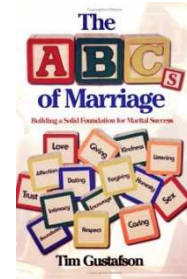




Last Shabbat, April 9, we welcomed Tim Gustafson as our guest Shabbat speaker. Below his bio are highlights from his message. Tim has been a member of the Or HaOlam board of directors since 1999. He is the founder of Gustafson Life Consulting in Overland Park, which he founded in 1998.

Tim has more than 40 years' experience in counseling and pastoral care for individuals, couples and families. Prior to opening his private practice, he was director of the pastoral care and counseling department at a large church in the Kansas City area. Tim holds two master's degrees, one in theology and one in pastoral counseling. Early in his career, he led a church as senior pastor.

Tim has also taught courses in counseling and marriage. His book, *The ABCs of Marriage: Building a Solid Foundation for Marital Success*, is available directly from Tim or through Amazon.com. Tim has found marital success with his wife of nearly 50 years, Reneé. They have three married children and 12 grandchildren.



Partial notes from Tim's message (you can view the entire message and service at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7dDA9bHGtXw>)

It's such an honor to be with you today and to be with Or HaOlam. My hope is that you will fall even more in love with the Messiah.

I'm in my office [as a counselor] always giving people tools to know how to do life better. One of my hopes is that people's lives will have less chaos in them and that the chaos would happen farther and farther apart, and that they would have more peace in their life and that it would happen closer and closer together. So, I'm going to give you a tool today and reference a couple of other tools and we'll see what happens ...

[2] Chronicles [16:9] says "He looks to and fro, seeking whom He may strongly support" and if that's you today, let me give you an encouraging word. He is looking for you. It might include 30 years of death, dying and letting your soul go away, so it's not all about you. But He is looking.

"Every year the [Or HaOlam] board of directors meets and we speak to the shamashim [volunteer leaders of Or HaOlam], which is many of you in here. I teach the shamashim some years and, every time, I give you a tool. The first tool I gave to the shamashim was this: When I started this little company [his counseling and consulting firm], the Lord said to me, 'Now Timothy, I want you to guard your words (because I'm a good talker). I want you to be careful when you

Speak. Because if you're going to teach (and if you want to take notes, this would be the place).

Tool #1 – Be careful how you speak: If you're going to teach, instruct, correct, judge, define or even give an opinion to someone, there's always a cost when you do that.

Let me say it again. If you're going to teach your husband, correct your kids, define anyone in your friendship group, instruct them, even give an opinion, there's a withdrawal taken out of the bank account of the relationship. And it's expensive if they are not asking you. And it's really expensive if it's not a 911. And it's VERY expensive if they're not wanting your help.

So, He said, "Timothy, I want you to be careful about speaking unless I've told you to speak, unless they're asking you with hearts to listen, or unless it's a 911, I want you to be silent ... Be careful with your words because you will be putting pearls before people who don't know what to do with your pearls. You will be putting seeds on soil that is not ready to grow out. Be careful with your words. You will only have so many words a day that I will give you. Be careful with how you give them." That, the Lord spoke to me in my office 20-some years ago.

Tool #2 – Be aware of the Kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness: I've loved Romans 14:17 which says "The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink but righteousness, peace and joy." ... I've decided I need to deal with righteousness, peace and joy and live there than live in the kingdom of darkness. So, when something happens to me, I go "Whoa! This feels shameful, guilty, condemnation, bitter, resentful, angry, pretty hard-hearted, pretty Jezebel, not interested in what I say, I know that this is probably not the Kingdom of God which is righteousness, peace and joy.

So, the Kingdom of God does bring sadness, does bring pain, does bring grief, but it does not deal in shame, condemnation, manipulation, grief, resentment, bitterness, anger, hard-heartedness. If you're going to deal with the kingdom of darkness with logic, more science, more words, more arguments, more decisions, sin management and even scripture sometimes – the kingdom of darkness will just mock you and like a Pac-Man, want more and more and more.

