

Sample (Session Four) from *The Leader's Balanced Life*

This sample session is taken from the Learner's Guide, which every learner is required to obtain. The Instructor's Guide has the exact same content but also includes PowerPoint Slides, Exams, Leader's Notes and Instructor Tips for teaching each session.

Look For These Unique Design Features In This Session:

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|-----------------------------|---|
| Session Outline | – Listed on the first page to provide a brief overview. |
| Objectives | – A primary educational objective, plus detailed supporting objectives for each main concept. |
| Main Diagram | – Each module has a main diagram to provide a “You Are Here” visual for the learner. |
| Diagrams & Boxes | – Many diagrams and visuals to enhance and support the teaching concepts. |
| Bolded Key Points | – The key points are bolded in a concise way for the Instructor and Learner to easily grasp the essential concepts. |
| Outline Format | – All sessions use an easy-to-follow outline format to make the lesson easy to teach and easy to learn. |
| Point to Ponder | – Summary or climactic thoughts placed in a shaded oval area to provide emphasis or interaction. |
| Group Application | – Every session has a Group Application at the end for small group activity, interaction, and assessment. |
| Discussion Questions | – Further questions for discussion and reflection. |
| Appendices | – Added material to study the topic further or provide assessments and resource tools. |



The Leader's Balanced Life

Contains Seven Sessions

Teaching Sessions

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There are seven sessions in *The Leader's Balanced Life* module. The circled session shown above is printed in this book to provide a sample for you.

SESSION OUTLINE

A. The Human Need for Relationships.

1. God created us for relationships.
2. Research supports our need for relationships.

B. Keeping Integrity In Relationships.

1. Integrity means being whole or undivided.
2. Integrity means being genuine.
3. Integrity means being honest.
4. Integrity means being dependable.
5. Integrity means being pure.

C. Having Accountability In Relationships.

1. Accountability provides protection.
2. Accountability increases faithfulness.
3. Accountability provides correction.
4. Accountability benefits all participants.

D. Preserving Your Relationships.

1. We must learn to control our tongue.
2. We must learn to keep proper boundaries.

E. Mending Broken Relationships.

1. Mending broken relationships begins with forgiveness.
2. Mending broken relationships is completed by restoration.

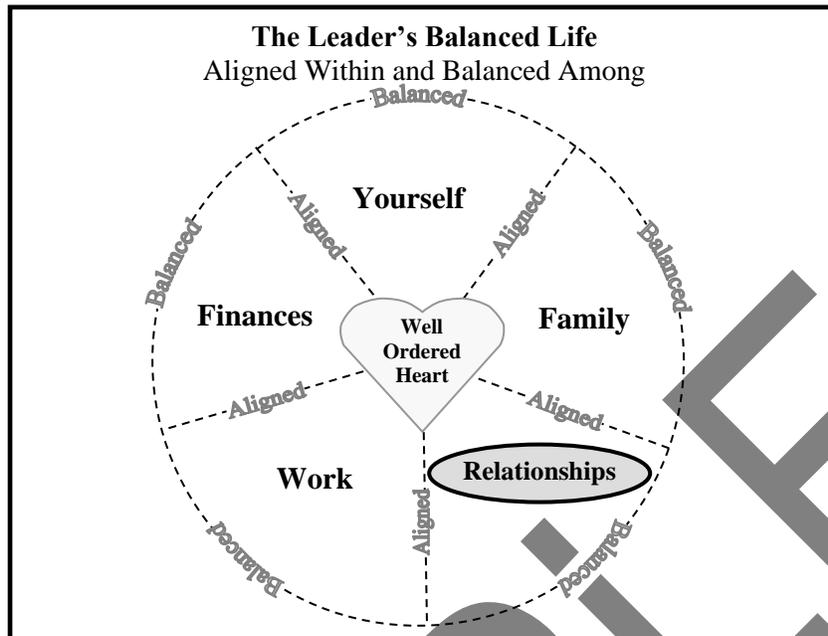
SESSION OBJECTIVES

Primary Objective:

To better understand human relationships so that ministry leaders will be able to enhance their relationships and teach others to do the same.

