ever seen a fig leaf they're not very big! Some of us it'd take a lot of fig leaves to cover up.

Today we all have much more sophisticated ways of covering up who we really are. We don't have to use fig leaves any more but we do it all the time. I wonder what ways you use to cover up your fears, your insecurities. **What ways do you cover them up?**

Some people **use humor**. They're the class clown but they don't let anybody get close to them. They don't let anybody get close to them. They use humor.

Maybe you try to cover up your insecurities **by presenting an image that you're all put together**. You've got the right clothes, you've got the right accessories, you've got the right hair, you drive the right car, you say the right things, you use the right words.

You give this image that you're all put together but you're not. You don't have it all together. You don't have it all together in any sense of the word. But you try to present this image. Why? Out of fear.

Today a lot of people **hide behind an online image**. If you read their

Facebook their life is perfect. And if you read their Instagram they have nothing but fun and everybody wants to date them! They are so cool. Stop pretending you've got a perfect life on social media! You're just faking it and it's revealing fears in your life.

There's a third phase. We move from shame to cover up and the third phase is...

Phase 3: DISTANCE FROM GOD

That's verse 8. *"Then they hid from God among the trees."*

Years ago there was a guy wrote a book called [Why Am I Afraid to Tell You Who I Really Am?](#)

Good question. Why am I afraid to tell you who I really am? The answer to that question was the reason **I'm afraid to tell you who I really am is because you may not like who I am.** And if I shared who I really am not who I'm pretending to be, if I shared who I really am and you don't accept me it's tough luck. I'm up the creek without a paddle. So there's no way I'm going to let you see the real me. Because you might reject it.

They hid from God among the trees. This causes us now not only to be **disconnected from other people** and that's why we have relationship problem with others. **But we're disconnected from God** and that's why we have a relationship problem with God. We not only start fearing other people but we start fearing God out of shame.

God doesn't expect you to be perfect but he does expect you to be honest.

So the **first fear is this fear of being exposed.** And that causes me to be distant. The second fear we see in Adam and Eve is the fear of disapproval.

2. MY FEAR OF DISAPPROVAL MAKES ME DEFENSIVE.

Now we move from **simply hiding and running and covering up** to now being **defensive and we start attacking other people back.** We're not just hiding; we're now hurling. **We're not just excusing ourselves; we're accusing others.**

In this stage now, when I have this fear of disapproval, **I start pointing fingers at everybody else.** And you hear people say, But you did that. You did this but you did that. That's moving from hiding to hurling. **From excusing to accusing.**

The more critical a person is the more you know they fear disapproval. I'll say that again: The more critical, the more perfectionistic, the more attacking somebody else – they're always putting somebody else down – the more you know that person fears disapproval. Because that's the way it shows up. The more I fear disapproval in my life the more I'm going to point at other people and all of what they're doing wrong.

So you see these commentators and preachers and other people always pointing out the wrongs of everybody else. They are afraid of being disapproved of themselves. It's coming out of their judgmentalism.

We see this in verse 12 *“God asked, ‘Did you eat what I told you not to eat?’ Adam answered Adam said, ‘You gave me this woman and she gave me the fruit, so I ate it.’”* **Adam took it like a man – he blamed his wife.**

He's not even blaming his wife but he's blaming God. *You gave me this woman. If you hadn't made this woman, you and me God, we'd be like this.* It's all my wife's fault. I'd really be close to you, God, if it weren't for *that* wife, that woman. She seduced me. She got me all messed up.

So Adam's blaming not only Eve, **he's blaming God for his choice.** He's passing the responsibility. You've heard me say many times you spell blame *b lame*. And Adam is being lame here.

Sorry ladies, **but Eve wasn't any more willing to accept responsibility.**

She doesn't show up either. She doesn't woman up to this. *Verse 13 “Eve said, ‘The serpent deceived me, and I ate it.’”* So Adam blames his wife and Eve blames the snake. Great. My fear of disapproval makes me defensive.

