



# Principles for Living

By Fern Willner

## MALACHI'S PROPHECY OF RESTORATION

One of the greatest needs in the world today is the redemption of relationships. The Bible talks about the universal need and impact of proper relationships between fathers and children:

*"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." Malachi 4:5,6*

Did Malachi foresee the coming cultural chaos, the social breakdown and peer pressure that youth and adults alike would be subject to?

In this seminar we will emphasize relationship needs and dangers in the home:

- Between husband and wife
- Between fathers and children

## THREE MAJOR FACTORS THAT DESTROY RELATIONSHIP

There are many factors that build or break relationships but there are three that contribute in a major way to the destruction of relationships:

- Power
- Sex
- Money

## **A. POWER**

Power is defined as strength, force, might. When used appropriately, power is of tremendous benefit. It supports authority, commands respect, overcomes weakness, protects from evil, contributes to excellence, demands justice, defends truth, etc.

### **The Curse**

After the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden, sovereign curses were imposed upon creation.

*“Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.” Ge 3:16*

The rule of the man over the woman has been a curse ever since. Even though the curse was broken through Jesus' victory on the cross, we have yet to see all things put under His feet. In the Spirit, there is no male or female. In the Spirit, we are to be all subject to one another. But, when man is not walking in the Spirit, he is subject to the curse of wanting to rule over a wife instead of being one with her, or of slipping into the abuse of power and control.

### **Control VS Understanding**

Control demands obedience without consideration of the other's needs or situation. It does not make allowances for understanding. It invites intolerance, impatience and inconsideration.

On the other hand, God urges his children to have a relationship of understanding – *“Come now let us reason together.” Is 1:18*

The result of reasoning is understanding, building relationships, clearing away walls of misunderstanding and misconceptions. Reasoning opens the door to realization and confession of wrong actions that were committed based on those misconceptions.

### **Speaking the Truth in Love Promotes Growth**

While the Bible urges us to speak the truth in love, Control destroys relationships and invites violence like anger and force.

*“...but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, ...” Ep 4:15 NAS*

Speaking the truth in love breaks the power of deception and takes away its license to perform. Truth weakens the power of wrong motives and Love opens the pathway to admission of wrong and to the release of forgiveness.

## **The Importance of Attitude and Body Language**

One OWBC student, a retired policeman, once explained the importance of body language and tone of voice when working to get a confession from a criminal. The same applies to all relationships.

Some men perceive that nurture belongs solely to the roles of women. In some places in Africa it is even a disgrace for a man to be seen carrying a child. Yet one of God's names, El Shaddai means "the Many-Breasted One". It is not a shame to be like Jesus, the One who is compassionate, gracious, loving, merciful, kind and forgiving.

## **Control Destroys Respect (High Regard, Honor, Esteem)**

Mankind has envisioned control as a power trait of respect. God sees humility as a power trait of respect. True power never has a need to vaunt itself.

*"For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted." Mt 23:12*

Jesus showed us the pathway to nurturing, loving relationships when He said, *"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."* Mt 11:28-29

Who would want to snuggle up to a person who is driven by control? They aren't restful, gentle or humble. You may obey them, but your heart won't be warm toward them with high regard, honor or esteem.

## **Harmony, Sympathy, Love, Compassion, Humility, Blessing Promote Life and Good Days**

*"Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tender-hearted, be courteous; not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. For "He who would love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking deceit. Let him turn away from evil and do good; Let him seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the LORD is against those who do evil." 1 Peter 3:8-12*

## **Peace VS Bitterness – Grace VS Defilement**

*"Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled" Heb 12:14,15 NKJV*

People with unresolved problems cause trouble and defilement. Criticism of others does not promote confidence, but rather breeds the defilement of insecurity and lack of respect for all authority including yours. Walking in the grace of God in your life as displayed in your words and actions will be a demonstration of holy conduct.

