

Give & Take

July 10, 2016

CORE: We are not called to live life in isolation but to live a life in collaboration with each other (working jointly together).

Over the last several weeks we have talked about what it looks like to live life together. Last week Pastor Dave and Mark shared on admonishing each other. This week we want to build off of that foundation by showing you the "how to" or the "DIY" version of how to give and receive input.

Early New Testament Church Life (Healthy Community)

- Acts 2:42-47 (NIV) **42** They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. **43** Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. **44** All the believers were together and had everything in common. **45** They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. **46** Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, **47** praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.
- True community and transparency has to be intentional
- Early church experienced extreme growth was a result of this life style

In growing together there will be times when we need to challenge each other by providing and receiving feedback.

What does the bible say about advice and wise counsel?

- Proverbs 11:14 (NASB) **14** Where there is no guidance the people fall, But in abundance of counselors there is [a]victory.
- Proverbs 19:20 (NIV) **20** *Listen to advice and accept discipline, and at the end you will be counted among the wise.*
- Proverbs 12:15 (NIV) **15** *The way of fools seems right to them, but the wise listen to advice.*
- There is safety in community
- Listen - shama (Hebrew), take heed, "not just in one ear and out the other"
- Active listening that leads to obedience
- Discipline - muser (Hebrew), training exhortation, warning

Three Principles on giving feedback/counsel

1. God Vision (seeing people the way God sees them):

- Jeremiah 31:3 (NIV) *3 The Lord appeared to us in the past,[a] saying: "I have loved you with an **everlasting love**; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness.*
- Matthew 9:36 (NIV) *36 When he saw the crowds, he had **compassion** on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.*
- Love has to be our motivation
- Seeing - to know, not an outward view of someone
- Compassion - *splanchnizomai* (Greek) - have pity, deep empathy, deeply moved
- Compassion moves us to action
- Jesus was moved with compassion and healed the sick and feed the hungry
- We should not hold a person hostage to their current situation or last poor decision!
- People are more likely to receive our words if they are filled with compassion and the love of Christ

2. Practice Discernment:

Ephesians 4:29 (NIV) *29 Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is **helpful for building others up** according to their needs, **that it may benefit those who listen.***

Hebrews 4:12 (NIV) *12 For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; **it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.***

- Seek Godly wisdom
- Be led by the spirit
- Use the Word of God

3. Speak in love

- Proverbs 12:18 (NIV) *18 The words of the reckless pierce like swords, but the **tongue of the wise brings healing.***
- Our goal is to relay the love of God
- Our counsel should always be life giving
- Healing - *marpe* (Greek) - Healing remedy
- Words of counsel and correction should bring healing - to make sound or whole
- *"You are so much better than the choices you are currently making - this isn't part of your God given DNA)"*
- Conversation should be hope filled and always directing them back to God

Receiving Accountability

Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 (NIV) – **“Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.”**

- We grow, get healed and mature from the Word, prayer and COMMUNITY.
- If you are not in community with other believers who will promote growth in your life, you are missing an important ingredient in your overall health—soul, spirit and body.
- A large component of community is giving and receiving input.
- It’s sometimes easier to give input than it is to receive it.

3 HINDRANCES TO RECEIVING

Disclaimer: It is possible to give a healthy response even if the input is offered in an unhealthy manner.

FEAR

- Fear of being hurt, being rejected, found out, etc.
- Fear will always corrode your relationships.

Normal reactions to fear:

- FIGHT – You fight everything being offered, whether right or wrong.
- FLIGHT – You run from it and go hide your head in the sand.
- FREEZE – You refuse to engage and are unable to respond in any way.
- *“In committing to unconditional love, we commit to keep moving toward each other even when we’re scared. We will do whatever it is we need to do to protect our connection.”* (Danny Silk)
- Fear tempts us to run away from each other—it causes distance.
- 2 Timothy 1:7 (NLT) – **“For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.”**
- Be motivated by power and love, not fear.
- We must commit to unconditional love and acceptance—no matter what.

OFFENSE

- Luke 17:1 – Jesus told His disciples that it is unthinkable to believe you can live life without offense.
- Offense – *skandalon* (Greek), from which we get the word *scandal*.
- *Skandalon* - the small piece of wood used to keep the door of an animal trap propped open. A piece of food was placed inside the trap to lure the animal inside. When the animal entered the trap and accidentally bumped the *skandalon*, or the small piece of wood, the *skandalon* collapsed, causing the trap door to slam shut and the animal to be caught inside with no way to escape.

- In NT, *skandalon* refers to a stone or an obstacle that caused one to trip, to stumble, to lose his footing, to waver, to falter, and to fall down.
- Peter uses *skandalon* to describe unbelievers who reject the gospel message—instead they stumble when they hear the truth, tripping over the message that could set them free.
- Don't trip over someone's message that has the power to set you free!
- Offense is an open door for the enemy to trap you and pull you into resentment, unforgiveness, bitterness and anger.
- We choose to be offended—nobody has that much power over you.

PRIDE

Proverbs 16:18 (AMP) – **“Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.”**

HOW TO RECEIVE

1. Have an open heart to hear and receive.
2. Love and receive the person even if it isn't accurate or wasn't given appropriately.
 - React vs. Respond
 - If we neglect the power of the resurrected Jesus in us, we will live our lives powerless to control ourselves, how we receive input and how we can change.
 - Look beyond the sting and find the truth.
3. Filter it
 - Ask the Lord for discernment.
 - Receive the truth and throw away what's not true.
 - Ask people you trust for input.