This happens in your marriage and your relationships all the time. If anybody says anything to you, your wife says something to you that you feel has a hint of disapproval, you immediately get defensive. You immediately get defensive. And you either explain it or you attack back or you accuse or you excuse or you say something catty or whatever.

My fear of exposure makes me distant and my fear of disapproval makes me defensive.

But there's a third fear that I see in Adam and Eve. It's the fear of losing control.

3. MY FEAR OF LOSING CONTROL MAKES ME DEMANDING.

The result of Adam and Eve's sin is they lost control. They lost **control of everything**. They lost control of their **future**. They lost control of their **destiny**. They got kicked out of paradise. Now they're feeling totally out of control because **they were**. They weren't controlling anything at this point. In this situation – my fear of losing control makes me demanding.

Let me say it this way: **The more out of control you feel the more controlling you become.**

The more out of control I feel the more controlling I become. I start bossing everybody around. I start making demands. I start protecting myself. I start defending, demanding, demeaning. I start dominating. The more insecure you are the greater you have the need to get your way.

If you're a very secure person you don't need to have your way all the time. You don't. It doesn't bother you. You don't have to have your way all the time because you're secure. But if you're insecure then you really have to have your way all the time. And you fight for your way and you push for your way and you control your way. The more out of control you feel the more controlling you become.

This happens in [verse 16](#) where God says to Eve *"You'll have yearnings for your husband.[in other words you're going to love your husband even though you both messed up] but he will lord it over you."* The Berkeley version says *"he will dominate you."*

This is where the war of the sexes began. Right there. All the misunderstanding between men and women and husbands and wives, boyfriends and girlfriends. All the confusion, all the conflict, all the jockeying for power and position. All the bargaining and who's going to be in control of this and who's going to run this... that all goes back to this situation here. **Sin.**

It's not a whole lot of fun to be in that kind of a relationship. Where you're **not cooperating but you're competing** with each other. Would you like to move from competition to cooperation in your marriage? Where you're not fighting each other but you're fighting together against other things? You're on the same team. *How do you do that?*

What is the antidote that transforms a relationship that relieves these three fears? The **fear of exposure** and the **fear of disapproval** and the **fear of losing control** that causes me to be **distant** and **defensive** and **demanding**

There's only one ANTIDOTE to the fears. It is love.

Write this down: Learn to live in God's love.

Notice this verse. 1 John 4:18. The first half of the verse says this *"Wherever God's love is, there is no fear."* **Circle that – no fear.** So you want to get rid of fear in a relationship? You've got to get God's love there. You want to get rid of fear in your career? Get God's love there. You want to get fear out of your education or your sports or whatever? You've got to get God's love there. Wherever God's love is there is no fear. *Why? "...Because God's perfect love drives out all fear."*

The opposite of fear is not faith. The opposite of fear is love. When you invite God's love into the front door of your heart – last week we talked about your heart is the center of your emotions. **When you ask God's love into your heart through the front door, fear goes out the backdoor. Because fear and love can't live in the same house.** When you let fear in the front door of your house, love goes out the back door. Whenever you are afraid you are not being loving. Because perfect love casts out all fear.

Why is it that people will stand watching a fire burning a building down and everybody's afraid to go in? But somebody runs in – it's the mother going in to get the baby. **Why? Because fear is overcome by love.** And the love is greater than the fear.

LEARN TO LIVE IN GOD'S LOVE

So learn to live in God's love. This is the result of fear the second part of that verse – 1 John 4:18b *"It is the thought of punishment that makes a person fearful."*

What is the thought of punishment? It's thinking about the negative consequences. **How many times have you been afraid to tell the truth because of the consequences?** How many times have you been afraid to be yourself because of the consequences? How many times have you gone to a party or gone on a date and you didn't want to say what you really believed because of the fear of the consequences – the punishment you'd receive. How many times have you had a friend and you knew something was wrong in their life and you tell them almost all of the truth but you save back the last ten percent which will make the difference? You hold back so many times, we hold back the last ten percent from somebody

because we're afraid we're going to hurt their feelings and then they're going to reject us. You're really doing it out of fear. We don't want to share the last ten percent.

