

# **INSTRUMENTS IN THE REDEEMER'S HANDS:**

## Outline and "Cheat Sheet"

### **LESSON 1: OUR NEED FOR HELP**

**CONCEPT: Our need for help is not the result of the Fall but the result of being human.**

**1. We are all created by God to be revelation receivers.**

- We are always taking in information.

**2. We are all created by God to be interpreters.**

- We are always interpreting information through our lens of understanding.

**3. We are all created by God to be worshippers.**

- We are always worshipping and desiring something.
- All thoughts, talk, and conversation are always agenda-setting.
- Advice is always moral, based on right or wrong, true and false.
- We do not live in an era where our advice, agenda, and interpretation of events is going to be pure and perfect.
- We must be cautious about this and seek the only source of truth that is pure and perfect, so that our talk, thoughts, and advice comes from there. That is the Word of God.

**Hebrews 3.12, 13** shows us the slow progression of sin when the Word isn't protecting our information gathering and interpretation.

~ **Sinful** (subtle patterns of sin I allow)

~ **Unbelieving** (subtle excuse of my sin, backing away from the clear Scriptures)

~ **Turning Away** (loss of spiritual anchor)

~ **Hardened Heart** (heart is numb and scabbed over due to sin)

### **LESSON 2: THE HEART IS THE TARGET**

**CONCEPT: The heart is active. It shapes and controls our behavior.**

**Luke 6.43-46** shows that there is a relationship with the fruit of our lives that goes down to the root.

- The heart controls everything we do and say.
- Lasting change always takes place through the pathway of the heart
- Therefore, heart change is always the goal.

**If we do not deal with what rules our hearts,  
we will even use the Word of God to serve our idols!**

**Things to Consider:**

- Our hearts are always being ruled by someone or something.
- "What is effectively and functionally ruling this person's heart in this situation?"
- What controls the heart will control my reactions and responses to the situations and people in my life.
- The way God changes us is to recapture our hearts to serve Him alone.
- The deepest issues of the human struggle are not issues of pain and suffering, they are issues of worship. What we worship will dictate how we respond to pain and suffering.

**Matter of Treasure**

**Matthew 6.19-24** shows us a few things.

- Everyone lives for some kind of treasure.
- Whatever you treasure will control your heart.
- Whatever controls your heart will control your behavior.

**Hebrews 4.12, 13** shows us that the Word is what discerns our hearts. Our hearts are what think (interpret) and also purpose (desire). Therefore, we need the Word to discern our hearts.

## **LESSON 3: UNDERSTANDING YOUR HEART STRUGGLE**

**CONCEPT:** The cause for my heart struggle is not the people or situations in my life, but the "heart" I bring to those relationships and circumstances.

**James 4.1** says that what causes conflict in relationships is the war that is going on inside of us. The people and circumstances only provide the opportunities for the idols and flesh inside of us to express itself, and thus a war is born. And the sole purpose of war is control.

When someone or something or a circumstance stands in the way of what we crave (our idols), our idolatry causes us to lash out in sin.

### **How Desire Takes Control**

1. **Desire:** "I want." Nothing wrong yet.
2. **Demand:** "I must." The desire is no longer an expression of love for God and man, but something I crave for myself.
3. **Need:** "I will." Something desirable is now seen as essential. I'm convinced that I can't live without it.
4. **Expectation:** "You should." This is where my relationships begin to be affected. If I believe I have a need, I expect others to make it happen if they really love me.
5. **Disappointment:** "You didn't!" Here the anger breaks out and becomes personal. You are standing in the way of what rules my heart.
6. **Punishment:** "Because you didn't, I will.." I respond to you in anger (silent treatment, hurtful words, vengeance, etc.)

The problem, then, is idolatry, and mere outward actions will not deal with that, because it is a heart issue.

**James** says change involves two things:

1. **"Wash your hands."** This has to do with changing behavior. This is stuff we can do to help "pave the way" for the most important part, which is number 2.
2. **"Purify your hearts."** This has to do with ridding our hearts of idols. This we can not do. God must do this, and this is ultimately what we need and what is ultimately the goal.

## **LESSON 4: FOLLOWING THE WONDERFUL COUNSELOR**

**CONCEPT:** Effective personal ministry seeks to be part of what the Lord is doing in the lives of others by modeling the way He has worked in us.

