

Relational Awareness ~ Lesson 5 ~ Reverse the Curse

Read all parts of the lesson (in black print) aloud in the group. Don't read answers in red unless there are no other appropriate answers given by group members. Start with question numbers circled in red.

In our first lesson we learned how to practice agape love. Then we looked at God's idea of mutual submission. In week three we saw how marriage operates as a body. Last week we studied God's original intent for marriage. We were challenged to identify a relationship in our lives where one person is dominant over another and think of ways to bring about change. Please share how this went.

In today's lesson, we will look at the relational curse in Genesis 3 and we will look at ways that a relationship is built up or torn down.

1. Read *Genesis chapter 3*. Who was the serpent and how did he convince Eve to eat the fruit? (vs 1-5) *Satan – he asked a deceptive question. He contradicted God by stating a half truth (You will not die – spiritual vs physical). He made it seem like God was withholding something good that they should want.*
2. How did Eve convince Adam to eat the fruit? (vs 6)
She gave some to him. His trust in her was stronger than his loyalty to God.
3. How did the disobedience of Adam and Eve affect their relationship with God? (vs 10 & 23)
They were afraid of Him and they were ashamed of their naked bodies. God distanced Himself from them.
4. In verses 11-13 we see the beginning of dysfunctional relationships. Both the man and the woman chose to not take responsibility for their own actions and instead put the blame on someone else. They did wrong, they got caught, and they didn't repent. How have you seen this type of dysfunction played out in a relationship?
5. What was God's curse on the snake? (vs 14-15)
He would crawl on his belly; lowest of animals; enemy of humans; crushed head vs bruised heel
- ⑥ Read *Genesis 2:17 & 3:16-19*. Five curses were given to the humans – 1 for both, 3 for the woman, 1 for the man. What are the 5 curses and which two are relational curses? *1) Death, 2) Pain in childbirth, 3) desire for husband (relational), 4) husband to rule over wife (relational), 5) hard labor to produce food from the ground – thorns & thistles*
- ⑦ How have the relational curses affected marital relationships throughout history?
Control & abuse; treating wife like property
- ⑧ Can the curses be reversed? *yes* How? *Read 1 Corinthians 15:22. Jesus defeated sin & death; He restores relationships*

Victims living under the oppression of a controller feel as if they are living in death.

9. When there is abuse in a marriage, children are trained to abuse the next generation. How can marriages model God’s love for children to follow? *Show consistent respect and kindness*
- 10 Let’s look at some characteristics that can either build a relationship or tear it down. These are applicable to marriage as well as other relationships. In the chart below, mark the characteristics that apply to your closest relationship.

| BUILDING UP | TEARING DOWN |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| Honest/Sincere | Dishonest/Deceptive |
| Freedom | Subjugation/ Domination/Control |
| Faithful | Betrayal/ Unfaithfulness/Cheating |
| Values the other | Mistreatment/Oppressive |
| Openness | Covert/Concealed Information |
| Listens to ideas, concerns, and beliefs | Dismisses concerns of the other |
| Comfort | Torment/ Harassment |
| Affirming | Criticism/Judging |
| <i>Accepts the other as they are</i> | <i>Irritation</i> |
| <i>Encouraging</i> | <i>Frustration</i> |
| <i>Patient</i> | <i>Anger</i> |

Adapted from Woman – Aware & Choosing

- 11 Fill in some other characteristics above that build up or tear down a relationship.
- 12 Without trying to change the other person, what one thing can you work on this week to improve your relationship?

Read the following:

You can be a part of the solution to domestic abuse by joining your church’s Domestic Kindness Action Team



DKAT: equips the whole church with DK instruction in Godly living & connects the oppressed and the repentant controllers to expert help.

If you can be anything, Choose to Be Kind