

Would You Rather Be Right Or Have Relationship?

(Or Where Would You Be Without Judas?)

Jack and Trisha Frost

Not long ago Trisha and I were asked, "What three people have helped most to mature you and to release you in ministry?" At first thought, it was those people in our lives who have stood beside us and loved us through every trial and storm. But then we thought of several people who had not appeared to be loyal to us, those who sowed evil reports against us, those who tried to make themselves look good by exposing our faults and weaknesses to others. As we thought about those who had helped us most in ministry, we began to realize it is also some of the hurtful, difficult relationships that have had dramatic impact for good in our lives. Without them, we may never have discovered what was in us. They helped us discover how deeply our lives were rooted in pride. We began to see how opinionated we were and how we had a need to be right. They were the blessing of God to us, helping to expose how much we lived with a need to be needed. They, unknowingly, helped to motivate us to the Cross!



It's funny how, in God's Word, He often turns what seems right and fair upside down. That is because it is Satan who demands what is right and fair. He demands payment for our sins and is constantly pronouncing us "guilty, guilty, guilty." But it is God who does not want to give us what we deserve. He wants to give us an undeserved, unmerited gift. Satan traffics in law and in what is right and fair, what we deserve. God traffics in grace and mercy, what we do not deserve. Grace is a higher place than what is right and fair and Satan can never operate in grace, only in accusations.

Satan is known as the "accuser of the brethren". His thoughts are always negative, accusatory, pointing out others' faults, blaming others, devaluing, and demanding of rights and justice. Resentment, bitterness, and a heavy heart follow Satan's thoughts. "God is love" and He is the opposite of Satan. His thoughts are always positive, comforting, edifying, encouraging, accepting, valuing, and loving. Grace, forgiveness, and innocence follow after God's thoughts. "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil..." (Jeremiah 29:11)

Before Trisha and I had this revelation, not knowing these truths brought much harm to our own lives and ministries. We would receive hurt from people and our response would be for justice and what was right and fair. We acted more like God's policemen and would begin to develop accusatory thoughts or words about those who hurt us. Then we would become negative, critical, and devaluing towards them in our thought life. We did not realize it, but we were coming into agreement with Satan's thoughts with our own thoughts, and it brought us under judgment and hindered us from receiving healing and the blessings of God in our lives, families, and ministries. "But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment..." (Matthew 5:22)

After all, when people mistreat and disappoint us, it is only natural to feel hurt and wounded. But do we respond with grace, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they are doing! They are only acting out of their own hidden core pain and rejection! Help me to cover them and restore relationship!" Or do we demand vindication, trying to justify and clear ourselves from blame? Do we try to make ourselves look good and innocent by exposing and talking about others' faults and thus making them look bad or in error?

Vindication can be one of the hungriest, most destructive appetites we possess. VINDICATION IS ROOTED IN DEMANDING OUR RIGHTS AND JUSTICE FOR THE WRONGS DONE TO US! But God says, "Vengeance is Mine." It is His right and it will cost us dearly to try helping Him out. When we do, God backs away from the situation and lets us handle things in our own fleshly, accusatory ways. Unknowingly, we are actually coming into agreement with Satan and separating ourselves from intimacy with God and from our inheritance in His blessings. When we decide we had better do something to help God, God help us!

It helps Trisha and I to look at it this way: it is not a matter of what we want to give to someone who hurts us. It is a matter of what we want to receive. Do we want to receive a hardened wounded heart that separates us from an intimate relationship with God and leads us into resentments, pride, and anxieties? Or do we want to enter into God's rest and walk in the joy of a lifestyle of forgiveness that produces a meek and gentle spirit? When we choose our response to wounding situations, we also choose our future rewards. "Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, they will pour into your lap. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return." (Luke 6:38) The context of this verse is not about money but about how we respond to those who hurt and disappoint us.

We make the decision whether to receive mistreatment at the hands of others as a blessing or as a curse. God has promised a blessing if we respond with forgiveness and grace. But when we respond with accusation, vindication, fault-finding, or blame shifting, we then give Satan a key to our front door and he can come and go as he pleases in our house. (Ephesians 4:26, 27)

"Blessed are you when men cast insults at you, and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, on account of Me. Rejoice, and be glad for your reward in heaven is great... But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you in order that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you..."