Supporting Objectives:

- A. Participants will be able to identify two reasons that explain why humans need relationships.
- B. Participants will be able to describe five aspects of keeping integrity in relationships.
- C. Participants will be able to explain four benefits of having accountability in relationships.
- D. Participants will be able to describe two keys to preserving your relationships.
- E. Participants will be able to explain two processes that mend broken relationships.



A. The Human Need for Relationships.

1. God created us for relationships.

The two greatest commands: Love the Lord with your whole being and love your neighbor as yourself (Mt 22:37-39 – paraphrase).

Humanity was created to have a loving relationship with their Creator and with one another.

- The Old Testament phrase the “People of God” reflects our need for community relationship. (Ex 19:5-6).
- The New Testament phrase “one another” refers to believers relating to each other and is used repeatedly.
- A common metaphor for the Church is the Body, which consists of many related parts (1Co 12:12; Eph 4:12). [See Appendix 4A]

2. Research supports our need for relationships.¹

- From the American Institute for Stress: “All [our research] confirms that strong social support is a powerful stress buster.”
- Wholesome community reduces the heart’s reactivity to stress. If it is spiritually based, health rises even further.
- People are as likely to suffer illness and premature death from being socially isolated as they are to die from smoking.

¹ Research adapted from *Making Room for Life* by Randy Frazee.

B. Keeping Integrity In Relationships.

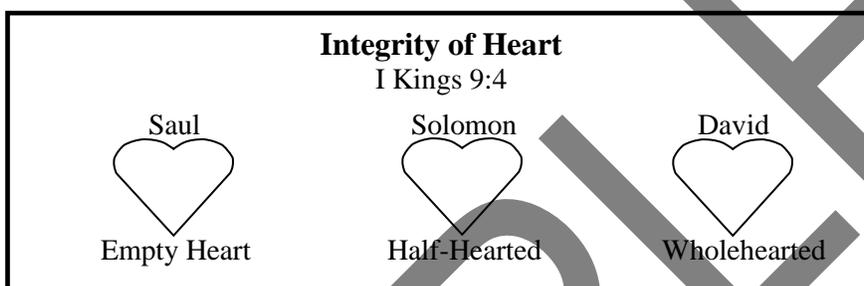
Integrity is a comprehensive word that involves several facets.

1. Integrity means being whole or undivided.

As for you [Solomon], if you walk before me in integrity of heart and uprightness, as David your father did... (1Ki 9:4).

Integrity comes from the word “integer,” which means a whole number, as opposed to a fraction. Integrity involves the concept of being complete, undivided, consistent, or whole.

- David had integrity, since he lived wholeheartedly for God.
- Like David, we are not to be fractured, divided, scattered, or double-minded (Jas 1:8, 4:8).



2. Integrity means being genuine.

These [trials] have come so your faith ... may be proved genuine (1Pt 1:7).

Integrity means that you are genuine and real, without pretense, not hypocritical, not being fake or an imitation.

- We must be genuine with others, not giving a false image.
- We must overcome the temptation of appearing bigger or better than we actually are.

3. Integrity means being honest.

A truthful witness gives honest testimony, but a false witness tells lies (Pr 12:17).

Integrity means that you tell the truth and avoid deception.

- We must be sincere in our thoughts, motives, and actions.
- We must not manipulate or take advantage of others.

4. Integrity means being dependable.

Simply let your “yes” be “yes” and your “no” be “no” ... (Mt 5:37).

Integrity means you are to be trustworthy and dependable.

- We must keep our word and do what we say we will do.
- Christians gain or lose credibility from their dependability.

5. Integrity means being pure.

Create in me a pure heart, Oh God ... (Ps 51:10).

Integrity means pure, clean, free from sin or guilt.

