



THE CRAZY CYCLE

1. Have you ever had someone expect you to play the role of God in some way in their life? What was the situation? What happened, or is it still ongoing? Some people see this as being loving to act as God for them, some say it is not loving. What is the argument for each point of view?
2. In Proverbs 4:23 it says to guard your heart above all things, what is your "heart"? How do we guard it?
3. What did Pastor Rick say are the two foundational elements for relationships? What does it mean to give grace to someone? Can you think of a time someone extended grace to you?
4. Read Ephesians 4:15. What does it mean to speak truth to someone? Why is truth essential in any relationship? How does this verse say we are to speak truth and what does it mean?
5. What do grace and truth provide in any relationship with another person?
6. What are the two reasons relationships get out of balance? If you have people like this in your life, what are the two aspects or boundaries you must set up to protect yourself?
7. Read Galatians 6:1,2,5. What did Pastor Rick say is the difference between helping someone carry boulders and helping them carry their knapsacks? Which one should we do and which one should we not do?
8. What are the 4 skills that are necessary to develop in order to have good relationship boundaries?

Answers

1. *Some think it is being compassionate to tell others what they should do so that their lives are easier. Some think that it is unloving to tell them what to do. They will never learn how to make their own decisions and eventually you will resent that they take up your time and effort telling them how to live their lives. They are responsible to learn what God wants them to do, not what you tell them to do.*
2. *Your heart is the inner person. It is your core values, what you believe to be true, your feelings, your emotions, your thoughts, your key decisions, the person that you really are. We are not to allow others to determine all of these things about ourselves, God is the one who tells us what should be part of our hearts. We protect our heart by following the truth of God's word and not what others tell us we should do in our lives.*
3. *The two foundational elements for relationships are: a. Grace and b. Truth. The word grace means "unmerited favor", to be given something that you do not deserve to receive. Obviously God extended his grace to us in our salvation (Ephesians 2:8,9) but we receive grace from others when they treat us in a way that we do not deserve to be treated by them. We extend grace to people when we are kind to people and they deserve for us to be mean or rude to them. A great example is when we pray for our enemies.*
4. *To speak truth to someone is exactly what it sounds like, to say what is true about their behavior or how they live their life, or how they have offended us. Truth is essential in a relationship because trust is essential in a relationship. You cannot trust people who lie to you and do not tell you the truth, even when you do not want to hear the truth. We are to speak the truth in love, which means we speak the truth not to get back at them or to make us feel better. We should speak the truth when telling the truth is the best thing for the other person. That is what it means to speak truth in love. It talks about our reason and motivation for telling the truth, it is not for revenge but to make the relationship better.*
5. *Grace provides the safety within a relationship that you can be honest with each other without being judged, punished, or not loved. Truth provides the structure upon which a relationship is built, it makes the relationship stable and trustworthy.*
6. *The two things that make a relationship out of balance are: a. Someone in my life is out of control and b. Someone is trying to control and manipulate me. The two boundaries you need to protect you from those type of people are: a. You love others without trying to rescue them from their the consequences of not being responsible for their own poor decisions and b. Learn to confront others about their bad decisions in a loving manner.*
7. *Helping people carry their "boulders" is helping others with the problems they encounter that they did not create and do not have the ability to overcome. The things in your knapsack are all the things described as your "heart" that you are responsible to control and make good decisions about. Those are the things we should not help others with, they are responsible to solve those issues themselves.*
8. *The four skills are: a. Always start from a position of loving humility; b. Learn to say "no" when it is best to say no; c. Give consequences if necessary; and d. Remember the hope of restoring a relationship is Jesus.*