It is the thought of punishment or negative consequences that makes a person fearful.

So how do I learn to live in God's love? You do three things. If you'll do these three things it will transform your relationships. These things will transform. **Three daily choices.**

Every day I surrender, every day I remember and every day I offer. If I do these three things and if you will do these three things you will transform your relationships.

HOW DO I LEARN TO LIVE IN GOD'S LOVE?

1. EVERY DAY SURRENDER MY HEART TO GOD.

Every day surrender my heart to God. Last week when we talked about emotions we said the heart is the symbol of the center of your emotions.

So what you do is every morning when you wake up you sit on the side of your bed and you say, "God before I even start this day I surrender the center of my emotions to you. God, I want you to be Lord of my feelings, Lord of my emotions. I want you to control my mind and my emotions. My mind and my heart. I surrender it to you. I want you to fill me with your love.

Why? Because God is love. God is love! The closer you get to God the more love will fill your heart. The further away you get from God the more fear will fill your heart. So if you want to get rid of your fears you've got to get close to God. If you get away from God fear, anxiety, worry, insecurity – those are going to soar in your life. Because perfect love casts out all fear. So if I get close to God it casts out the worry, the insecurity, the anxiety, the fears and all of those things.

Job 11:13-18 it's a great verse. It says this: *"Surrender your heart to God, turn to him in prayer, and give up your sins— even those you do in secret. [You can do that the first thing in the morning. You sit on the side of your bed – surrender your heart to God, turn to him in prayer and give up your sins even those you do in secret] Then [notice the benefits] you won't be ashamed; [shame will be banished from your life. You won't be ashamed...] you will be confident and fearless. Your troubles will go away*

like water beneath a bridge, and your darkest night will be brighter than noon. Then you'll rest safe and secure, filled with hope and emptied of worry!"

Hello! Does anybody want that? I could have done the whole message on that one. We could read that verse and go home.

There are **three commands and eight promises** in that verse. God says you do this and I'll do this. **Every promise has a premise.**

Surrender your heart to God. God, I give you my emotions, I give you my heart. I do it every day. Turn to him in prayer. You talk to him in prayer. And you give up your sins. That's confession. You say, God that was wrong. That attitude was wrong. I shouldn't have done that. You get a clean heart.

Then he says. **Notice the eight benefits.** No shame, you'll be confident, you'll be fearless, your troubles will be like water under the bridge, the dark night you're going through is going to be brighter than noon, you'll be able to sleep well, you're going to be able to rest safe and secure you'll sleep well; you're going to be filled with hope and you're going to be emptied of worry.

Wow! You ought to take that verse and write it on a little three by five card this week and put it on your vanity or put it on your car visor or put it where you will see it and you read it over and over and over. Do those three things and expect those eight benefits.

The first thing I do to live in God's love is every day surrender my heart to God. And look at the benefits.

2. EVERY DAY I REMEMBER. -

Remember What? **Every day I remember the way God loves me.**

You have to pause every day and remember the way that God loves you. Because if you don't feel loved by God you're certainly not going to offer love to anybody else. If you don't feel loved you're not going to be loving. **It is impossible to be loving and not feel loved.**

So I have to remind myself every day what God thinks about me. Not what the world thinks, not even what I think about me. But what does God think about me? This is what removes my fears.

Let me just give you **four of the things God thinks about you.**

○ **I'm completely accepted.**

That's important because the **deepest wounds of your life are those caused by rejection**. So we spend much of our lives trying to earn the acceptance and avoid rejection from our parents and from our peers and from those we respect and from those we envy. And even total strangers. We want their respect. We want to be accepted. We don't want to be rejected. Even strangers.