- We must live a life of high moral conduct and purity.
- We cannot be rude, coarse, or vulgar with others.

C. Having Accountability In Relationships.

All Christians, especially leaders, should have other Christians who hold them accountable.

1. **Accountability provides protection.**

But encourage one another daily ... so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness (Heb 3:13).

a. **Protection from temptation.**

Most spouses and leaders would not fall in sexual or ethical sin if they had an accountability relationship. This protects us from taking costly initial steps toward wrongdoing.

b. **Protection from hard-heartedness.**

Being encouraged or challenged to keep our heart clean protects us from skewed thinking or bitterness.

c. **Protection from mistakes.**

Getting others' input helps us gain new insight and further perspective, and helps prevent bad decisions.

d. **Protection from attacks.**

Accountability relationships protect us by having them get involved when accusations or attacks are made against us.

2. **Accountability increases faithfulness.**

Let us consider how we may spur one another toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together (Heb 10:24, 25a).

- We are much more likely to accomplish a task if we are held accountable to others to get it done.
- Being held accountable for our decisions and time management keep us focused on the right course.

3. **Accountability provides correction.**

He who ignores discipline despises himself, but whoever heeds correction gains understanding (Pr 15:32).

- To get better at anything, you must be willing to be corrected and learn to improve.
- Everyone must be accountable for their actions and mistakes.
- Ministry leaders who sin must face correction and discipline.

4. **Accountability benefits all participants.**

You and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith (Ro 1:12).

- The relationship sharpens and helps grow each participant.
- The love and friendship deepens between the participants.

Point to Ponder

Lack of accountability among Christians (especially leaders) helps explain why we do not see effective or lasting results and why the world often scoffs at us.

D. Preserving Your Relationships.

We must learn two key disciplines for preserving healthy relationships.

1. We must learn to control our tongue.

a. We must bridle our tongue.

If anyone ... does not keep a tight rein on their tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless (Jas 1:26).

- Teachers will be judged more strictly for their words (Jas 3:1). [See Appendix 4B]
- Control of our tongue shows overall self-control (Jas 3:2).
- Our tongue controls us or sets direction, like a horse bit, ship rudder, or spark of fire (Jas 3:3-5).
- Most creatures can be tamed, but our tongue resists and is like poison to us and others (Jas 3:7,8).
- Our tongue should not be “forked,” it should not speak both blessings and curses (Jas 3:9-12, 1Pt 3:8-10).

b. We are to use our words to build others up.

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths but only what is helpful for building others up ... (Eph 4:29).

- We must avoid gossip, slander, backbiting, and tearing others down.
- We are to speak of thanksgiving, not allow crudeness, coarseness, or profanity to come from our mouth (Eph 5:4).
- We are to encourage and build each other up (1Th 5:11).
- Quickly reprove those who speak poorly of others (Pr 9:8).

2. We must learn to keep proper boundaries.

a. We must set boundaries for our life and relationships.

¹⁰ *Do not move an ancient boundary stone or encroach on the fields of the fatherless, ¹¹ for their Defender is strong; he will take up their case against you (Pr 23:10,11).*

Boundaries are the healthy limits established for how we should live and relate to others.

- Boundaries identify lines of where things begin and end.
- Boundaries are the things that define who we are and who we are not.
- Boundaries help clarify who we are responsible “to” and what we are responsible “for.”

b. **We must assess and protect our boundaries.**

The Lord tears down the proud man's house, but he keeps the widow's boundaries intact (Pr 15:25).

Proactive Boundaries:

- Sabbath – Maintain a day of rest.
- Managing yourself – Get proper exercise, diet and sleep.
- Spouse – Sustain quality time and intimacy.
- Children – Keep devotional times, family times, etc.

Protective Boundaries:

- Employment – Work hard, but set limits on time.
- Relationships – Build friendships, but set clear limits with the opposite sex.
- Priorities – Do not give too much time to low priorities or allow deeper intimacy with lower priority relationships.

c. **Many people have problems with boundaries.**²

Men move boundary stones, they pasture flocks they have stolen (Job 24:2).

