

Chapter One: Be Loving: Recognize their worth - Choose love. Be Loving: Recognize their worth..... Ephesians 2:10 “We are God’s workmanship.”

IT may shock and dishearten you to know that the roughest sandpaper person you know in your life may well be living right under your roof.

We live in a world that hoards a myriad of problems. However, you will be thrilled to know that I have discovered the biggest problem of all – **people!** In my opinion, if there were fewer people, there would definitely be fewer problems.

Let’s be honest! Some people are more difficult to get along with than others; they “rub” us the wrong way! **I call them “Sandpaper People.”** Sandpaper people come in all shapes, sizes and colors and sometimes they *are* us! We try to change them, run from them, ignore them and even take a stab at fixing them. If only it were that simple. It rarely is.

Getting along with sandpaper people requires a new point of view, seeing them as God sees them. We cannot base love on feelings, but on God’s love released by choices we make in dealing with sandpaper people.

Just as the disciples were called to harmony and peace, so are we. Our relationship should not only demonstrate the reality of a living God but total acceptance and wholehearted commitment to him as well.

The artist came to the park every day. Painted in the same place every day...specialized in portraits. People watching, searching for the right face to paint. Each face spoke of a different stories and the lives that people live.

Sandpaper people desperately need someone who will look beyond their abrasive behavior to recognize their worth. Sandpaper people have allowed someone or something to assign an identity to them that is false.

Sandpaper people fail to understand that their identity was established before the world began, in the heart and mind of God.

we are inviting God to work in us and through us to bring about change; to create His image in us so we can then see His image in others. Difficult relationships find it hard to survive in an atmosphere of love because stubborn wills yield to love as the worth of a soul is recognized and valued.

We must know ourselves... until we do. We are who everyone else chooses to identify us....

The perfect sandpaper person who was transformed. John 4:5-9 – The Woman at the Well!

Jesus Loved Her... ○ She was immoral and spiritually ignorant, an outcast despised by the Jews and even her own people.

- Very Popular with the men...used and casted aside like a damaged doll. ○ How do you think she feels about her life?

Getting along with people who rub us the wrong way requires a new point of view, choosing to see them as God sees them and laying aside every attitude that does not reflect the image of God. Sandpaper people are created in Gods image and should be treated that way!

Jesus pursued her- ...The woman was so important that Jesus pursued her, going out of his way to arrange a meeting with her.

- Meeting this woman was NOT an accident. He planned a divine interruption in her life, full of love and forgiveness.
- He met her at the point of her greatest need. His plan was to set her free!!! ○ **When our messes meet His mercy, it is the perfect setting for a miracle!!**
- **Once because I made you and once because I bought you... (the little boat)**

Jesus Valued Her ...They never even gave her a name! ○ Sandpaper people simply cannot understand they are valuable to anyone much less to God. ○ Jesus in dealing with her was speaking to all women and to every need that we have in our lives.

- The fact that he spoke to her was a miracle. Men didn't talk to women. Jeremiah 1:5 **Our value rest solely in the eternal and undeniable act that we are created by God...set apart and waned by Him!** ○ **Sandpaper people will never be free to change until they understand that their worth and value come from and flows through their identity in God.**

Jesus Chose Her.... Jesus not only loved and pursued the woman at the well.

- He chose her to carry out his plan... Jesus could have made a lot of choices but he chooses to use her. His decision makes no sense unless you factor in Grace
- **The Grace of God changes everything! - Grace can simply defined as Gods riches at Christ's expense.**

Jesus Changed her.... The woman was desperate for someone who could change her life.

She was tired of the way she lived.....

- **God takes sour circumstances and relationships of life to cut away everything that doesn't look like his child.**

Sandpaper People: Dealing with difficult People

- **We can rest in the truth that God is the one doing the cutting, the results will be astonishing...**
- Jesus offered her the living water, which gave her hope for changing her life —Page 21
- God does not love us because we are lovable and deserve to be loved. He loves us simply because He is love and he cannot help himself. God is Love.....
- We are unable to give love until we have received real love..... God's love reveals the very person of God to us...
- **We must understand and remember that GOD does not love us because we are lovable and deserve to be loved. He loves us simply because he is Love and He cannot help Himself!!**
 - We call it mercy....IT is God's forgiving love
 - We call it fate... It is Gods caring love
 - We call it kindness.... It is Gods accepting love
 - We call it death...It is Gods proven Love
 - We call it the plan of God.... It is Gods perfect love
 - We call it heaven.... It is God's rewarding love
 - We call it eternity.... It is God's unending love.