### **Set an Example of Respecting Leadership and Obeying It**

*“Obey your spiritual leaders and recognize their authority, for they keep watch over your soul without resting since they will have to give an account to God for their work. So, it will benefit you when you make their work a pleasure and not a heavy burden.” Heb 13:17 TPT*

The person who understands obedience understands leadership. Someone once said, “if you want your children to grow up respecting the ministry, don’t have roasted Minister for lunch”.

## **B. SEX**

### **Flee Immorality**

*“Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.” 1 Co 6:18-20 NKJV*

### **Cultural Pressure**

This society is inundated with pressure to have sex before marriage, to find sexual gratification with someone other than their married partner, to approve of same-sex partners, sexual activities with children, group sex, even with animals.

### **Guard the Mind**

Sin starts in the mind. Proverbs 23:7 says, *“As he thinketh in his heart so is he...”*

James 1:14 says, *“...but each one is tempted when by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed...”*

It is imperative that we obey the command in Philippians 4:8, *“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.”*

Paul goes on to promise that if we do this, “the peace of God will be with you” (vs9).

## **Wages of Sexual Sin – Dick Purnell**

When sexual sins are encouraged the results of such acts are never included. Dick Purnell, in his book, *“Becoming a Friend and Lover”* informs us of some of these results.

### **Psychological Results:**

1. Guilt – When your conscience is violated, guilt is a natural result. Jimmy Williams writes that guilt is anger turned inward and results in devastating results in human behaviour. It produces: depression, Lowered Self-Esteem, Fatigue, etc.
2. Loss of Self-Esteem – In premarital sexual relations, it is easy to use the other person for self-gratification. But one cannot escape the knowledge of that motivation and as result feels of self-disgust result and loss of self-respect and esteem.
3. Flashbacks – Memories that explode on the mind at unexpected moments, even years later when one is happily married, can be a sign of unresolved guilt and negatively impact even years later.
4. Mental Pollution – The act may be over, the act may even have been confessed and repented of, but the thoughts and mental impact can live on for years. In some cases, these memories can result in a mental obsession and addiction that causes one to become obsessed with sex and lead to intense struggle.
5. Sexual Inhibition – Psychologists, Clinical and News articles, Sex Therapists and other sources all cite the results of the breaking of sexual taboos and the extreme search to appease the sexual appetite has led to an increased quandary of “Inhibited Sexual Desire”, or worse, inability to perform with a partner without the presence of porn or even with a partner at all. Psychology Today reported somewhere around 1990 that 28% of men and 40% of women no longer have the desire for sex at all.

(Reference lost)

Today, in an age where every kind of sexual approach is being attempted to be normalized, including “changing appetites”, in an attempt to remove all stigma from the effects of sin and guilt, it is difficult to find any tracking of how breaking what was considered healthy roles in sexual interaction and implementing an “Anything goes” model has affected the long-term emotional and sexual state of the individual. Thank God, we don’t have to guess, we can return to our Manual, the Bible, and see:

*“And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; <sup>29</sup> being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, <sup>30</sup> backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, <sup>31</sup> undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; <sup>32</sup> who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.” Romans 1:28-32 NKJV*

### **Relational Results**

1. Break-up – A break in relationship often occurs because of guilt or because the relationship no longer is self-gratifying. Dr E Mansell Pattison of the Medical College of Georgia says, “My observations lead me to conclude that ... there is a paradox – a happy union living together unmarried, but an unhappy union as soon as they marry. Sexual dissatisfaction is the leading reported cause of the break-up. Before marriage sex may smother a couple’s incompatibilities.”
2. Mis-trust – If a person did not wait until marriage to have sex, there’s no guarantee that making the relationship legal will stem a partner’s impulse for self-gratification after the act.
3. Comparison – Comparison in any area of a relationship can undermine it but comparison in the area of sex can devastate it.