Many people struggle to either set and keep healthy boundaries, or to respect the boundaries of others.

		Boundary Problems	
		Unable to Say:	Unable to hear:
NO	Compliant Person	Controlling Person	
	Feels guilty and/or controlled by others, not able to set boundaries. They yield to others too often.	Aggressively or manipulatively violates boundaries of others. They try to control others.	
YES	Non-responsive Person	Avoidant Person	
	Sets bad boundaries against giving love and care. They will not help others.	Sets bad boundaries against receiving love and care. They will not receive help from others.	

[See Appendix 4C]

² Adapted from *Boundaries* by Henry Cloud and John Townsend.

E. Mending Broken Relationships.

The process of mending broken relationships involves two powerful components.

1. **Mending broken relationships begins with forgiveness.**

¹⁴For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins (Mt 6:14-15).

- Forgiveness is always a choice, an act of the will (Eph 4:32).
- Forgiving someone is done more for your sake than the offenders, but it helps both people (Mt 18:34-35).
- Forgiveness is not forgetting the offense, rather it is not holding the sin against the offender (1Co13:5).
- Forgiveness is agreeing to live at peace with the consequences of what took place.
- If people sin against you and you are not able to forgive them, your own relationship with God becomes broken.

[See Appendix 4D & 4E]

2. **Mending broken relationships is completed by restoration.**

This [new creation] is from God who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation (2Co 5:18).

a. **Steps toward restoration.**

- Let God reveal your broken relationships (2Co 5:23).
- Take the initiative to go to the person alone and try to be restored (Mt 18:15).
- Take ownership for your part in the broken relationship.
- Ask for and extend forgiveness.
- Express love and value for the person and relationship.
- Consider the other person, see the matter from their view.
- Share your heart and views, with restoration as the goal.
- Pray together, speak blessing, be reconciled if possible.

b. **Ongoing restoration practices.**

- If your attempt at restoration fails, try again with mediation (Mt 18:16).
 - Reconciliation requires both people to embrace it. Seek it, but live at peace and be free regardless of the response (Ro 12:18).
 - Commit to speak only blessings over the other person, regardless of how it turns out.
 - Be available to encourage (not force) others to reconcile when you see other broken relationships (Php 4:2-3).
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Group Application

This session presented several key aspects for enhancing your relationships. Assess yourself in terms of how you currently are living in regard to each aspect. Rate yourself from 1 (low) to 10 (high) then identify specifically how you need to improve.

<u>Relationship Aspect</u>	<u>Rating</u>	<u>Needs for Improvement</u>
1. Valuing Relationships	—	
2. Keeping Integrity	—	
3. Having Accountability	—	
4. Controlling Your Tongue	—	
5. Keeping Proper Boundaries	—	
6. Extending Forgiveness	—	
7. Seeking Reconciliation	—	

Discussion Questions for Session 4

1. Among the ministry leaders you know or see, how are they doing in terms of walking in integrity? Why do you think some are struggling in this area? Is your response different for business, military, or political leaders? Why or why not?
2. Among the ministry leaders you know or see, how are they doing in terms of practicing and benefiting from accountability? Explain your answer. Is your response different for business, military, or political leaders? Why or why not?
3. What do you need to do to better preserve your relationships in the area of controlling your tongue and keeping better boundaries?