### **Ambassadors for Christ**

1. **The Message of the King.** "What does my Lord want to communicate to this person in this situation?"
2. **The Methods of the King.** "How does the Lord work change in our lives? What are His methods?"
3. **The Character of the King.** "Why does the Lord do what He does in bringing change?"

### **Four Elements of Being an Instrument**

**Love:** Covenantal model of change. All real change takes place in relationship. God covenants with us, and we covenant with each other. When we want to see change, we must come alongside and love others. People aren't projects, they are people that we love. We must learn to love others.

**Know:** We also must get to know people and their situation. We must learn how to listen, and also how to ask the right questions to give us the best idea of what is going on in the situation and in their heart.

**Speak:** We must learn to speak God's wisdom from the Word into their hearts and situation, not just speak our own advice, and not just speak the law and commands and harsh words. We must bring Gospel truth.

**Do:** We must help people work these things out and apply the truth to their hearts. We must help disciple them into a healthy, Gospel-centered lifestyle.

## **LESSON 5: LOVE I: BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS IN WHICH GOD'S WORK WILL THRIVE**

**CONCEPT:** God always changes people within the context of relationship.

1. God has a higher purpose for our friendships than our present, personal happiness.
2. He wants our relationships to provide a context for His ongoing work of change in and through us.
3. We need to build relationships that promote and encourage this work of change.
  - Redemptive activity always takes place in the context of relationships
  - God's first step for real change is drawing us into relationship with Him.
  - Our human relationships are an important part of the work of change God is completing in us.

### **Four Elements of a Loving Relationship: Number 1 and 2**

#### **1. Enter the Person's World.**

**Entry Gates: What They are Not:**

- It is not the problem that the person wants to talk about.
- It is not a situation or circumstance in his life.
- It is not another person or a problem in a relationship.

**Entry Gates: What They Are:**

- An entry gate is the person's experience of the situation, problem, or relationship. We need to ask:
  - "What is this person struggling with in the midst of the situation," or...
  - "What has this person in its grip right now?"

**How to get beyond the problem and connect with the person through entry gates:**

1. Listen for emotive words: "I am so scared," "I am discouraged."
2. Listen for interpretive words: "I deserve this," "this always happens to me," "God doesn't hear me."
3. Listen for self-talk: "I'm such a failure," "I feel like quitting."
4. Ask questions about their feelings, thoughts about God, perspective, etc.

#### **2. Incarnate the Love of Christ.**

God doesn't just use what we say to people, but what we do. **Colossians 3.15-17** shows us how we are to put on Christ as we minister to others. When we minister to others, we have to know that at some point anger will be pointed at us, we will be blamed for things, and depressed people will tell us that they did everything we have suggested and it doesn't work. We need the mind and attitude of Christ in order to respond biblically and lovingly to them.

## **LESSON 6: LOVE II: BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS IN WHICH GOD'S WORK WILL THRIVE**

**CONCEPT:** God calls us to suffer so we would be qualified agents of His comfort and compassion.

### **Four Elements of a Loving Relationship: Number 3 and 4**

#### **3. Identify with Suffering.**

**Hebrews 2.10, 11** tells us we are brothers with Christ, as well as with those we minister to. This means:

- We are in the same family
- We are in a similar position in the family
- We share the same life experience because of that position

Therefore, we don't stand "above" others, but humbly alongside them. To come alongside them and understand their suffering is an important part of ministry. Christ was our example here. He suffered so He could relate. We also don't let people become dependent on us, because we realize we are just brothers, not the Savior.

#### **4. Accept with an Agenda.**

It is wrong for us to approach a struggling believer being critical, condemning, or with self-righteousness. At the same time, we make sure people know that God's agenda is heart change. Acceptance does not mean simply looking the other way.

### **LESSON 7: KNOW I: GET TO KNOW PEOPLE; DISCOVER WHERE CHANGE IS NEEDED**

**CONCEPT: Wise people are not the only people with the right answers, but people who ask the right questions. We can't get to the right answers without asking the right questions.**

#### **The Problem of Assumptions**

Don't assume almost anything with people. Ask lots of defining questions and clarifying questions. To make sure our conclusions are valid, there are three things we must regularly do:

- 1. Ask people to define their terms.** We often define terms differently. It is also best to agree to terms that are most biblical. For instance, if someone says a relationship "got physical," ask what that means. Hugging, kissing, sex? If the answer is "sex," and the sex is outside of marriage, agree to call it "sexual sin" or "adultery" rather than "getting physical."
- 2. Ask people to clarify what they mean with concrete, real-life examples of their terms.** For instance, if they say, "I just get really down." Ask them to explain what that looks like. Do they cry, get angry?
- 3. Ask people to explain why they responded the way they did in the examples they have given you.**

