

*“Personal ministry is not always about knowing what to say. It is not about fixing everything in sight that is broken. Personal ministry is about connecting people with Christ so that they are able to think as he would have them think, desire what he says is best, and do what he calls them to do even if their circumstances never get fixed. It involves exposing hurt, lost, confused people to God’s glory, so that they give up their pursuit of their own glory and live for his. It is about so thoroughly embedding people’s personal stories in the larger story of redemption that they approach every situation and relationship with a God Story mentality.”*

*Instruments in the Redeemer’s Hands, Paul Tripp, Page 184.*

## **Case Study**

Notes:

### **Love**

**Change begins in the context of loving relationships.**

It is about a person, not a problem.

Listening must be present to love the person.

*The first service that one owes to others in the fellowship consists in listening to them. Just as love to God begins with listening to His Word, so the beginning of love for brethren is learning to listen to them. It is God's love for us that He not only gives us His Word but also lends us His ear. So it is His work that we do for our brother when we learn to listen to him. Christians, especially ministers, so often think they must always contribute something when they are in the company of others, that this is the one service they have to render. They forget that listening can be a greater service than speaking.*

*Life Together, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Page 97-98*

Incarnate the love of Christ.

## **Know**

### **Understand what is going on.**

Ask, don't assume.

*Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. (Hebrews 4:14-15, ESV)*

Gather information about:

- **Situation:** When and where did it happen?
- **Response:** What did you do?
- **Thoughts/Feelings:** What were you feeling/thinking?
- **Motives:** What did you desire, think you deserved, want?

Get below the surface.

## **SPEAK**

### **Speak the truth in love.**

God's Word, not my opinion.

*"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17, ESV)*

Comfort and Call of the Gospel.

*"Everyone needs both sides of the Gospel - all the time! These two aspects of the gospel (the grace of justification and the grace of sanctification) do not stand in opposition to each other; rather, they complement and complete each other. Together they express God's grace in Christ; they depict what the gospel produces in those who live in its light."*

*Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands, Paul Tripp, Page 217.*

## **DO**

### **Pursue change in the heart, not just behavior.**

Not a set of rules, but loving Jesus.

Faith working through love.

Patient and urgent.

Establish accountability.

What does change look like?

- Decreasing frequency between struggles.
- Decreasing duration and intensity of struggle.
- Different response after struggle - increased hatred of sin and increased hope in God.

*Luther went on to write a beautiful statement describing the transformation dynamic: "This life, therefore, is not righteousness but growth in righteousness, not health but healing, not being but becoming, not rest but exercise.*

*We are not yet what we shall be, but we are growing toward it. The process is not yet finished but it is going on. This is not the end but it is the road. All does not yet gleam in glory but all is being purified."*

*Lifelong progressive sanctification was the trumpet call back to biblical faith. It was a call back to this life - including sex - in which the living God is on the scene throughout your life. He planned a good work. He began a good work. He continues a good work. He will finish a good work. He has staked His glory on the completion of that work. Lengthening the battle heightens the significance of our Savior for every step along the way. We are not yet what we shall be, but we are growing toward it.*

*David Powlison*