APPENDIX 4A

Scriptures that Address “One Another”

1. “. . . Be at peace with each other” (Mk 9:50).
2. “. . . Wash one another’s feet” (Jn 13:14).
- 3-5 “. . . Love one another . . .” (Jn 13:34,35).
- 6-7 “. . . Love each other . . .” (Jn 15:12,17).
8. “Be devoted to one another in brotherly love . . .” (Ro 12:10).
9. “. . . Honor one another above yourselves” (Ro 12:10).
10. “Live in harmony with one another . . .” (Ro 12:16).
11. “. . . Love one another . . .” (Ro 13:8).
12. “. . . Stop passing judgment on one another” (Ro 14:13).
13. “Pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another” (Ro 14:19).
14. “Be of the same mind with one another” (Ro 15:5).
15. “Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you . . .” (Ro 15:7).
16. “. . . Instruct one another” (Ro 15:14).
17. “Greet one another with a holy kiss . . .” (Ro 16:16).
18. “. . . When you come together to eat, wait for each other” (1Co 11:33).
19. “. . . Have equal concern for each other” (1Co 12:25).
20. “. . . Greet one another with a holy kiss” (1Co 16:20).
21. “Greet one another with a holy kiss” (2Co 13:12).
22. “. . . Serve one another in love” (Gal 5:13).
- 23-24. “If you keep on biting and devouring each other . . . you will be destroyed by each other” (Gal 5:15).
25. “Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other” (Gal 5:26).
26. “Carry each other’s burdens . . .” (Gal 6:2).
27. “. . . Be patient, bearing with one another in love” (Eph 4:2).
28. “Be kind and compassionate to one another . . .” (Eph 4:32).
29. “. . . Forgiving each other . . .” (Eph 4:32).
30. “Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs” (Eph 5:19).
31. “Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ” (Eph 5:21).
32. “. . . In humility consider others better than yourselves” (Php 2:3).
33. “Do not lie to each other . . .” (Col 3:9).
34. “Bear with each other . . .” (Col 3:13).
35. “. . . Forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another” (Col 3:13).
36. “Teaching and admonishing one another” (Col 3:16).
37. “. . . Make your love increase and overflow for each other” (1Th 3:12).
38. “. . . Love each other” (1Th 4:9).
39. “. . . Encourage each other . . .” (1Th 4:18).
40. “. . . Encourage one another . . .” (1Th 5:11).
41. “. . . Spur one another on toward love and good deeds” (Heb 10:24).
42. “. . . Encourage one another” (Heb 10:25).
43. “. . . Do not slander one another” (Jas 4:11).
44. “Don’t grumble against each other . . .” (Jas 5:9).
45. “Confess your sins to each other . . .” (Jas 5:16).
46. “. . . Pray for each other . . .” (Jas 5:16).
47. “. . . Love one another deeply, from the heart” (1Pe 1:22).
48. “. . . Live in harmony with one another . . .” (1Pe 3:8).
49. “. . . Love each other deeply . . .” (1Pe 4:8).
50. “Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling” (1Pe 4:9).
51. “. . . Clothe yourselves with humility toward one another . . .” (1Pe 5:5).
52. “Greet one another with a kiss of love” (1Pe 5:14).
53. “If we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another” (1Jn 1:7).
- 54-59. “Love one another” (1Jn 3:11, 23; 4:7,11,12; 2Jn 5).

APPENDIX 4B

Words of Wisdom

Wisdom From Proverbs About Our Words

Power of words.

Proverbs teaches that wisdom will affect what we say and how we say it. A person with wisdom understands that he is responsible for his words. Proverbs 6:16-19 lists seven abominations to the Lord. The list represents things that God hates! *A lying tongue* (vs. 17), *a false witness who utters lies* (vs. 19a), and *one who spreads strife among brothers* (vs. 19b) are three of the seven abominations. Though society may underestimate the power of the tongue while promoting a philosophy of many words and liberal speech; Proverbs does not underestimate the power of the tongue. Instead, Proverbs reminds us that our tongues must be used very carefully. Proverbs 18:21 teaches us that death and life are in the power of the tongue. The influence of words is great. The going forth of words can be compared to *a scorching fire* (Pr 16:27) that can *separate intimate friends* (vs. 28).

Silence your words.

