

Confronting Yourself

Matthew 7:1-5; Luke 6:36-42

ASSIGNMENT: To make a “Logs List”

1. Read over Matthew 7:1-5. Pray and ask the Lord to help you to be honest with yourself. You might pray like this: “Father, help me to be honest with You, my spouse and myself. Examine my life right now and help me to honestly list the ‘logs’ that are in my life – the attitudes, thoughts, and behaviors that I should be attempting to change for Your sake.”
2. Take three 20-minute sessions to make your list. Remember to read Matthew 7:1-5 and pray before each session.
3. Take a sheet of paper and divide it in half. One side is for the husband; one for the wife.
4. Write these headings on the paper.
 - *“I am failing or sinning (or have failed or have sinned) as a husband (other categories to consider: father, son, son-in-law, neighbor, employee, citizen, follower of Christ) by:”*
 - *“I am failing or sinning (or have failed or have sinned) as a wife by: see above examples”*
5. Then begin to list your “logs.” BE SPECIFIC! *(No one changes in the general, or the abstract – a person can only change in specifics.)*
6. The husband starts and writes one specific ‘log’ (a way he has or is sinning) on his side of the paper. The wife then takes a turn and puts one specific ‘log’ (a way she has or is sinning) on her side of the paper. Keep taking turns like this through the first two sessions. (Follow the **important** rules on the back side.)
7. During the third session, draw a line under the entries you have written. Then each of you take turns (wife first) suggesting offensive areas that you believe the other has not included. You might state it like this: *“I believe you should consider adding to your list...”*
8. Bring your ‘Logs List’ to your next counseling session.

<p>Example: Husband</p> <p>TOO GENERAL: I am failing as a husband by being a poor leader.</p> <p>BE SPECIFIC: I am failing as a husband by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ not correcting or disciplining my children when they misbehave ➤ consistently ignoring misbehavior at the table ➤ carelessly setting poor examples in taking care of my clothes ➤ criticizing my wife in front of our children ➤ not supporting my wife in her discipline of the children <p><i>(These are all specific, concrete items that you can begin to change.)</i></p>	<p>Example: Wife</p> <p>TOO GENERAL: I am sinning as a wife by being inconsiderate of my husband.</p> <p>BE SPECIFIC: I am sinning as a wife by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ failing to share the events of my life with my husband ➤ not telling him about social plans far enough in advance for him to prepare ➤ not considering his likes and dislikes when I prepare meals ➤ rearranging the furniture without consulting him ➤ being unwilling to meet his physical needs <p><i>(These are all specific, concrete items that you can change.)</i></p>
<p>Example: Citizen</p> <p>TOO GENERAL: I am failing as a citizen by being a poor driver.</p> <p>BE SPECIFIC: I am failing as a citizen by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ not stopping fully at stop signs ➤ consistently driving ten miles over the speed limit ➤ carelessly watching the scenery when driving & not observing the road ➤ by rushing up on stop signs and stop lights & thus frightening my passengers <p><i>(These are all specific, concrete items that you can</i></p>	<p>Example: Employee</p> <p>TOO GENERAL: I am sinning as an employee by being negligent in my duties.</p> <p>BE SPECIFIC: I am sinning as an employee by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ consistently arriving 10 minutes late ➤ extending my break time by 10-15 minutes ➤ not listening carefully to instructions ➤ gossiping about other employees ➤ turning in incomplete work orders ➤ turning in padded expense sheets <p><i>(These are all specific, concrete items that you can change.)</i></p>

IMPORTANT RULES FOR THE SESSIONS

- 1) It is the husband's responsibility to set the time, start the session, and close it on time.
- 2) Do not debate, discuss or argue about any items that are put on the lists.
- 3) Do not minimize what your partner puts down by comments like, "Oh you're not so bad in that area!" or "That's not really important!"
- 4) Do not maximize what your partner says by comments like, "Well I am sure glad you put that one down because you really need to work on that one."
- 5) Do not try to solve any of the problems on the list.
- 6) **JUST LISTEN AND MAKE THE LIST!** (Solutions will come later.)
- 7) If either of you do slip and become angry, argue, or clam up, the other should just wait silently and pray until the situation is restored.
- 8) The list will contain some surprises! You may be surprised that the other person knows as many of his faults as he does. You may be surprised at the wide misunderstandings and misinterpretations that he has of you. Don't argue about these. Just Listen and Learn! You may also be surprised by what, to you, is brand new material. You may be surprised at your mate's priorities and the importance that he/she places upon them.
- 9) The list is an evidence of obedience as you are examining your heart according to God's command in Matthew 7:1-5.
- 10) The lists are also very important because they will form the basis for future sessions as we begin to address each of the issues revealed from God's Word.
- 11) At first, we will work on these items together; later, when things are going well, you will know how to work out the rest of the lists on your own.
- 12) If you take this assignment seriously we will be able to move forward in finding solutions at an accelerated pace.

Setting Up a Family Conference Table

PLACE:

Agree upon an area in which daily conferences may be held without interruption. Choose a table, preferably one that is not used frequently for other purposes. Hold all conferences there. If problems arise elsewhere, whenever possible, wait until you reach home to discuss them---at the conference table. The first week read Matt. 7:1-5; Col. 3:12-15; Phil 2:3-5 and Eph. 4:29-32 each night before conferring.

PLACE _____ TIME _____

PURPOSE

The conference table is a place to confer, not to argue. Begin by talking about yourself -- your sins and failures -- and settle all such matters first by asking forgiveness. (Matt. 7:4-5) Do not say, "I am sorry," but rather state "I was wrong for _____, will you forgive me?" Speak all the truth in love. Do not allow any anger to be carried over into the next day (Eph. 4:26). Ask forgiveness for any expression of anger.

Not all problems can be solved at one sitting. You may find it necessary to make up an agenda and schedule out the work over a period of time according to priorities. Direct all your energies toward defeating the problem, not toward the other person. Your goal is to reach biblical solutions, so always have Bibles on the table and use them. Ask, What is the problem? Define the problem issue carefully. Ask, What does the bible say about how to resolve this issue? List practical steps that will enable you to practice the biblical solution. It helps to record the results of your work on paper. Keep a notebook of "Conference Table Solutions." Open and close conferences with prayer. Remember when you need help, re-read Matt. 7:1-5, Col. 3:12-15, Phil 2:3-5 and Eph. 4:29-32.

PROCEDURE

If any conferee argues, "clams up" or does anything other than confer at the table, the others should use the time out signal. You need to establish a prearranged signal at your first conference. We suggest using the time out signal used in sports, making a T with your hands. This prearranged signal means, "In my opinion we've stopped conferring, "Whether he was right or wrong in this judgment does not matter and ought not to be discussed at the moment. The person seated should then indicate his willingness to confer, and invite others to be resume the conversation.

SUMMARY:

1. Have a specific place to confer.
2. Husband/Father/Head of Household should take the leadership to initiate, but he is not the only one that may do so.
3. Begin with prayer and read Matt. 7:1-5, Col. 3:12-15, Phil 2:3-5 and Eph. 4:29-32.

4. If one conferee stops conferring and begins arguing use your prearranged signal to indicate that, in your opinion, they have stopped discussing and are arguing.
5. Record the results of the conference, action to be taken, decisions made, etc., in a notebook.
6. Close in prayer.