Chapter 2: Be Humble: Choose Against Pride.... God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.

Pride has been defined as a deadly disease, a spiritual cancer”, that devours love and contentment. Pride is a sign of Our own insecurity and feelings of inferiority.

God opposes Pride.

- Proverbs 16:18-19 Learning to deal with pride is an essential part of every relationship and when it comes to getting along with people who rub us the wrong way.
- Romans 12:3-6, 10 -How can we rid out lives of pride and prevent it from carving out a destructive stronghold from which relationship problem arise? **Step 1: Recognize the power of grace-Romans 12:3**
- Pride goal is to make us independent of God, duping us into believing we are in control of our own instead of trusting God for his decisions. ○ God’s grace was Paul’s starting place his finish line and everything in between. The very reason he was so humble, his life so Powerful.
- Nothing on this earth is powerful enough to erase guilt. we must deal with it. We try to fix ourselves but fail. We try to fix sandpaper people but fail... We need Grace....
God’s
Grace ○ **The amazing truth is that grace is ours for the asking.** God stands ready to pour his priceless grace into every heart and soul. Grace works to generate unexplainable peace, eternal life, unending joy and freedom from sin through unconditional love
- **Grace offers the riches of God at the expenses of Jesus Christ and His death on the cross.**

Step 2 Take charge of your mind.

- Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgement, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. Romans 12:3

2 Corinthians 10:5 Urges us on in the battle.

- Isaiah 26:3 You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, whose thoughts are fixed on you. What does it mean to “fix’ our thoughts? page 31

Step 3 Be a Kingdom Thinker

- Just as each of us has on body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are any form one body. Roman 12:4-5
- Balance is hard to maintain. in pools and in relationships.
- Spiritual Gifts1 Corinthians 12;7
- Pride destroys unity and sets itself up against God, a very dangerous place to be. Every gift, every believer and every relationship is Important and has a unique purpose in the kingdom. God is all about relationships.
- What roles does scripture say about sandpaper person and their worth in Gods Kingdom. Romans 8:28

Step 4 Practice Accountability

Accountability is often seen as a relationship straitjacket which limits freedom, of expression and hinders those who “March to a different drummer.”

What is accountability?

God never intended submission to be nothing more other than a fit to every relationship.

God places people in our lives to see things we cannot see, to encourage and build us up, to correct, love and protect us.

Chapter 3 _Be Accepting: Love Them—Just as they are!!!

Core Principle

"accepting" difficult people as a spiritual practice that goes beyond tolerating them. Instead, it involves choosing to love them in spite of their abrasive behaviors and resisting the urge to change or resent them. Acceptance is about seeing their value as individuals created by God and understanding that their actions may not define their entire character.

- Understand that you can't change them, only yourself ○ You can't fix abrasive people, but you can choose your response.
- Adopt God's viewpoint instead of your emotional one
- Instead of seeing them as irritants, see them as people who are hurting, insecure, or spiritually unfinished—just like you.
- Respond with grace rather than reaction
- Practical steps include pausing before responding, praying for the person, and choosing kindness even when it's undeserved.
- Recognize the intrinsic worth of everyone, even those who irritate or frustrate you. Acceptance begins with valuing the person rather than focusing solely on their challenging behavior. **Teenagers' emotional outbursts ...**
- **Practice patience and empathy, understanding that people often** act out of their own pain, limitations, or misunderstandings. This perspective helps reduce frustration and defensive reactions
- Control your responses, choosing peace over conflict. Southerland stresses that reacting negatively can escalate tension, whereas accepting people softens interactions and models Christ-like love.
Let God use the friction to refine you

The chapter frames difficult relationships as spiritual sandpaper—painful but transformative, shaping you into someone more patient, loving, and Christlike.

Choice #1- Coose Faithfulness

- Sometimes being faithful means sacrificing your own happiness for at time in order to redeem the relationship. Hosea did just that. God called him to faithfulness and asked him to focus on his wife's needs instead of his own and He obeyed God.