Shutting our mouth is often the wisest thing we can do. Proverbs 17:28 says, “Even a fool, when he keeps silent, is considered wise”. Silence may also display wisdom in what we choose to listen to. The less we say, the more we can listen. The more we listen, the more we can learn. Hearing or listening are both functions that consume most of our time in the communication process. Proverbs 12:15 indicates that listening is a mark of a wise man. Listening is not simply the passive side of communication, it is in itself active. Our listening must be selective (Pr 15:31), receptive (Pr 2:1), attentive (Pr 4:1; 5:1), and must result in steadfast action (Pr 5:7).

Guard your words.

We should avoid an over abundance of words. Proverbs 10:19 says that too many words lead to sin. We must consider the worth of a word before we speak it. We must be wise in choosing our words. In the Apocryphal writings, Sirach gives this suggestion: “Make balances and scales for your words and make a door and a bolt for your mouth. Beware, lest you err with your tongue” (Sir 28:25, 26). David Wright sums up this idea best when he says, “We think much about physical resources and guard these jealously. According to Solomon, our word resources must be just as jealously guarded, just as wisely used. There is a right and wrong way to spend this precious commodity. God is vitally interested in what pours forth from our lips because, like the desire for fellowship, this power of language is an expression of His image in us. Language is not to be taken lightly, talk is not cheap.”

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APPENDIX 4B (continued)

Words of Wisdom (continued)

Four styles of words from Proverbs.

1. **Manipulating words.**

Manipulating words are the style of a crafty and deceptive salesman. He uses words in a creative style; however, he is insincere (Pr 5:3, 4). The manipulating speaker is an expert in the use of flattery and persuasion. Manipulation attempts to establish personal credibility, convince others of personal superiority, and takes advantage of the weakness of others (Pr 7:14-20).

2. **Foolish words.**

Foolish words are used by a person who is undisciplined with his words. The foolish talker babbles endlessly and conducts empty conversation. The foolish speaker makes promises that he later regrets (Pr 6:2). His babbling leads to his downfall (Pr 10:8, 19; 13:3). This lack of control may result in gossip (Pr 12:23). He rejects wisdom (Pr 23:9).

3. **Treacherous words.**

Treacherous words are violent and hostile. Much like manipulating words, treacherous words are destined to destroy. However, instead of being deceptive, these words are brutally direct (Pr 11:9). The treacherous speaker is harsh and rude (Pr 12:18; 16:27). Boasting (Pr 25:14), lying (Pr 6:17; 12:22; 26:28), false witnessing (Pr 25:18), gossiping (Pr 20:19), backbiting (Pr 25:23), tale bearing (Pr 11:13; 18:8; 20:19; 26:20), and flattering (Pr 26:28; 28:23; 29:5) are all attributes of treacherous words.

4. **Wise words.**

Wise words are the opposite of manipulating, foolish, and treacherous words. Honesty is the cornerstone of the wise words (Pr 4:24; 12:17; 16:23). The wise speaker will never speak without thinking (Pr 15:28; 16:23) and he knows when to be silent (Pr 11:13). Wise men speak with cool spirits (Pr 17:27). A cool spirit will give time to listen (Pr 18:13), allow tempers to cool (Pr 15:1), and is effective and powerful (Pr 25:15). A wise man will exercise restraint with his words. He does not feel compelled to add his views to every part of a discussion, thus, his words carry more weight when he does speak.

We must constantly check our tongue. We must ask ourselves challenging questions. Are we being wise with our tongues? Are we using words to edify and to heal? Do we complain too much? Do we too often fall to the temptation of speaking poorly of another person? Do we talk too much? Do our words hurt other people? Do we add meaningful content to conversations when we do talk?

APPENDIX 4C

Ten Laws of Boundaries³

Setting and keeping proper boundaries.

1. **The Law of Sowing and Reaping.**

The law of cause and effect is a basic law of life. "You reap whatever you sow. If you sow to your own flesh, you will reap corruption from the flesh; but if you sow to the Spirit, you will reap eternal life from the Spirit". (Gal. 6:7-8) When God tells us that we will reap what we sow, he is not punishing us; he is simply explaining to us how things actually operate. Boundaries force the person who is doing the sowing to also do the reaping.