(Matthew 5:11, 12, 44-4)

These verses imply that there is no blessing or reward when we do good to good people. Blessing comes when we do good to the people who hurt us. The blessing is Sonship! We end up with the feeling of full acceptance and unconditional love with the Father. We begin walking in a deeper intimacy with God and we start taking on His spirit of grace. That releases intimacy in most of our relationships. We then start becoming comfortable with love and forgiveness. This is the place where healing and the blessings of God begin to overtake you.

A study by Mark Virkler reveals that eighty percent of most Christian's thoughts are negative. "They didn't value me! They didn't speak to me! They were not concerned with my need! They! They! They!" You can take most of your thoughts or conversations about a difficult person in your life, and in one way or another line them up under one of two categories:

THOUGHTS OF RESTORATION AND RELATIONSHIP

or

THOUGHTS OF VINDICATION AND EXPOSURE

One way leads to blessing and the other way releases a self-imposed curse. Satan wants us to inherit a curse. If the majority of our thoughts and conversations are in agreement with him, he has a right to release the curse. "He also loved cursing, so it came to him; and he did not delight in blessing, so it was far from him. But he clothed himself with cursing as with his garment, and it entered into his body like water, and like oil into his bones." (Psalm 109:17, 18)

God wants us to inherit a blessing. All we have to do is give the person a gift that they do not deserve, a gift of forgiveness and grace. "To sum up, let all be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing." (1 Peter 3:8, 9)

It really comes down to this, WOULD WE RATHER BE RIGHT OR HAVE RELATIONSHIP? How often our thoughts come into agreement with Satan when we strive to be right in our relationships, especially at home. The biggest problem is we usually are right about others' faults! But you can be right and have the wrong attitude and you are dead wrong. Jesus didn't "grasp" for position or authority (Philippians 2:5-8). Satan did. Jesus sought to humble Himself. Satan sought to exalt himself. Satan lost his position in God's presence. Christ was exalted to the right hand of the Father. When you choose the behavior, you choose the consequences! (See Law & Grace chart)

Jesus revealed the path to blessing and intimacy in Luke 6:27, 28, 35: "But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you... and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High..."

"Love your enemies" and you take on the spirit of Christ!

"Do good to those who hate you" and you may make them your friend!

"Bless those who curse you" and you inherit a blessing!

"Pray for those who mistreat you" and you see them through the loving eyes of the Father!

Jesus walked out these principles with the one who hurt Him most, Judas. He knew what was in Judas' heart from the beginning, yet Jesus continued to serve and minister to him for three years. He allowed Judas to minister beside Him. He washed Judas' feet right before the betrayal. He broke bread with him and lived faithful to the covenant of loyalty with Judas in spite of Judas' actions towards Him. He never stopped receiving and valuing Judas. Have you received the difficult person whom God has placed in your life as an instrument of blessing? If you do not value and respect them, then you may

be treating them like a curse, thus inheriting a curse! When we receive them as a blessing to help us find out what is in us, then God can take every negative relationship and use it to bring us into spiritual maturity. This releases us to be an instrument of His love to our family and to the nations!

"And as for you, you (Joseph's brothers) meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive."
(Genesis 50:20)

Do you have a pattern of struggling with strife or conflict in relationships? Are your thoughts or words often accusatory towards those who hurt or disappoint you? Are you part of a team that lacks unity? Do churches in your city seem to be competitive and just do not flow well together as the Body of Christ? We have material available that will help you to mature in this area of life and ministry.

In the Father's love,

Jack & Trisha Frost

Reprint Permission

Permission is granted to reproduce articles from this website provided:

- 1) articles are reprinted in their entirety, and
- 2) acknowledgement of both Shiloh Place Ministries and the article's author(s) are printed with each copy as follows:

(author's name)

Shiloh Place Ministries, PO Box 5, Conway, SC 29528

(843) 365-8990

info@shilohplace.org

www.shilohplace.org