## Physical Results

1. **Herpes** – About 1 in 10 adults in the US is afflicted with genital herpes. The most prevalent STD today (These stats are previous to 1990. Stats today for Herpes are as follows: 16.2% (over 25 million; 1 out of 6) have genital herpes, (Note: 80% of all Americans have oral herpes), Women: 20.9% of women have genital herpes, Men: 11.5% of men have genital herpes, 80% of Americans with genital herpes (HSV-2) are unaware of their infection, Up to 50% of new genital herpes infections are caused by HSV-1, mainly through cases of oral herpes being passed through oral sex (Source: [The New York Times Health section](#)) Other more troubling stats can be found at: [https://www.herpes-coldsores.com/herpes\\_statistics.htm](https://www.herpes-coldsores.com/herpes_statistics.htm)
2. **Gonorrhea** – “Gonorrhea is the second most commonly reported notifiable disease in the United States. Infections due to *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*, like those resulting from *Chlamydia trachomatis*, are a major cause of pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) in the United States. PID can lead to serious outcomes in women, such as tubal infertility, ectopic pregnancy, and chronic pelvic pain. In addition, epidemiologic and biologic studies provide evidence that gonococcal infections facilitate the transmission of HIV infection.<sup>1</sup>” (For more information including reported numbers: <https://www.cdc.gov/std/stats17/gonorrhea.htm>)
3. **Syphilis** – Syphilis, a genital ulcerative disease caused by the bacterium *Treponema pallidum*, is associated with significant complications if left untreated and can facilitate the transmission and acquisition of HIV infection.<sup>1-3</sup> Additionally, historical data demonstrate that untreated syphilis in pregnant women, if acquired during the four years before delivery, can lead to infection of the fetus in up to 80% of cases and may result in stillbirth or death of the infant in up to 40% of cases.<sup>4</sup> the P&S syphilis rate has increased almost every year since 2000–2001. Since 2000, the rise in the rate of reported P&S syphilis has been primarily attributable to increased cases among men and, specifically, among gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men (collectively referred to as MSM). MSM account for the majority of P&S syphilis cases, and estimated rates are substantially higher among MSM compared with men who have sex with women only (MSW) or women.<sup>5</sup> The number of cases among MSM has continued to increase, but within the last five years, cases among MSW and women



have increased substantially as well. (For more information on numbers and impact see:

<https://www.cdc.gov/std/stats17/syphilis.htm>)

4. Chlamydia - Chlamydia, caused by infection with *Chlamydia trachomatis*, is the most common notifiable disease in the United States. It is among the most prevalent of all STDs, and since 1994, has comprised the largest proportion of all STDs reported to CDC ([Table 1](#)). Studies also demonstrate the high prevalence of chlamydial infections in the general US population, particularly among young women.<sup>1</sup> Chlamydial infections in women are usually asymptomatic.<sup>2</sup> Untreated infection can result in pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), which is a major cause of infertility, ectopic pregnancy, and chronic pelvic pain. As with other inflammatory STDs, chlamydial infection could facilitate the transmission of HIV infection.<sup>5</sup> In addition, pregnant women infected with chlamydia can pass the infection to their infants during delivery, potentially resulting in ophthalmia neonatorum, which can lead to blindness, and pneumonia.<sup>6</sup> (For more information and statistics see: <https://www.cdc.gov/std/stats17/chlamydia.htm>)
5. Other STDs and Health Complications including HIV/AIDS, Pelvic Inflammatory Disease, Genital Cancer, Ectopic Pregnancies and other long-term effects of STIs and STDs including the link between early on-set Alzheimer and some STD/STIs.

## Social Results

1. Unwanted Disease
2. Unwanted Pregnancies – Lack of foolproof contraceptives
3. Lack of support system for raising children without commitment of one or the other partner when sex was intended purely for self-gratification and when the intention of the relationship was never meant to be long-term
4. Abortion
5. Cultural Disintegration

## Spiritual Results

1. Coldness towards God
2. Coldness towards faithful Christians
3. Misery

Although the terms of “love” and “sex” are used interchangeably, sex is not the answer for the need of intimacy. Relationships require interaction in five different areas of our lives:

1. Physical
2. Emotional
3. Mental
4. Social
5. Spiritual

Only when all three work in harmony do we have true happiness and fulfillment. It will cause pain when any one of these ingredients is missing. It has been said that, “The driving desire of each human being is not for sex or romance, it is for true intimacy”. (Most of the information in the previous section is from Dick Purnell's book, “*Becoming a Friend and Lover*” published by *Here's Life Publisher's Inc.* which can be found on Amazon and Goodreads, augmented by statistical information from the CDC – Center for Disease Control)

When sex is misused it perverts the very things that God meant it to be. The kiss of friendship, the hug of companionship, the touches of encouragement and support are meant to be a blessing to the human family. When kissing, hugging, touching and so on are relegated to sex-only acts meant for pure self-gratification, it breeds incest in the family and immorality outside of it. We are instructed to: *"Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity. Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen."* 1 Pe 5:14

## **The Bible and Sex**

The Bible speaks very clearly about the subject of sex.

*"Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband."* 1 Co 7:3 NKJV

*"Honor the sanctity of marriage and keep your vows of purity to one another, for God will judge sexual immorality in any form, whether single or married."* Heb 13:4 TPT

*"See that no one is sexually immoral"* Heb 12:16

## **C. MONEY**

### **Keep Ourselves from the Love of Money**

Hebrews 13:5,6 tells us to keep ourselves from the love of money.

*Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you, so that we confidently say, "the LORD is my helper, I will not be afraid. What will man do to me?"*

### **Don't Live Above Your Means**

Don't live as a slave to indebtedness. How many people have been willing to sacrifice everything including children and spouse for the pursuit of position, reputation, and acquisition of things?

It is interesting that Jesus clearly articulated in Mt 6:24, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

What makes this so interesting is that the inherent action of serving the god Mammon was to physically sacrifice one's child on a burning hot metal altar in hopes of a good return of goods. We too often fail to see how often our children are sacrificed at the altar of a promotion at work or working to purchase the next new toy or some other objective that seems good but has no eternal value in the lives of our children.



## **Don't Live Below Your Means**

Don't be a slave to your own selfishness. Some, for various reasons, become so enslaved to saving for the future, or to protecting what they have from a perception of potential lack, that they lose compassion for the needs of others around them; the needs of the unsaved, the needs of the church, or even the needs of their own families. The Bible warns the man who does not provide for the needs of his own household. This man is to be considered worse than an infidel.

*"But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever." 1 Ti 5:8*

## **FORMING RELATIONSHIPS**

### **Things That Break Relationships**

It seems to one in the middle of a broken relationship, that the cause is complicated and the solution even more so; not true. What broke this relationship?

- Impatience
- Meanness
- Envy
- Boasting
- Pride
- Unrepentance
- Rudeness
- Self-Seeking
- Anger
- Keeping a Record of Wrongs
- Delighting in Evil
- Unsafe (as in secrets or money or promises)
- Untrusting
- Easily Dissuaded from Right

### **Things that Build Relationships**

The solution? 1 Corinthians Chapter 13...

*"If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. <sup>2</sup> If I have the gift of prophecy and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. <sup>3</sup> And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body <sup>[a]</sup> to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.*

*<sup>4</sup> Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, <sup>5</sup> does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, <sup>6</sup> does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; <sup>7</sup> <sup>[b]</sup>bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*

<sup>8</sup> Love never fails; but if there are gifts of <sup>[c]</sup>prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away. <sup>9</sup> For we know in part and we prophesy in part; <sup>10</sup> but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. <sup>11</sup> When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I <sup>[a]</sup>became a man, I did away with childish things. <sup>12</sup> For now we see in a mirror <sup>[a]</sup>dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known. <sup>13</sup> But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the <sup>[f]</sup>greatest of these is love.”

The solution in all of these is submitting yourself to the true LOVE of God.

<sup>7</sup> Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is <sup>[a]</sup>born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup> The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. <sup>9</sup> By this the love of God was manifested <sup>[b]</sup>in us, that God has sent His <sup>[c]</sup>only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. <sup>10</sup> In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. <sup>11</sup> Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. <sup>12</sup> No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us. <sup>13</sup> By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. <sup>14</sup> We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.