Choice #2 Choose to Forgive (Hosea 3:1)

- Forgiveness is not a feeling; it is a choice, a deliberate action and an independent act between God and us.
- Love that chooses forgiveness is the only choice that sets us free from the chains of anger, resentment, revenge and bitterness.
- Forgiveness is the deepest need of our soul and God's greatest gift. ○ God forgave all our sins. HE canceled the record that contained the charges against us.
- SO, it's up to us to forgive each other including our sandpaper people. Choose to forgive them and you will find your heart set free as well.

Choice #3: Choose to Sacrifice (Hosea 3:2)

- Hosea was the one who had been wronged and humiliated. Yes, he was the one following God, but he was asked to sacrifice.
- He sacrifices everything in order to redeem a woman who didn't deserve to be saved.
- **Exactly what Christ did for each of us.**
- **God always honors a humble heart, a heart willing to crucify pride and choose humility.**
- Hosea Sacrifice his Rights—His wife broke the covenant of marriage ○ Hosea sacrifices his money—Hosea had to buy back his own wife.

Choice # 4: Choose to Restore (Hosea 3:3)

- Hosea fixed his eyes and heart on restoration, not condemning his wife but rather her behavior. God calls us to do the same with sandpaper people.
- He wanted to restore his marriage, but first he wanted to restore his wife! He was willing to hold his wife accountable, setting aside his own need for the higher purpose of restoration.

Choice 5: Choose to Love the Way God loves (Hosea 3: 4-5)

- The marriage of Hosea and Gomer is meant to be a picture of our relationship with God. His unwavering love for us, His children.
- We have become prostitutes of the world, depending on the wrong people and the wrong things, selling ourselves to unworthy desires and goals.
- We have to run from our faithful God and His precious love nailed to the cross, straight into the arms of our own inadequacies and selfish desires.
- We have followed after false gods, worship instead of worshiping the one true God.

- Love is patient ○ Love is Kind ○ Lover does not envy ○ Love is not easily angered ○ Lover keeps no record of wrongs ○ Love Never fails (1 Corinthians 13:4-5,8)

Chapter 4 Be Encouraging: Become their cheerleader 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Encourage each other and give each other strength ○ We must choose to see them as God sees them, change our focus to their good points and then voice them!

- The power of the spoken word is great! Sandpaper people are accustomed to being the target of harsh words tossed at others to make themselves elevated.

1. Understand that the tongue is a gift from God. Proverbs 16:1-The gift of communication comes from God.

- It is our responsibility to manage and use that gift of communication for accountability, encouragement, strength and support of others.
- Sandpaper people there is a lack of positive emotional deposits. They have never had a cheerleader nor do they feel they deserve one. ○ Communication with sandpaper people need spiritual intervention and authentic interpretation of what they truly need and want.
- When we deposit words of truth, love patience and acceptance, their emotional balance moves into the black and a healthy relationship can begin.

2. Recognize the Power of the Tongue ○ What you say affects how you live. You will be rewarded by how you speak. What you say can mean life or death.

- The tongue builds or destroys relationships. Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs (Ephesians 4:29)
- Encourage each other and give each other strength (Thessalonians 5:11)
 - Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing (Proverbs 12:18)
- Destructive verbal darts we tend to aim at others, when they find their mark, ruin is the result. But under God's control, words build solid relationships.

- 3. Learn to control the tongue** ○ He who guards his lips guards his life, but he who speaks rashly will come to ruin (Proverbs 13:3)
- If we do not learn to use and control our tongue, it will use and control us! How can we learn to manage our mouth and control our tongue.
 - Check your heart! The mouth speaks the things that are in the heart. Good people have good things in their hearts and so they say good things, but evil people have evil in their hearts, so they say evil things (Matthew 12:34-35) ○ A wise man's heart guides his mouth (Proverb 16:23) ○ The tongue of the righteous is choice silver, but the heart of the wicked is of little value. Proverbs 10:20
 - The control of the tongue begins with an obedient heart, a heart committed to truth, a heart under the control of the Holy Spirit. ○ Clean house, No more rebellions, clean house. No more rebellions, please. Get a new heart (Ezekiel 18:31)
 - Guard your mind: Test me, O Lord and try me, examine my heart and my mind (Psalm 26:2)
 - Ask God for Help: Take control of what I say, O Lord and keep my lips sealed (Psalm 141:3)
 - Speak Less: Do not be quick with your mouth, do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few (Ecclesiastes 5:2)
 - Words are a powerful gift from God, but every gift comes with responsibility to use that gift in the right way!