There is a myth that says, If I could just be perfect then everybody would like me. I hate to tell you this: Jesus was perfect and a lot of people didn't like him. No matter who you are or what you do somebody's not going to like it.

Here's the good news: You don't need everybody's approval to be happy. The bad news is you're not going to get it anyway! The good news is though they're always worried about their approval rating. Do I have enough friends on Facebook?

The point here is you need to realize this issue of acceptance has already been settled by God. The Bible says in Titus 3:7 "*Jesus made us acceptable to God.*" **Jesus** – what he did on the cross – made us acceptable to God. If God likes me and I like me if you don't like me what's your problem? I'm acceptable. I am completely accepted.

○ **I'm unconditionally loved.**

That's what God thinks about you. **He loves you unconditionally.** There are a lot of things I can say about God's love but two of the characteristics of **God's love are it's consistent and it's unconditional.**

God is not fickle. God is not unpredictable. God doesn't say I'm going to love you today but tomorrow I've got a bad hair day.

Over the years, heard people say something like this, growing up I never knew if my dad was going to hug me or slug me. Inconsistent parents produce insecure kids. That may be where some of your insecurity came from. But God's love is consistent. It's not fickle.

And not only that; it's unconditional. God doesn't say I love you if. He doesn't say I love you because. **He says I love you period!** I love you in spite of the fact. **You can't make God stop loving you.** God will never love you more than this very second and God will never love you any less than this second. **No one will ever love you more than God does. You never need to ask, Will God love me today? Did I pray enough today?**

God's love is not based on what YOU DO but on WHO HE IS! We always get into trouble when we doubt God's love. When we doubt God's love we get fearful. *Isaiah 54:10* says *"My love for you will never end says the Lord."* I am completely accepted and I'm unconditionally loved.

The third thing God says about you,

○ **I'm totally forgiven.**

So why am I carrying shame? Why am I holding onto shame? I'm totally forgiven. Do you realize that **before God even made you he already knew the worst things you'd ever do and he still chose to love you?** He knows the things you're going to do that you don't even know you're going to do. He already knows them. And he still has chosen to love you. Because of what Jesus did for you, dying for your sins on the cross, I am totally forgiven. *Romans 8:1* *"There is NO condemnation for those in Christ Jesus!"* Sin is wiped out. **God doesn't rehearse it; He releases it.**

Then number four, what does God think of you?

○ **I'm considered extremely valuable by God**

Let me ask you a very personal question: **How much do you think you're worth?** I'm not talking about your net worth – I'm talking about your self-worth. I'm not talking about your valuables. I'm talking about your own personal value. **How much do you think you as a person are worth?**

You go, I'm not sure about that. Let me ask you another question: **What is it that makes something valuable?** There are **two things** that create value. **Who owns it?** The value depends on who owns it. And the second is, **What somebody's willing to pay for it.** That's what determines the value. Who owns it and what somebody's willing to pay for it.

In other words value depends on who owns something. **Would you agree that at an auction, a toothbrush owned by Elvis or Derek Jeter or some superstar would be more valuable than a toothbrush owned by Brad Eubank?** Yeah. A bed owned by a president would be more valuable than bed that you own. **Who owns something often creates its value.** The owner adds value to common things.

Who do you belong to? Who owns you? God does. You're a child of God. You're a son of God. You're a daughter of God. Here's what the Bible says about you. *"You've been bought [with a price] and paid for by*

Christ's death."

Value depends on what somebody's willing to pay for it. How much is your house worth? Not as much as you think it is. Your house is worth what anybody is willing to pay for it. If nobody's willing to pay your price it isn't worth that. Sorry! Hate to tell you that. But it's only as valuable as what somebody's willing to pay for it.

Jesus Christ paid for you with his life. That's how valuable you are. So how do I remember every day the way God loves me? I get up in the morning and say (1) *God I just want to remind myself how much you love me.* (2) *I'm completely accepted.* (3) *And I'm unconditionally loved.* (4) *And I'm totally forgiven.* (5) *And I'm considered extremely valuable and capable.* You remind yourself of those things.

