

## Obtaining The Relational “Operating System” of the Kingdom

**Trainer-Equiper:** Tim Johns

**Objective:** To change our minds (repent) from our worldly and immature way of thinking, feeling, and relating in order to gain an entirely new kingdom operating system in our minds, emotions, and relationships. The pain of broken relationships and the reality that in the last days “the love of many will grow cold”, can motivate us to be relationally mature in love. One of the greatest ways we can change the world is to model Christ-centered, kingdom relationships. (Matthew 24:12)

**Biblical Text:** Matthew, Romans 12:19, Ephesians 4:30-32

**Introduction:** Each and every one of us who is a follower of Jesus the Messiah-King, has the exact same mandate – to advance Christ’s kingdom wherever we live. Because God revealed Himself as a Father, Son, and Spirit, he will only build his kingdom relationally. None of us were naturally born with the relational skills of the kingdom. We were born in fear, deprivation, and in predatory mode, primarily controlled by six dominate negative emotions: sad, anger, despair, shame, anxiety, disgust. Yet, now we have been born again as sons/daughters of God through Christ. We are new creations called to be transformed into Christ’s likeness by the renewing of our minds. (2 Cor. 5:17; Romans 12:1-2) Therefore, one of the most important things we can learn and apply is the relational etiquette in the kingdom. The Book of Matthew is full of relational kingdom wisdom – it is a relational code of conduct. We are called sons and daughters of our Father in heaven....and we are expected to see and treat all people the way Father sees and treats them. Therefore, the more relationally loving and mature we are, the more we are advancing the kingdom on earth. Every time we get a relational victory, we are bringing more heaven to earth.

1. Everyone one of the beatitudes deals with a relational attitude or practice. Example: Show mercy...get mercy.
2. Don’t murder...don’t even remain angry.
3. Don’t insult others...
4. Leave the altar and go repair relationships. Get reconciled.
5. Don’t commit adultery...don’t even lust. That is objectifying others.
6. Don’t carry out easy divorce. Fight for your marriage.
7. Don’t retaliate.
8. Love your enemies.
9. Pray for your persecutors.
10. Total forgiveness: Matthew 6:12 and 14. There are levels of hurt, betrayal, undermining....relational injury...that are lethal. Prolonged unforgiveness can easily and quickly turn into bitterness. One of the great deceptions is that if we hold onto to our anger and bitterness...that this will punish those who hurt us. But the only person who is damaged is the one who holds onto bitterness and unforgiveness. We think if we forgive, then justice will never be served. See “Total Forgiveness” by R. T. Kendall

- A. Don't take revenge, but leave room for God's wrath. It is written, "It is mine to avenge; I will repay, says the Lord. Rom. 12:19
  - B. Unforgiveness grieves the Holy Spirit. The primary way we **grieve** the Spirit in our lives is by fostering bitterness in our hearts. "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Ephesians 4:30-32 I believe our anointing will be proportionate to our forgiveness & mercy.
  - C. Types of forgiveness: 1.) Detached forgiveness – where there is a reduction in negative feelings toward the offender, but no reconciliation takes place. 2.) Limited forgiveness – where there is a reduction in negative feelings toward the offender, and the relationship is partially restored, though there is a decrease in the emotional intensity of the relationship. 3. Full forgiveness – where there is a total cessation of negative feelings toward the offender, and the relationship is fully restored.
  - D. Total forgiveness can involve a level of forgiveness even if there is no reconciliation. It must happen in the heart for peace to emerge. What matters is that the Holy Spirit is able to dwell in us ungrieved.
  - E. The ultimate proof of total forgiveness takes place when we sincerely petition the Father to let those who have hurt us off the hook – even if they have hurt not only us, but also those close to us. Jesus, "Are you now asking Me to set them free as if they had done nothing wrong?" Would you like the Lord to forgive you totally and completely? Do you want the Lord to fully bless and prosper them and you? Jesus, "What if I forgive and bless you in proportion to how you want Me to forgive and bless them?"
  - F. God is reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. 2 Cor. 5:19. While sinners, Christ forgives us. Rom 5:8
  - G. What forgiveness is not: a.) approval of what they did, b.) excusing what they did, c.) justifying what they did, d.) pardoning what they did, e.) forgiveness isn't necessarily reconciliation, f.) denying what they did, g.) blindness to what happened, g.) forgetting, h.) refusing to take the wrong seriously, i.) pretending we are not hurt,
  - H. What is total forgiveness: 1.) Being aware and still forgiving, 2.) choosing to keep no records of wrong, 3.) refusing to punish, 4.) not telling what they did, 5.) being merciful, mercy is not getting what we deserve (justice). 6.) graciousness...cuts across the legalistic spirit, 7.) it is an inner condition of the heart (Matt. 12:34)...most people we must forgive do not believe they have done anything wrong...they believe it was justified. 8.) absence of bitterness, 9.) forgiving God, 10.) forgiving ourselves.
  - I. How do we know if we have totally forgiven?: 1. Do not let anyone know what someone said about you or did to you, 2. Do not allow anyone to be afraid of you or intimidated by you. 3. We will want them to forgive themselves and not feel guilty. 4. We will let them save face. 5. We will protect them from their greatest fears, 6. It is a lifelong commitment. 7. We will pray for them to be blessed. Matthew 5:44; Lk 6:28
11. Don't judge, or you will be judged. Matt. 7:1-5