The Kingdom of Light, when I encounter, I encounter someone who wants to hear what I'm saying. There may be difficulty and struggle and argumentation, and iron sharpening iron and even disagreement and sadness and pain and grief, death and dying. But the Kingdom of Light looks very different, and you can see it. Once you begin to see it "you look light, you look dark." Right? "That's one's dark, that one's light." Easy. Once your spirit gets attuned to peace and joy and righteousness and [you experience the kingdom of darkness], you go "Whoa! I don't think this feels good."

My friend Matt Purkey said [about the counseling office in my home] Jesus lives in my basement. I love that. [My clients] meet the Messiah – they meet Yeshua – in my home. And they address their issues – Kingdom of Light stuff – and they get well.

Kingdom of darkness stuff – I don't have any time with there. It began early in my Lutheran church when we debated whether we should use real wine or grape juice, whether we should baptize babies or adults, whether James should be in the book or not in the book. On and on and on and on. Today ... I'm very careful about invading the issues of culture, unless the Lord has told me to speak or He's gone on before me and they're asking me, or it's a 911.

You see, if I'm dealing with stress or chaos or crazy in my life, and shame and guilt and condemnation, I'm not going to make it through the rest of the day with joy in my heart to love my wife or my children or be available for what the Lord brings to me. I'm going to be a bitter old man – cynical, hard in heart and to blank with it! I do not want to live that way in my life. I want to be safe for people to talk to me.

Don't waste your time messing with the kingdom of darkness because the only thing the kingdom of darkness responds to is "perfect love casts out all fear." Get out in the name of Jesus!

Deal with [the kingdom of darkness] with the Spirit of Jesus, "perfect love casts out all fear," the fruit of the Spirit – mercy, gentleness, grace, kindness. Jesus was silent in the courtroom. Sometimes silence is there when you're dealing with the kingdom of darkness, but oftentimes the darkness will feel like you're rejecting them or dissing them or dismissing them.

Tool #3 – Expectations

Luke 19:28-40 [read from The Living Bible]

²⁸After telling this story, Jesus went on toward Jerusalem, walking along ahead of his disciples. ²⁹As they came to the towns of Bethphage and Bethany, on the Mount of Olives, he sent two disciples ahead, ³⁰with instructions to go to the next village, and as they entered they were to look for a donkey tied beside the road. It would be a colt, not yet broken for riding.

"Untie him," Jesus said, "and bring him here. ³¹And if anyone asks you what you are doing, just say, 'The Lord needs him.'"

³²They found the colt as Jesus said, ³³and sure enough, as they were untying it, the owners demanded an explanation.

"What are you doing?" they asked. "Why are you untying our colt?"

³⁴ And the disciples simply replied, “The Lord needs him!” ³⁵ So they brought the colt to Jesus ...

Tim: Now picture this if you can when I read it.

... and threw some of their clothing across its back for Jesus to sit on.

³⁶⁻³⁷ Then the crowds spread out their robes along the road ahead of him,

Tim: The kids waved their palm branches and here He comes – the Messiah is coming in the city.

and as they reached the place where the road started down from the Mount of Olives, the whole procession began to shout and sing as they walked along, praising God for all the wonderful miracles Jesus had done.

³⁸ “God has given us a King!” they exulted. “Long live the King! Let all heaven rejoice! Glory to God in the highest heavens!”

³⁹ But some of the Pharisees among the crowd said, “Sir, rebuke your followers for saying things like that!”

⁴⁰ He replied, “If they keep quiet, the stones along the road will burst into cheers!”

Tim: If you’ve gone outside lately and heard the wind blowing and seen the little stones and the flowers coming up, and hear the birds and sit by a river and hear it trickling, you will hear Creation making noises to its Creator. And if we go silent, the rocks are going to cry out. I do not want to be one-upped by a rock.

The Messiah comes into the city. Some of them wanted Him to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. Some of them wanted Him to bring about the end of war so that everybody could live in peace. Some of them wanted Him to unite all people, regardless of differences of religion and culture. Some of them wanted Him to bring a true awareness of God to the people. And some felt it would be a signal to the end of the world.

So, here’s the Lord coming into the city on a donkey – not on a white charger -- on a donkey – with plenty of expectations around Him, coming into the city. Here He comes. “Yay, yay, yay!” they’re cheering. “We are the champions; we are the champions.” They’re into it like, “He’s here!” It’s a celebration. “He’s going to do it! Finally, the Messiah!”