Chapter 5: Be Patient: Learn to Endure

1. Recognize God as the source of Patience
 - Roman 15:5 Paul clearly notes “Patience and encouragement come from God”
 - God will strengthen you with his own great power so that you will not give up when trouble comes but you will be patient! (Colossians 1:11)
 - Through the Bible: The scriptures give us patience (Roman 15:4)
 - Through our circumstances: Stay on the path that the lord your God has commanded you to follow (Deuteronomy 5:33)
 - Relationships produce patience, too. The more difficult the relationship is the most valuable lesson. As iron sharpens iron, so people can improve each other (Proverbs 27:17)
 - But the same is true in difficult relationships. When iron rubs against another piece of iron, it shapes and sharpens both. The same is true in difficult relationships. When a piece of iron is rubbed against another piece of iron, it shapes and sharpens both...Sparks fly....
2. Choose to be Patient
 - James 5:7- Be patient until the Lord comes again.
 - Patience chooses a better perspective: The soldiers of Saul thought Goliath was too big to kill. David thought he was too big to miss! The victory came because of a different perspective.
 - Life is like that. Sandpaper people trying to capture your attention, ignoring the signs, breaking the rules while barging into your life.
 - Patience chooses in Love more. I Corinthians 13:4- Love is patient, love is kind.

Chapter 6: Be forgiving: Forgive and Forget

- Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as Go in Christ forgave you. ○ The antidote to Failure: Sandpaper people want forgiveness but cannot forgive.
- Forgiveness is a gift we give ourselves. (Hebrews 12:14-15) ○ Step 1: Take the Initiative: Matthew 18:23 ○ Step 2: Forgive yourself: John 1:9 ○ Step 3: Forgive the Debt: IT is finished- Paid in Full ○ Step 4: Practice Acceptance: Romans 8:28 ○ Step 5: Pursue Reconciliation: Matthew 5:23

When we daily practice forgiveness, it is stored in our hearts and lives so that when the hardest moments of hurt come, it is easier to forgive. We need to deep the habit of forgiving.

Forgiveness pleases God and it frees us to forgive and to be forgiven.

Chapter 7: Be Caring: Meet a need

Proverbs 25:21-22- if your enemy is hungry, give him food ko eat. If he is thirsty, give him water to drink. In doing this you will heap burning coals on his head, and the Lord will reward you.

- Who is my neighbor—Be careful when we think a frown can't become a smile with a little kindness and persistence.
- The story of the Good Samaritan is one of the most familiar passages in all scripture of identifying” **Who our neighbor!**” Luke 10:30-37

1. Decision One: To see the need: Wonder just how many sandpaper people ae, in fact, angels sent by God. How many angels have we missed because we were too busy to see them?

- Needy people are everywhere. Some are easy to spot, while others bury their needs deeply, unseen and unmet,

- locking away each dreadful memory. ○ Everyday their needs are paraded in front of our eye, but we fail to see them.
- Two main reason is: were too busy ○ or we just don't care enough to see them.

Everyday sandpaper people are discarded on the side of the road wounded and bleeding. It is so much easier just to walk on by relegating our responsibility to someone else—anyone else!!

- 2. Decision 2: Feel Their Pain: He felt compassion -Luke 10:33** ○ Compassion is a key word in 2 Corinthians used a total of 29 times. It can be defined as “Called to one’s side to help.”
 - Compassion is empathy, Not Sympathy! Share each other’s troubles and problems and in this way obey the law of Christ (Galatians 6:2)
- 3. Decision 3: Take immediate action:** He came to him and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them and put him on his own beast and brought him an inn and took care of him (Luke 10:34)
- 4. Decision 4: Make a Long-Term Plan:** On the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said Take care of him (Luke 10:35)
- 5. Decision 5: Always follow up-** Whatever more you spend, when I return, I will repay you: Luke 10:35

Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers’ hands? And he said, “The one who showed mercy toward him. Then Jesus said to him “Go and do the same!” Luke 10:36-37