2. **The Law of Responsibility.**

The law of responsibility includes loving others. The commandment to love others is the entire law for Christians (Gal. 5:13-14). Jesus calls it "my" commandment. "Love each other as I have loved you" (John 15:13). Anytime you are not loving others, you are not taking full responsibility for yourself; you have disowned your heart. A strong theme throughout the Bible is that you are to give to the needs of others and to put limits on sin. Strong boundaries help you do just that.

3. **The Law of Power.**

Though you do not have the power in and of yourself to overcome destructive patterns, you do have the power to do some things that will bring fruits of victory later:

- You have the power to agree with the truth about your problems. (Confession)
- You have the power to submit your inability to God.
- You have the power to search and ask God and others to reveal more about what is within your boundaries.
- You have the power to turn from the evil that you find within you. (Repentance)
- You have the power to humble yourself and ask God and others to help you with your developmental injuries and leftover childhood needs.
- You have the power to seek out those that you have injured and make amends.

4. **The Law of Respect.**

Jesus said, "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you" (Mat. 7:12). We need to respect the boundaries of others. We need to love the boundaries of others in order to command respect for our own. We need to treat the boundaries of others the same way we want them to treat ours.

5. **The Law of Motivation.**

The Law of Motivation, simply stated is, freedom comes first, service comes second. If you serve or give to get free of fear, you are doomed to failure. It is truly more blessed to give than to receive. If your giving is not leading to cheer, then you need to examine your motives.

³ Adapted from *Boundaries* by Henry Cloud and John Townsend.

APPENDIX 4C (continued)

Ten Laws of Boundaries³ (continued)

6. **The Law of Evaluation.**

We must evaluate the boundaries we set, and be responsible to those who are affected by them. We may cause pain by making choices that others do not like, but we can also cause needed corrective pain by confronting people when they are wrong. If we do not share our pain with each other, bitterness and hatred can set in. We need to be honest with each other about how we are hurt. "Speak truthfully to {your} neighbor, for {you} are all members of one body" (Eph. 4:25).

7. **The Law of Proactivity.**

Proactive people do not demand rights, they live them. Power is not something you demand or deserve, it is something you express. The ultimate expression of power is love. Proactive people are able to "love others as themselves." They are able to "die to self" and not "return evil for evil". These people have truly moved past the reactive stance of the law and are able to love and not react.

8. **The Law of Envy.**

Your envy should always be a sign to you that you are lacking something. At the very moment envy begins, you should ask God to help you understand what you resent, why it is that you do not have whatever it is that you are envying, and whether you truly need it. Ask God to show you what you need to do to prepare to receive it, or to give up the desire.

9. **The Law of Activity.**

It has been said that when a baby bird is ready to hatch, if you break the shell for the bird, it will die. The bird must peck its own way out of the egg into the world. This aggressive "workout" strengthens the bird, allowing it to function in the outside world. Robbed of this responsibility, it will die. God made us in the same way. If He were to "hatch" us, do our work for us, or invade our boundaries, we would surely die.

10. **The Law of Exposure.**

The Law of Exposure says that your boundaries need to be made visible to others and communicated to them in relationship. David speaks of it in this way, "Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place" (Ps 51:6). God wants real relationship with us and want us to have real relationship with each other. This is the path to real love: Communicate your boundaries openly!

³ Adapted from *Boundaries* by Henry Cloud and John Townsend.

APPENDIX 4D

Twelve Steps to Forgiveness ⁴

If someone has hurt you in the past, you may be in bondage. Forgiveness is the only way to healing and freedom. You may say, "I can't forgive because of what he did to me." You have suffered no pain that Jesus didn't also endure on the cross. He shed His blood so that everyone may be forgiven; even that person who devastated you. Just as Christ forgave us, it is now time to forgive those who have wronged you. Forgiveness is an effort of the will. Here are 12 steps to help you through the process of forgiveness, and to become free from the bondage of the past!