Which, in essence, is what this congregation is all about – to the Jewish people – because many people here haven’t been introduced to the One who came into the city and believed that His death and resurrection accomplished something for you. The Messiah had come. He’d come.

At that time that area was ruled by the Romans. Many expected the Messiah to be a military figure who would fight the Romans and drive them out. Some wanted to be like a prophet. Some wanted to be like David. And a few days later they watched their Messiah die on that piece of wood and be buried.

Talk about disappointment. Proverbs 13:12 has become one of my favorite scriptures along with Romans 14:17. Proverbs 13:12 says this: Deferred hope makes a heart sick. Good News [Translation] says “When hope is crushed, the heart is crushed.” But I like this one the best: Expectations that don’t come true make for sad hearts.

People come into my office and they have expectations. They want their relationships and their families to look better. “My husband isn’t spiritual enough. I want him to lead us more.” “My wife doesn’t meet my needs for physical intimacy.” “My kids – they just don’t honor us.” “My husband doesn’t earn enough money.” “My wife (or husband) doesn’t clean up the house well enough.” “I want my health to be better – my health is so sad.” “I wish my wife was grateful for what I have – my expectation – please, can’t you be grateful for me?” “I want my kids to obey me.” “I wish my boss appreciated me.” “I wish my employees were grateful and thankful.” A leader of a church said to me, “Man, I wish my team could follow me better, could work harder.” “I wish my congregation volunteered more freely.”

Those are the people who show up in my office – one part, around expectations.

Hope deferred can look like many things. And in your hearts today, I’m looking for the hope deferred that has caused sickness – that looks like it’s bringing sickness, depression, sadness, grief, anger, resentment, bitterness and causing dissention, causing kingdom of darkness in your home. Helping you be careful with how you address that kingdom of darkness so that you can grow old with joy in your heart and do it a long time.

Hope deferred, which makes the heart sick, can look like prayer for salvation for a loved one that has never been answered, a job search (100 resumes, 97 rejections), a long-term battle with cancer, heartbreaking string of marriages, miscarriages, marriages that don’t work, that keeps getting postponed. I get sicker and sicker. I get despair. I get affliction. I get sadness. I get, often, physically sick. We become spiritually dried up and now we are no longer living with peace and joy and righteousness. We’re living here – Hebrews [12:15] says “let no root of bitterness spring up inside you lest it will defile everything.” When they walk in my office I’m going “hmmm – Kingdom of Light? Kingdom of darkness? Hmmm – bitter? Joyful? Anyone with eyes can see it, by the way.

You have an expectation in your home. It’s real – it’s true. John 8:32 says, “If you know the truth you will be set free.” And so, in my office a person walks in with

their expectations. And for a moment, I want you to think in your head the expectation that you have for somebody close to you or even your own life ... Take the expectation right now in your heart (find a moment of silence) that's messing with you. That expectation often makes people sad and can bring depression, anxiety and sickness, or bitterness and resentment. In my office I'm trying to help people know what the truth is.

What do we do with our disappointment?

Tool #1 – Be careful how you speak.

Tool #2 – Know which kingdom you're dealing with.

Tool #3 – Be aware of the expectation in your heart – silent and mindful for a second to see what's going on and what it's producing in your heart. You can hold onto it, stew over it, be passive-aggressive with it, keep it a secret, hope they change, hope they figure you out – and I'm telling you, you're going to be in my office or somebody's office and you're not going to have peace and joy if you live that way.

You can have a conversation with them ... oftentimes they can be angry, bitter, dismissive, especially if – remember Tool #1 – they're not asking you ..., or the Lord has told [you] ... or it's 911 ...

What did the Messiah do? Yeshua came into the city (previously), then He said to Peter, oh by the way, I'm going to go die and Peter said, don't talk like that, Lord! [Yeshua] said that to Judas and Judas sold Him out to be betrayed. He said it to the Pharisees and they said, who do you think you are? So, the expectations that He had on Him, He presented them. But Mary – she knew. But even when she went to the tomb, she was hopeful, but there was that little thing in her heart going, oh ..., and when it was empty!

Expectations. Identify them. Take them to the Lord.