That's a key to relationships.

Here's a third thing. I surrender, I remember then

3. EVERY DAY I OFFER.

I offer that same love to others. The same love that God gives to me the Bible says I am to offer to everybody else that I come in contact with. Every day I offer that same love to others.

Here's what the Bible says. *John 13:34 Jesus said this "I'm giving you a new commandment to love each other. Love each other in the same way that I have loved you."*

That's not an option. That's not a suggestion. If you're a follower of Christ you must love everybody. Whether you like them or not. In the same way that Christ loved you. That is you are to accept them completely, you're to love them unconditionally, you're to forgive them totally. And you are to consider them extremely valuable. Jesus said you are to love everybody else in the same way that I love you.

Will that transform your relationships? Yes it would.

The Bible says in Romans 15:7 "Accept one another just as Christ accepted you." **Circle the phrase "just as"**. Accept one another just as Christ accepted you. In other words in the same way. Just like Christ accepted you.

What does that mean? **It means this: It means I must accept everybody else the way Jesus accepts me.** I must love everybody else the way Jesus loves me. I must **forgive** everybody else the way Jesus forgives me. I

must **value** everybody else the way Jesus values me.

Book entitled How to Make People Really Feel Loved. If I would to boil out the answer to that question, **How to make the people in my life really feel loved?** The answer is the last verse on your outline. If you want to become a great lover you must do these things because this is what real love is.

The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 13:7 *“Love never stops being patient, Love never stops believing, Love never stops hoping, Love never gives up!”*

Circle the four nevers. This is what real love is. This is how God loves you. God never stops being patient with you. God never stops believing in you. God never stops hoping for the best in your life. God never gives up on you. **That’s what God expects you to do with everybody else.**

Let me explain that verse. **“Love never stops being patient.”** That means love extends grace. Love extends grace. You offer grace to people. Love never stops being patient. It extends grace.

“Love never stops believing.” That means it expresses faith. It never stops. I believe in you. I know we’ve had this tough time. I know we’ve had this failure. I know we’ve had this sin, this falling out; but I never stop believing in you.

Love extends grace and expresses faith.

Three, love expects the best. It never stops hoping. Are you expecting the best in your marriage or have you settled for less than the best? Love extends grace, expresses faith, expects the best, it never stops hoping.

Finally, And love endures the worst. It never gives up. You can throw everything at me but I’m going to keep loving you. Love endures the worst.

You needed this message today and God has spoken to you and you know it. If you want to transform your relationships then I’m going to invite you to follow me in a prayer.

Prayer:

Just say this in your mind. When I say this say God I agree with this. Me too. Dear God, I admit that I have made a mess in my relationships. They're complicated, they're broken, they're not the best. I've often settled for less than the best and they need a transformation. I'd like you to begin by changing me. Deliver me from these three fears that I've learned about today. I can see how they make me distant and defensive and even demanding. So today and each day from now on I want to surrender my heart to you. I'm doing this right now. I surrender my heart to you. Just say that "God, I surrender my heart to you." I want to learn to live my life in your love. Filled with your love. Please replace my shame with your love. When I'm afraid to let others see the real me remind me of how you see me. Say this. Thank you that you accept me completely. Say, thank you that you love me unconditionally. Say, thank you that you forgive me totally. Say, thank you that you paid such a high price to save me. Dear God, help me to accept others just as you've accepted me. Help me to love others unconditionally just as you have loved me. And help me to forgive others totally just as you've forgiven me. And help me to value others as much as you value me. Say, dear God I want to be known as a loving person. I want to be a great lover. So help me to extend grace to the people around me. And help me to express faith in the people around me. And help me to expect the best in the people around me. And help me to endure the worst when it happens. I want to live my life in love and I humbly ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.