#### **How to Ask Good Questions:**

- 1. Always ask open-ended questions.** Not "yes" or "no" questions. Ask questions that will disclose "entry gates," like feelings, interpretation, what they are thinking, what they think about God, etc.
- 2. Use a combination of survey and focused questions.** Survey questions scan the general scope of someone's life. They reveal themes and patterns. Patterns that maybe relate to past experience or personality. Focused questions look intensively at one areas of a person's life. Survey looks broad, focus goes deep. Survey will help you learn what to focus on, and focus will help you go deep into roots (the ultimate goal).
- 3. Remember that certain kinds of questions reveal certain kinds of information.**  
There are five classes of questions:
  - What? The most basic questions. "What did you do?" "I talked to my wife."
  - How? Reveals the way it was done. "How did you talk to her?" "I yelled for 15 minutes."
  - Why? Uncovers the purpose, desire, goal and motive. "Why so long?" "I wanted to make sure she knew."
  - How Often? Where? These reveal themes and patterns. "Where/When?" "After stressful work days."
  - When? Order of events. "When did you begin to yell?" "After she asked me about work."
- 4. Ask a progressive line of questions, in which each question is based on previous information.** These questions will either broaden (survey) or deepen (focus) your understanding. Don't fill in the gaps yourself.

### **LESSON 8: KNOW II: GET TO KNOW PEOPLE; DISCOVER WHERE CHANGE IS NEEDED**

**CONCEPT: Your ministry isn't shaped by the facts you gather, but the way you interpret the facts.**

We need to filter what we gather through a biblical grid. We should not feel the need to rush to give advice. We must learn how to categorize and organize the information we are gathering.

#### **Four Questions to Help Organize the Information:**

**1. The Situation:** What is Going On? Past and present, these are the "survey" questions. Family history, current situation, significant relationships that influence their thinking. Getting to know their world.

**2. The Responses:** What Do They Do in Response? Information that describes their behavior. Look for themes and patterns about behavior.

**3. The Thoughts:** What Does the Person Think About What's Going On? How do they interpret their world? Here you consider the "heart" that is directing behavior. Read **Numbers 11.1-23** for a great picture of how Israel responded to their situation and how it revealed their heart.

**4. The Motives:** What Does the Person Want of the Situation? What are the person's desires, goals, values, idols? What do they truly want in life and in this situation?

See the example of "**Sharon**" in this section on page 95.

## **LESSON 9: SPEAK I: SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE**

**CONCEPT: Confrontation needs to be rooted in the comfort and call of the Gospel.**

When we think of confrontation, we often think of tense moments, harsh words, ultimatums, and threats, rather than patient and committed love. **2 Corinthians 5.20** reminds us that what should motivate us is not our opinion, anger, or impatience. What should motivate us is God's desire to make His appeal to that person through us.

We must not combine God's agenda with "what I've always wanted to say" to the person. We want them to see themselves in the mirror of God's Word. Here is how we can move in that direction.

**1. Start With Ourselves.** We must deal with our own hearts. Do we have bad feelings or emotions toward the person? Thoughts of bitterness, anger, vengeance, condemnation? If we don't deal with these honestly, many things can happen:

- Ministry moments turn into moments of anger
- We personalize things that are not personal
- We are adversarial in our approach
- We confuse our opinions with God's will
- We settle for quick solutions that don't address the heart

**2. Understand Why People Need to be Confronted.** Consider the goals ahead of time. When we ask, "why do they need to be confronted, here are four big reasons:

- The deceitfulness of sin, which blinds our hearts.
- Wrong and unbiblical thinking.
- Emotional thinking.
- Our view of life, family, and God.

**3. Speak with God's Goals in View.** Two goals must be the standard.

1. We would be used as instruments of seeing.
2. We would be used as God's agent of repentance.

**Don't leave the Gospel at the door.** We tend to emphasize the Law over the Gospel. It is His kindness that leads us to repentance. And it is the Gospel and His kindness that gives us the courage and safety to come into light.

We are to remind people of their identity in Christ, and then *because* of that identity encourage them that they can walk in freedom and respond to the call of Gospel living.

## **LESSON 10: SPEAK II: SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE**

**CONCEPT: The steps of confrontation are consideration, confession, commitment, and change.**

The big question is, "Whose agenda are we following?" Are we confronting as "mini-kings" of our own kingdom? Or as ambassadors of the King of kings?

