



INSTRUMENTS IN THE REDEEMER'S HANDS

Lesson 8 – Know II: Getting to Know People; Discovering Where Change Is Needed

Concepts and Objectives

- Concept: Personal ministry is not shaped by the facts you gather but by the way you interpret those facts.
- Personalized: I need to think distinctively biblical ways about myself and the people God places in my path.
- Related to others: One of the primary ways to function as an instrument of change is to help others think biblically about their situation and relationships, thoughts, motives, and behavior.

Lesson Content

The Blind Leading the Blind

As we seek to know and help people, we must always ask ourselves, “What principles, promises, perspectives, themes, and commands of Scripture speak to this person in this situation?”

In all of this talk, are we asking ourselves what the Bible has to say about what we are discussing? If not, it is very easy for all of that advice-giving to be little more than the blind leading the blind.

Organizing the Information Biblically

One way to promote godly change in others is to learn how to think about what they say in an organized, biblical way.

1. *The Situation*. What is going on? Gather information that describes what the person's world is like. _____

2. *The Responses*. What does the person do in response to what is going on? Include facts that describe the person's behavior.

3. *The Thoughts.* What does the person think about what is going on? Include information on how he has been interpreting his world. _____

4. *The Motives.* What does the person want out of, or in the midst of, what is going on? Include what you know about the person's desires, goals, purposes, treasures, motives, values, and idols. _____

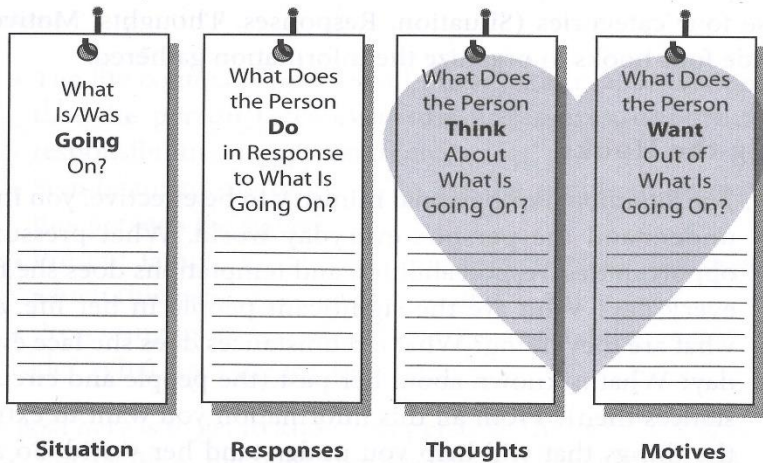


Figure 8-1.
Knowing a Person Biblically

Using the Hooks

1. The Situation.
 - a. Your calling is to build a bridge of understanding from the Word of God to the details of her world so that she can understand what God has promised her and called her to do.
2. The Responses.
 - a. Here the focus is on the person's behavior.

- b. Look for themes and patterns. What are the typical ways she responds to situations and people?
 - c. As they explain the situation, take out any information that describes the person's behavior and place it here.
3. The Thoughts.
- a. Here you are considering the "heart" that directs the person's behavior.
 - b. Recognize how the person is responding not just to the facts of her life but to her interpretation of those facts.
 - c. Notice how thoughts shape responses (Numbers 11).
 - i. They had a distorted view of the past (v. 4-5).
 - ii. They had a distorted view of the present (v. 6-9).
 - iii. They had a distorted view of self (v. 10-15).
 - iv. They had a distorted view of God (v. 21-22).
 - v. They had a distorted view of the future (v. 6).
4. The Motives.
- a. We know that there is always something or someone ruling our hearts.
 - b. We know that behind every action, reaction, or response are desires, motives, goals, and purposes.
 - c. We know that we quickly exchange worship and service for the Creator for worship and service of the created thing.

"Sharon" Case Study

The Big Question: In personal ministry, do you take time to organize information in a way that helps you interpret it biblically?

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Concepts

1. Personal ministry is not shaped by the facts you gather but by the way you interpret those facts.

2. Interpreting information biblically begins with organizing the material under biblical categories.

Personalized

1. I need to be aware that I never live based on the facts of my experience but on how I interpret those facts.
2. Because I am always interpreting, I need to be aware of how my reactions to others are shaped by the sense I have made out of their choices, behavior, and words.
3. I must be committed to making Scripture my primary tool for interpreting life.

Related to Others

1. One of the primary ways I will function as God's instrument of change is to help those around me to think about their lives in a distinctively biblical way.
2. As I get to know people, I need to take the time necessary to let biblical categories sort out the information they give me.
3. As I listen to people tell their stories, I need to ask, "What does the Bible say about what I'm hearing?"

Make It Real

In light of your personal ministry opportunity, use the following categories and questions to organize the information you have gathered about your person or group. Refer to the Sharon case study as an example.

1. Situation. List everything you can find about the person's circumstances.
2. Response. List everything you can that characterizes the person's response to circumstances.
3. Thoughts. List everything you can that describes the way the person thinks about his situation. How is he thinking about himself, God, change, and so forth?
4. Motives. List everything you can that describes what the person wants out of (or in the midst of) the situation.
5. Pray specifically for God's wisdom and discernment as you try to understand this person.