

Introduction:

- Review: First week Pastor Joshua discussed six toxic behaviors that we bring into relationships that make them unhealthy. Last week I defined what loving clean is. And the initial steps we must take to rid ourselves of toxic behaviors so that we can love clean.
- ***Loving Clean is the ability to love others without bringing toxic tendencies into the relationship.
- Detox is the removal of toxic substances from a living organism. ***Detox in relationships is the removal of toxic behaviors that poison the relationships.
- Let me ask you today: Are you toxic or nourishing in your relationships? Do you bring life or take life from your relationships?
 - We can think of "toxic" people as those who consistently behave in ways that make others feel devalued, inadequate, angry, frustrated, or guilty, and non-person.
 - In contrast, "nourishing" people consistently behave in ways that make others feel valued, capable, loved, respected, and appreciated. IE. "A big man is one who makes others feel bigger when they have been with them."
- ***If a relationship is healthy and not toxic it should result in the fruit of:
 - 1. Progress (Every round ought to go higher and higher)
 - 2. Productivity (Fruitful)
 - 3. Prosperity (Growth)
- ***If a relationship is unhealthy and toxic it will generally reveal itself by the fruit of:
 - 1. Stagnation (No progress or growth)
 - 2. Degradation (to be reduced; going down)
 - 3. Deflation (To come into a lower level of value "self-esteem or self value")
- Let's get to the root of the matter this morning.

I. The Roots of Toxic Relating

- A. First Root: All about self. The majority of the toxic behaviors that we bring into our relationships come from two 'self' activities.
 1. Self protecting – it is the behavior that we use to avoid losing self-esteem. Self protecting is basically a relational behavior that we manifest because we are afraid of being hurt. It is fear based. Important to understand that. It is fear based.
 2. Self serving – the condition of putting one's own interests before those of others. Being devoted to or caring only for oneself; concerned primarily with one's own interests, benefits, welfare, etc., regardless of others. This too is fear based.
 3. Self is basically polar opposite of love.
- B. Second Root: Vaguely knowing God
 1. Vague means to be unclear in thought, understanding or expression. IE. "Sort of".

2. There are too many people who just vaguely know God. Two ways to vaguely know God:
 - a) Those who are just ignorant. They have never been taught to understand who He is. They do not know His ways i.e. Newly weds...who think they know each other.
 - b) Those who know it all. Their understanding is knowledge based. i.e. Philosophy teacher at ISU. Wow, did he know the scripture, know the arguments, the philosophy! But he did not know God! i.e. *A civil war professor may know all about Ulysses S. Grant but they will never know him.* Because we know about Him but do not really know Him leads us to the third root...

C. Third Root: not trusting God. This becomes the foundation of why we are toxic relationally.

1. Did the Pharisees trust God? No.
 - a) i.e. The Pharisees did not know God. Jn 3 Nicodemus - "How is it you know the ways of the weather but not the ways of God?" Midwest They had the knowledge of God but did not know God.
 - b) Jesus said this of them. *You are of your father the devil.* He told them this because this is what happens when you do life without a personal relationship with God.
 - c) Because they did not know God, they poisoned the people because they themselves were toxic. Their relationship with others was toxic and brought people down instead of lifting them up; took away life rather than giving life.
2. When I trust that God will be protector, savior, provider, sovereign, passion, source then I do not have to worry. If I trust that he loves me I do not have to be toxic in relating... He will take care of me.

D. So the three roots that kill relationship are: Selfishness, Not knowing God and His ways, and Not Trusting Him to care for me.

II. Killing the Roots

- A. Growing up in the Midwest on a farm I learned early what it meant to pull weeds-not pick the leaves off of weeds. i.e. "If you don't get the root it will come right back." You have to deal with your own roots not others.
- B. ***Jesus' cure for the selfish root was making life about others and not yourself.
 1. Lk 9:46, Mt 23:1-11(see Mt. Note Pharisees selfishness) *"The greatest among you must be a servant."* (Matthew 23:11, NLT) If you want to be great assume the place of least. If you want to be great be a servant to others. Killing the selfish root is about making life about others.
 2. *"Then, calling the crowd to join his disciples, he said, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross, and follow me."* (Mark 8:34, NLT) The only person who carried the cross in the Roman world was the one

who was sentenced to die upon it. Turn from your selfish ways. How selfish are you? Is your marriage about your spouse or about you? Are you about your friends or about you?

3. *"If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it."* (Luke 9:24, NLT) Giving up your life can be painful and stressful...initially. But once you have tasted of the freedom you will not want to go back.
 4. Love others. 1 Cor 13
- C. The Apostles cure for the vague root was to make life about "knowing Him":
1. *"For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified."* (1 Corinthians 2:2, NKJV)
 - a) Gr. *oida* – meaning to know as in personally and to understand.
 - b) This is not abstract knowledge but a knowledge of mission that produces obedience Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. (1985). *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (p. 674). G
 - c) To Paul knowledge of Christ was not some vague thing. He applied himself to personally know Christ so that Christ's presence in Paul's life would be visible.
 2. *"I want to know Christ and experience the mighty power that raised him from the dead..."* (Philippians 3:10, NLT)
 - a) Gr. *ginōskō* emphasizes understanding rather than sensory perception. This act embraces every organ and mode of knowledge, e.g., by seeing, hearing, investigation, or experience, and of people as well as things. The dominant concept is that of knowledge by objective observation.
 - b) Translation, Paul: "Because I know Him by personal relationship, I do everything I can to know more about Him, His ways, and His Kingdom".
 3. *"Anyone who continues to live in him will not sin. But anyone who keeps on sinning does not know him or understand who he is."* (1 John 3:6, NLT) see also 1 Jn 2:5-6.
 - a) Those who know Him want to know more of Him and His ways. John really stresses this in 1 Jn.
 - b) *"Those who say they live in God should live their lives as Jesus did."* 1 Jn 2:6
 - c) *And everyone who has this hope [resting] on Him cleanses (purifies) himself just as He is pure (chaste, undefiled, guiltless).The Amplified Bible.* (1 Jn 3:3)
- D. Christ cure for the untrusting root: Make life about walking by faith! Trusting Him in all things. *"Jesus told them, "This is the only work God wants from you: Believe in the one he has sent.""* (John 6:29, NLT)
1. At some point you must take a leap of faith and trust Him.
 2. Walk by faith! *"For we live by believing and not by seeing."* (2 Corinthians 5:7, NLT)
 3. Crucify your "self." *"My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."* (Galatians 2:20, NLT) The more I know Him

the more I trust Him. The more I trust Him the more I want my life to be patterned after Him. Sermon on the Mount.

- E. To Kill the toxic roots of relationship: Make life about others and not yourself; Make life about knowing Him; Make life about walking by faith.

III. **The Root of the Matter**

- A. The root of the matter is love. *Perfect love drives out all fear.* If you are not in fear, you will trust God to protect you. You will trust God to care for you and you will trust God to love you. When fear is removed you will not need to be self-serving or self protecting. When I trust that God will be protector, savior, provider, sovereign, passion, source then I do not have to worry. If I trust that he loves me I do not have to be toxic in relating... He will take care of me.
1. 1 Cor 13:4-7
 2. Gal 5:22
- B. The root of the matter is becoming more Christ like in this life. If we do that we will not be toxic relationally. This is every believers responsibility and reward!
- C. The root of the matter is life in the Spirit. Everything the river touches lives. Ez 47:9
- D. 1 cor 13 love chapter

Conclusion:

- *"Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong."* (Ephesians 3:17, NLT)
- Next week I will talk about how do your relate to someone who is toxic?