<sup>15</sup> Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. <sup>16</sup> We have come to know and have believed the love which God has <sup>[d]</sup>for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. <sup>17</sup> By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world. <sup>18</sup> There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear <sup>[e]</sup>involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love. <sup>19</sup> We love, because He first loved us. <sup>20</sup> If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. <sup>21</sup> And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.” 1 Jn 4:7-21

One walking in the Love that comes from Above knows that to be like Christ is to be like the One who emptied Himself and became like a Servant, and that being like Christ means following that same example. That one understands that this kind of love that heals relationships does not naturally abide in the heart of man. By our very human nature we are self-seeking and self-gratifying but in following Christ's example of submitting Himself to His Father, our submission to God will cause all other relationships to become whole, proper and life-giving. In that kind of submission, we will see miracles, relationships that seem dead will be raised to life, what seems to be a lost cause will see miraculous turn-around. Our homes, our hearts and our bodies, souls and spirits will be filled with the same Holy Spirit who raised Christ's body from the dead. How could we not see the miraculous at work? (Rom 8:11)

**The Most Important Factor in Strong Relationships is Faith in God**

## Believe God's Promises

We can have confidence in the Word of the LORD. It may seem that God's way is inconvenient and challenging and not worth the hassle. We may wonder if we are giving up something that seems really great for an unknown blessing some day in the future. But the whole of scripture reaffirms that the truth of the Word of God not only saves us from the negative future consequences of a damaged relationship with God and possibly a present damaged relationship with others, obeying and walking in the truths of God's Word have physical, emotional, relational, financial, mental, as well as spiritual blessing attached to following them in the here and now not just in the "sweet by and by".

*"The law of the LORD is <sup>[d]</sup>perfect, **restoring the soul**;  
The testimony of the LORD is sure, **making wise the simple**.  
<sup>8</sup> The precepts of the LORD are right, **rejoicing the heart**;  
The commandment of the LORD is pure, **enlightening the eyes**.  
<sup>9</sup> The fear of the LORD is clean, **enduring forever**;  
The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether.  
<sup>10</sup> They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold;  
Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb.  
<sup>11</sup> Moreover, by them Your servant is warned;  
**In keeping them there is great reward.**" Ps 19: 7-11*

*"<sup>1</sup>Blessed is the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful. <sup>2</sup>But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law does he meditate day and night. <sup>3</sup>And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper." Ps 1:1-3*

## Watch Your Thoughts

It is easy to forget when things get hard and we are tempted to trust in our own skill and judgement, that it is God who provides for us and it is God who works on our behalf to fulfill His promises. Like Jeroboam in 1 Kings 12, it is easy for us to search for our own solution to situations that seem necessary to solve; yet in solving it in our own way we create situations that end up becoming sin before God.

In 1 Thessalonians 5 Paul sums up the basic actions prevalent in the life of a Christian yet he is careful to establish that even the work of purification in the life of a Christian is God's own work that He is doing Himself.

In fact it is a good last comment to wrap this whole study up with; we are not on our own in pursuit of walking in Godly principles. We have only begun this journey because God Himself entreated us and pursued us. This work in us is His good pleasure and He is watching over this work in the lives of His children that those who would yield to Him will see His blessings not just in eternity, but right now here in the land of the living. (Phil 2:13, Eph 1:3-5, Eph 1:9, Lu 12:32, etc)

So, we echo the words of Paul,

*<sup>23</sup> Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify<sup>[a]</sup> you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*<sup>24</sup> He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it." 1Th 5:23,24 Amen.*

*This article was edited posthumously by Mina Willner Dragovic. This writing was originally intended to be an accompaniment to seminars offered by Fern Willner and so additional verses and points were added especially at the end for clarification and completion, and in the case of the Physical Results under the Wages of Sexual Sin section, more up to date statistical and explanatory information was added primarily from the Center for Disease Control website along with a few other sites as referenced.*



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