- 1. Write on a sheet of paper the names of the persons who offended you.**
Describe in writing the specific wrongs you suffered (e.g. rejection, deprivation of love, injustice, unfairness, physical, verbal, sexual, or emotional abuse, etc.).
- 2. Face the hurt and the hate.**
Write down how you feel about these people and their offenses.
- 3. Acknowledge the significance of the cross.**
Remember, it is the cross of Christ that makes forgiveness legally and morally right. He died "once for all" (Heb 10:10).
- 4. Decide that you will bear the burden of each person's sin** (Gal 6:1,2).
This means you agree to live with the consequences of another person's sin, just like God did for us (2Co 5:21). This also means that you will not retaliate in the future by using the information about their sin against them. True forgiveness is substitutionary, just as Christ's forgiveness of us was.
- 5. Decide to forgive.**
Forgiveness is a conscious choice, an act of the will. This may be the most difficult thing you have to do, but you must *choose* to forgive, even if you don't feel like it. Since God commands us to forgive, you can do it!
- 6. Take your list to the Lord and pray: "I forgive (name) for (list the offenses)."**
If you have been bitter towards this person for a long time, you may want to pray with a Christian counselor or trusted friend.
- 7. Destroy the list.**
You are now free. Do not tell the offenders what you have done (the person you may need to forgive could be dead). Your forgiveness is between you and God only.
- 8. Do not expect your decision to forgive to affect the people you forgave.**
Instead, pray for them, so that they too may find freedom.
- 9. Try to understand the people you have forgiven. They are victims, too.**
- 10. Expect positive results of forgiveness in you.**
In time you will be able to think about and even be with the people who hurt you without feeling anger, resentment, or bitterness.
- 11. Thank God for lessons you learned and the maturity you gained due to the process.**
- 12. Be sure to accept your part of the blame for the offenses you suffered.**
Confess your failure to the Lord and to others, and realize that if you have offended someone else, you must go to that person and seek his or her forgiveness.

⁴Adapted from *Victory Over the Darkness* by Neil Anderson.

APPENDIX 4E

Consequences of Unforgiveness

by Bill Bright

If you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins. (Jesus, Mt 6:14-15)

Unforgiveness is an invitation for evil.

It is interesting that this exhortation from our Lord comes immediately after what we call “the Lord’s prayer” in Matthew 6, just following the words “deliver us from the evil one.” Unforgiveness is an evil that can invite other evil into our lives.

Since God our Father has forgiven us, we must also forgive others. When we pray the Lord’s prayer we actually condemn ourselves if we pray the prayer without forgiving those who may have offended us.

Unforgiveness was killing my friend.

Whenever we hold a grudge, we are asking for trouble. One friend who was very dear to me had a grudge that was just consuming him. I pleaded with him about his problem, because I knew it was affecting his health. He was sick constantly. He went through all kinds of difficult operations.

With great compassion for my friend, I spoke to him with love but honesty, “Your problem is that you are filled with hate, and unless you get rid of this hatred in your heart, you’ll kill yourself.” I really believe that. Fortunately, as far as I know, when he died he had cleared up all accounts and had made the profession of his faith in Christ, which is very encouraging.

Unforgiveness is like cancer.

Experts say that bitterness and unforgiveness can, indeed, make us sick and kill us. Some believe that unforgiveness can even cause cancer. I do not doubt that. It can eat at us spiritually like a cancer. I have no trouble believing that it can affect our cells because our spirit, soul and body are so interrelated.

Unforgiveness hinders our spiritual life.

Unforgiveness can also hinder our faith and prayers. It is no accident that following His powerful prayer and faith exhortation, our Lord ended it with another reminder about forgiveness: *Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins (Mk 11:24-25).*

It helps us to forgive when we remember that God forgave us even when we do not deserve it. We must look upon others with the same compassion with which God looks upon us.