

UPPER ROOM BIBLE STUDY CLASS

“Reconciliation: God’s Bridge to Us; Our Bridge to Each Other”

Pastor Jim Otte

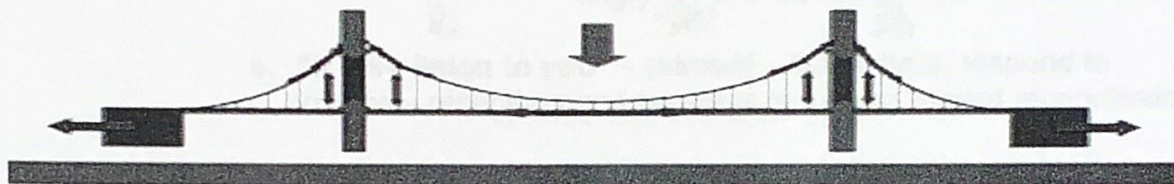
Winter, 2021

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Session 2: God’s Template for Reconciliation

Suspension Bridges

- Works by Tension and Compression



1. God’s Word provides the template for talking through differences and conflicts among Christians:

a. **Matthew 18:15-20.** “If your brother or sister<sup>[a]</sup> sins,<sup>[b]</sup> go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. <sup>16</sup> But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’<sup>[c]</sup> <sup>17</sup> If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

a. “If your brother or sister sins” (amartyon) – umbrella term for the many ways you can offend or hurt someone:

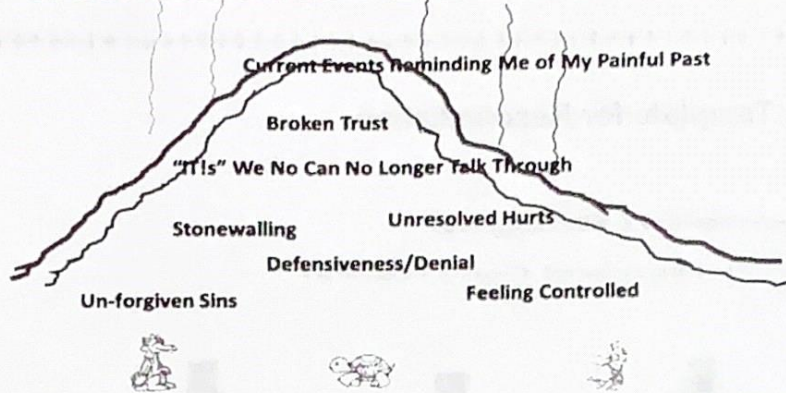
1. Break a commandment against
2. Trespass over boundaries of loving or respecting
3. Misunderstandings, misinterpretations, assumptions
4. Devalue by disregarding or seeking to invalidate their worth in thoughts, words, and deeds.

5. The effect of sin(s) is:

- a. It creates a chasm of hurt and mistrust.
- b. Without a bridge, the chasm hardens as a giant pile of “YUCK!” takes shape between the two.



**Un-relieved Stress is Stored as "YUCK!"  
Unaddressed YUCK brews into RESENTMENT!**



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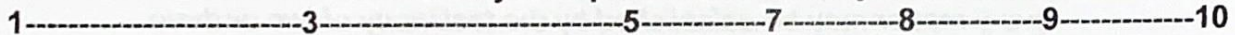
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**b. Let's talk about "resentment"**

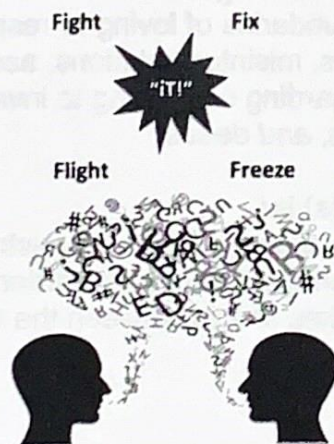
i.

- ii. "go and point out...just between the two of you." – attention must be paid to the manner and tone in which the "going" and "pointing out" takes place!

**1. Check your upset-ness intensity level and soothe it first.**



**When the "IT!" Happens:  
The Reticular Activating System (RAS): Mind-Body Reaction 1/15,000<sup>th</sup>  
of a Sec.**



**Mind-Body Stress Chemicals "Flood" You:**

- Heart – 100 beats/minutes
- Breathing speeds up/shallower breaths
- Tightness in throat
- Increase blood-clotting
- Decreased appetite
- Muscle tension to prepare for action
- Hyper-vigilance; detailed focus
- More verbal or more quiet
- Decreased interest in bonding
- Hear half of what's said
- Say what you shouldn't say
- Interpret inaccurately
- Body reacts in fight, flight, freeze, fix
- Rational thinking switches "OFF"
- Assumes the worst; reinforces the worst
- "Movie memories" triggered; relive the "IT!"

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2. Ask yourself the question: ***“What style of “going and pointing out” will best facilitate “listening and winning them over” (persuasive & healing)?***
  - a. ***Fight/Flight style*** of Win/Lose; Right/Wrong; “Proving something”; Self-Preservation. OR
  - b. ***“Righteousness of God” style:***
    - i. ***Ephesians 4:25-27.*** *Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. 26 “In your anger do not sin”[a]: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, 27 and do not give the devil a foothold.*

- a. **“if they listen to you” – (akuso)** – listen, hear, respond to – implies a receptivity and repentance moving toward reconciliation
  - a.
- b. **“But, if they will not listen, take one or two others along”** – a failure or refusal to respond; reacting defensively; etc.
  - a. **Question:** What factors could contribute to someone *“not listening?”*
- c. **“one of two others along”** – “differentiated” facilitators of reconciliation
  - a. **Rescuers** – stepping in to eliminate disagreement, to protect those who are wounded by it
  - b. **Advocates** – identifying with the “victims” of disagreement, speaking for them, fighting for those who can’t fight for themselves
  - c. **Facilitators** – guiding the process of working through the disagreement, teaching the process so people can work through them on their own
- d. **“tell it to the church”** – involve the spiritual leadership of the church to assist in prioritizing reconciliation
- e. **“treat them as you would”** – an ultimate consequence, of the refusal to reconcile, is the re-evangelization of the individual. This is not an invitation to shun the person!

## 2. The Process of Reconciliation

- a. Phase 1 = Listening for Mutual Respect & Understanding
- b. Phase 2 = Identifying Hurt & Repairing it through Forgiveness
- c. Phase 3 = Restoring Trust through Collaborative Problem Solving