### **Progressive Steps of Confrontation**

**1. Consideration.** What does the person need to see, and how can I help him? Often when people tell their story, they are not in it! Our goal is to help people look at their behavior and examine their heart. There are five questions we can ask:

- **What was going on?** This is easiest. This is the "survey" and "situation" type question.
- **What were you thinking and feeling?** You are asking him to consider his inner self.
- **What did you do in response?** You are building, showing him his response is due to his thoughts.
- **Why did you do it?** This reveals motives. It shows what he wants, what is important to him.
- **What was the result?** You aim to have him see that the results are due to his desires, not circumstances.

**2. Confession:** We prefer blaming and hiding, but confession needs to be clear, concrete and specific. Also, don't confess for the person, but allow them to frame the words and own them. Don't assume confession!

**3. Commitment:** Where does the person need to commit actions? What new habits or attitudes?

**4. Change:** Seeing sin and making commitments doesn't equal change. Change is the evidence of repentance.

**Learning to Confront Biblically:** we need to get away from the "read him the riot act" mentality, where we just bring up our charges against the person. Always have two-way communication.

## **LESSON 11: DO I: APPLYING CHANGE TO EVERY DAY LIFE**

**CONCEPT:** To help someone change, I must have a biblical agenda for change that reflects biblical commands, principles, promise, and priorities.

### **Four Things to Help Us Apply the Truth: Number 1 and 2**

**1. Establish the Personal Ministry Agenda.** This gives a sense of direction as you minister. This is the plan or map and stated, clear goal. We are often weak here. Here are three agenda-setting questions:

1. What does the bible say about the information that has been gathered?
2. What are God's goals for change for this person in this situation?
3. What are the biblical methods for accomplishing God's goals for change?

**2. Clarify Responsibility:** We must make clear who is responsible for what. Some people will be irresponsible, waiting for God to do what He has already called them to do. Others will be overly-responsible, acting like mini-messiahs and being controlling, legalistic, people pleasing, and taking as their responsibility things that God hasn't called or enabled them to do. Most, however, will probably be genuinely confused about what they are responsible for.

**Open to Page 132 to look at the graphic of the oval.** The oval shows that the outer oval has things that are important to us (the love of a spouse, a child's salvation), but they are actually outside of our ability to bring it about. When that oval is too big, we are living as mini-messiahs. When it is too small, we are being irresponsible.

## **LESSON 12: DO II: APPLYING CHANGE TO EVERY DAY LIFE**

**CONCEPT:** Human beings always live out some sense of identity. It is vital for the believer to understand his identity in Christ.

### **Four Things to Help Us Apply the Truth: Number 3 and 4**

**3. Instill Identity in Christ:** We are all operating and making decisions based on our identity: boss, mother, son, coach, etc. We must always be reminding people of their actual identity in Christ. Read **2 Peter 1.3-9** for a picture of this, including page 145 of the workbook.

**4. Providing Accountability:** We are to carry each other's burdens and encourage one another daily.

#### **What Accountability Is:**

- Accountability is not being a private detective or a police officer.
- It is not about trying to do the work of the Holy Spirit.
- It is not about being someone's conscience.
- It is not about forcing someone to obey.
- It is not about chasing someone who is running or looking for someone who is hiding.

Accountability is about providing loving structure, guidance, assistance, encouragement, and warning to a person who is fully committed to the change God is working in his life.

#### **What Accountability Is:**

- **It Provides Structure:** We provide order and structure when things are messy in people's lives.
- **It Provides Guidance:** People want to do what is right, but don't know how. You can provide the "where," "when" and "how" of change.

- **It Provides Assistance:** Sometimes, people can't apply the change alone. Maybe a difficult talk with a wife or friend, and they need someone to help them and be there with them.
- **It Provides Encouragement:** People get beaten down when they are attempting change. They question their commitments and are tempted to quit. They need someone they trust to be next to them.
- **It Provides Warning:** Sometimes, people make the commitment to change, but when it gets tough, they are tempted to turn back when the work is too hard. They need to be reminded of the truth and the reality of what consequences might bring.

**Three Questions to Ask When Considering Providing Ongoing Accountability:**

1. What kinds of ongoing help will this person need?
2. How often will I need to be in contact with him for change to continue?
3. Are there other resources in the body of Christ that would be helpful during this period of change?