Chapter Eight: Be Peaceful: Wage Peace

Those who do not control themselves are like a city whose walls are broken down. Proverbs 25:28

- We are emotional critters, created by God with the capacity for strong emotions! Like any gift from Gods’ hands, our emotions can be sued for

good or misused for ill. God calls us to a peaceful resolution. Romans 12:18

- Step 1: Recognize the power of anger- ○ Anger is an emotional warning light, alerting us to the fact that something is wrong. ○ Step 2: Learn how to deal with anger from time to time every relationship will require a response to anger-filled words, attitudes or actions'-

Nehemiah 5: 6-7 ○ Admit

we are Angry ○ Delay

our response ○

Dismiss our Anger ○

Resolve our Anger

Resolve to prevent Anger: Proverbs 14:16- The world is watching as is every sandpaper person in your life! They want to see how your emotions will allow you to respond.

Chapter nine: Be Confrontational: Care enough to Confront

Faithful are the wounds of a friend: Proverbs 27:6

We are born helpless. As soon as we are fully conscious, we discover loneliness. One of the basic needs of every healthy relationship is the art of confrontation. Confrontation is a way to pull someone over to the side of the road emotionally for the purpose of solving conflict, while still promoting peace.

- Goal: Unity – The highest goal for every relationship

is unity at some level. Confrontation: Not Combat

- If you love someone, level with them ○ Key 1- Confront with the Right Motive ○ Key 2: Confront in the Right Way ○ Key 3-Confront at the Right Time ○ Key 4: Confront with the Right Audience

Chapter 10: Be Strong: Develop Endurance

He gives strength to those who are tired and more power to those who are weak: Isaiah 40:29

Sandpaper people make me Tired---Literally. Dealing with difficult people drains my emotional energy and dulls my mental consistency.

Choice 1: Choose Humility Over Pride- be Humbled under God's powerful hand so he will lift you up when the right time comes (1Peter 5:6)

Choice 2: Choose peace Over Worry. Give all your worries to him, because he cares about you (1 Peter 5:7)

Choice 3: Choose Knowledge over ignorance Control yourselves and be careful. The devil, your enemy, goes around like a roaring lion looking for someone to eat. Refuse to give in to him, by standing strong in your faith. You know that your Christian family all over the world is having the same kinds of suffering (1 Peter 5:8-9)

- Identify the Enemy ----1 Peter 5:8-9
- Use the right weapon- Refuse to give in to him, by standing strong in your faith. 1 Peter 5:9

Choice 4: Choose Character over Comfort- 1Peter 5:10 -after u suffer for a short time, God, who gives all grace, will make everything right. He will make you strong and support you and keep you from falling. He called you to share in his glory in Christ, a glory that will continue forever. 1 Peter 5:10

Chapter 11: Be Thankful: Thank God for Them

No matter what happens, always be thankful for this Is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6 ○ An opportunity to be Thankful

○ A choice for Thanks

Being Thankful brings God Pleasures:

- Reason 1: Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you I Christ Jesus (1 Thessalonians 5:18) ○ Reason 2: Being Thankful deepens our trust Psalms 43: 4 ○ Reason 3: Being Thankful frees us from having to understand our circumstances – Psalm 50:23
- Reason 4: Being Thankful transforms tragedy into triumph-1 Peter 1:7
- Reason 5: Being Thankful strengthens our prayer life -Psalm 118:21
- Reason 6: Being Thankful seals the victory – Psalm 20:5

Chapter 12: Be Committed: Refuse to Walk Away

Let us run the race that is before us and never give up. Hebrews 12:1

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.”,
“Love your neighbor. This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is
equally important ‘love your neighbor as yourself. All the other commandments
and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments. -
Matthew 22:37-39

Sandpaper people behave in a manner that drives others away. Commitment
looks past that behavior, sees the need and chooses to stay.

Sandpaper people uncover the motives we try so hard to bury.

We are to love God with all of our heart, which means to love him completely
from the center of our being. We are to love him with all of our soul, which is our
very essence. Finally, we are to love him with our whole mind, the place our
identity is forged and then worked out in our lives. God calls us to total
commitment to him. It is from the commitment we are empowered to love our
neighbor.