- A. Surrender your right to judge.
  - B. The law of sowing and reaping...we get back more than we give. Lk 6:38
  - C. People respond to me in direct accordance with the way I treat them...yet more!  
People will give back to you in a greater measure than you gave to them. If you operate in criticism and rejection, you will reap what you sow.
  - D. Judgement is not identifying what someone did. That is observation.
  - E. Judgment is when we assume to know **why** a person did what they did. That is playing God. Only God knows the heart.
  - F. Hurt comes into our hearts when we attach significance to someone's actions. "Keep in mind nothing has the power to hurt you until you attach significance to it. Another person's actions are only as significant to you as the judgments you pass on them. The judgement you make is based on your decision about why that person did what he did. The degree of pain or insult you experience from the actions of another is based solely on the judgment you pass. And the judgment. You pass is your assumption of why he/she did what he/she did." Taken from "How To Stop The Pain" by James Richards
12. Both unforgiveness and judgment will result in the closure of your relational circuits, which then blocks the flow of God's life between you and God and you and others.

**Belonging Checklist for Relational Circuits** (Long Form Beta 2.0) Copyright by E. James Wilder Ph.D. and Ed Khouri 2009

***General signs that my relational circuits are OFF***

- I just want to make a problem, person or feeling stop and go away.
- My mind is "locked onto" something upsetting.
- I think, say, repeat a word, phrase, cliché or thought that is negative, insulting or profane.
- I feel like screaming, name-calling or threatening (or I do).
- I strongly want to retaliate.
- I determine the only acceptable response that someone else can give me.
- I just want to get away, or fight or I freeze.[4]
- I become aggressive in the way I interrogate, judge and fix others.
- Interrogate – I ask aggressive questions about my hunch or fear of what someone is thinking, doing or feeling while looking for a particular response.
- Judge – I use my questions to expose the things I disapprove or will use to prove myself right or win.
- Fix – I already know what I want them to do or say and use my questions (talking with them) to get my way or reach my goal.
- I feel like it is their fault if they get hurt. (They asked for it. They should just get out of my way. They should have thought of that!)
- I don't feel like listening to what others are feelings, saying or going to say. When others are talking, I am already figuring out what to say before they even finish.
- I don't want to make eye contact.

- I would rather just handle problems myself.
- People are a bother and/or get in my way.

*If my answers are YES, then my relational circuits are OFF.*

***Additional questions to see if my relational circuits are ON when I am alone***

- I see this moment as a new situation where I can learn something. (It does not feel like a bad place I have been before.)
- I can reflect on myself (not just my hurts).
- I think of others who would understand me well if they were here now. (I am not struggling with feeling isolated and alone.)
- I am eager to talk with God about this situation. I want to encourage others to be helpful. *If I cannot check YES then my relational connection circuits are OFF or weak.*

***Additional questions to see if my relational circuits are ON with people I do not know***

- I can be respectful.
- I am aware and interested in their point of view.
- I am open to understanding what they are feeling right now.
- I am aware of my own feelings and responses without having to blurt them out.
- I can join in give-and-take both verbally and nonverbally.
- I can help them make their points more clearly understandable. They will agree with my description because it does not make them look stupid.
- I can understand and accept it if they make a choice I do not like.

*If I cannot check YES then my relational connection circuits are OFF or weak.*

***Additional questions to see if my relational circuits are ON with people I know well***

- Do my good memories of them seem important right now?
- Do I feel connected to \_\_\_\_\_ (someone I usually like)?
- Do I feel a desire to be connected to \_\_\_\_\_ (someone I usually like)?
- Do I experience him/her as a relational being?
- Am I aware of his/her care for me?
- Do I feel compassion about what he/she's thinking and feeling?
- Am I open to share their distressing feelings with them to help them return to joy?
- Do I perceive the presence of \_\_\_\_\_ (someone I usually like) as a resource?
- Am I experiencing joy in being with him/her?

*If I cannot check YES then my relational connection circuits are OFF or weak.*

EVERYTHING with respect to my relational conflicts, urges and cravings will turn out better once my relational circuits are back on.