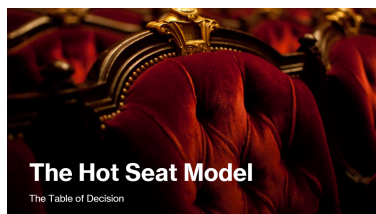


Lent: Hotseat Series **Problematic Events**



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We are in Lent, 40 days of fasting, and we are going over the Hot Seat Model which is a discipleship model developed here 18 years ago. We say we are a monastic community which means to practice something over and over. Because I developed this, it's vulnerable to present it: the intention is from I Pet 2:9, you are a royal priesthood, part of a community of very important pastors. You must be trained to be a part of this: I want to have a community that helps people ages 9 and up to offer this care to each other. This series is to help everyone participate in this model.

How did the Hotseat originate? It starts with CHOICE.



Choice, Decision, Volition

What you choose
indicates what
you worship.

Early in my ministry, I observed over and over that people do things just because that's the way they are: they don't recognize that they have a choice. In fact, this choice indicates what you worship. The way you entertain yourself indicates what you worship: where you center and organize your life. Choice drives everything: we are volitional humans.

In the Hot Set, there is no special seat that you sit on; after a while, people changed the name to "Table of Decision."

At its core is Matt 11:28:

Two Voices – Two Yokes

Matthew 11:28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

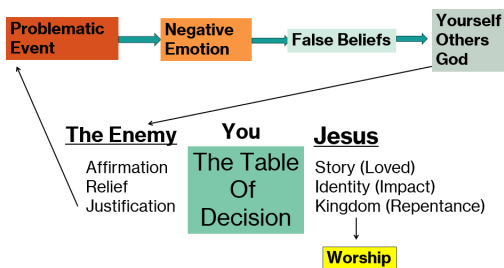
A couple of things happen in this passage: Jesus is saying people are child-like and he wants to gather them but they must choose.

The bigger picture for this verse involves the word “yoke.” For a rabbi, this means his way of teaching or being. Jesus is looking out at the Pharisees at the heavy yoke they put upon people with their rules and laws. These are burdens: you are either in or out depending on how you are doing with these laws.

I think there are only two rabbis: one is the world and its values and the other is Jesus. We are familiar with the world’s (enemy’s) yoke which is where we live: it is burdensome. But Jesus says we have a choice EVERY MOMENT of life. Jesus is gentle and will give us REST. We are not people of rest and we don’t often experience it but Jesus offers it. This Hot Seat Model is to help people look at their past stories to become people of the Gospel, people of rest.

Here is the context for how the Hotseat works. This is often done in a group; here at the Village, we call them Pilgrim Groups. I hope within these groups we engage each other including children, with this model on a regular basis.

Here is a basic diagram of what happens in a Hotseat:



Life is built on a series of **events**: If I say “you’re stupid”, it takes 4 seconds to internalize it. But if I say “Good job, Jake” it takes 60 seconds to process it. That is a big difference! We don’t want to think about what’s happening in our lives. But in the back of our heads, we are always narrating what is going on. These problematic events have negative emotions connected to them that appear immediately. You

might feel anxious and play with your fingernails.

Behind these emotions are false beliefs about myself, others, and God. They may feel true but they almost always involve relationships. People cause negative emotions in each other. Beliefs about God are harder but we will work this out over the next seven weeks.

For example, let’s say my wife asks why I didn’t do the dishes and immediately I believe I am a failure. If you were aware of this, you could process it.

You make a choice: you and I are so familiar with the enemy’s story because he’s been telling it to us since we were born. The enemy affirms everything you believe and he offers us relief. We have contempt as relief, we have substances to numb us, we eat too much.

We cannot have relief without a lame **justification**: why it's OK for you to sin.

We are not familiar with the gospel story: **this is not a tape we play**. We think Jesus died and rose again and that's it: then we have to deal with our problem. But the Gospel goes on to say that we have a **Story**, an **Identify**, and live in a **Kingdom**. We get stuck in a loop where we think we have no choice. This is what I want to talk about over Lent.

But first, let's talk about YOU and what you bring to every event in your life. Without this, you won't understand how to use this model.



You

- Created for Relationship
- Longing for Love and Impact (security and significance)
- Brokenness – Distortion
- Seeking a false fulfillment
- In process

Let's break these down:

You: Created for Relationship

Genesis 1:26 - 27 Then God said, Let **us** make mankind in our image, in **our** likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.

So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; **male and female** he created them.

1. You were created for relationship: (Gen 1:26-27) You can see there is an illusion to the trinity and that we have distinction between animals, yet we have a relationship with them. We have an impact on them and them on us! We are designed as people to be together and we have a deep longing for community. Later, God says it's not good to be alone. We must understand that we are people of relationship.

You: Am I loved? Do I have impact?

Psalms 139:13-14 – For you **created** my inmost being; you **knit** me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

Proverbs 18:10 – The name of the Lord is a fortified tower; the righteous run to it and **are safe**.

2. You are asking everyone this question! Do I have impact? Every 3 year olds asks this: We ask this to everyone: even the clerk at the grocery store. We live in a world where everyone is asking this and this creates chaos. This is rough on us and this brings problematic events. This is genuine and good (Psalm 139). If you read the scriptures over and over, you hear over and over “**I love you**” and “**You have impact.**” If you went to church in the South, you would know that dressing up is important. To be a kid in uncomfortable clothes is how to live in the Gospel: it's so hard to hold onto this truth. We come to every relationship asking this question.

You: Brokenness and Distortion

Genesis 3:7-10 – Then the **eyes** of both of them were **opened**, and they realized they were naked... So they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, 'Where are you?' He answered, 'I **heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.**'

You: Seeking a false fulfillment

Jeremiah 2:13 – My people have committed **two sins**: They have **forsaken me**, **the spring of living water**, and have **dug** their own cisterns, **broken cisterns** that **cannot hold water**.

You: Dignity and Depravity (In Process)

2 Corinthians 5:17 – Therefore, if anyone is **in Christ**, the **new creation** has come: *The old has gone, the new is here!*

Psalms 147:3 – He **heals** the brokenhearted and **binds up** their wounds.

3. Brokenness and Distortion: This is the life we all live: we are afraid of being seen and people knowing that we are not loved and have no impact. We hide and try to escape.

We respond by **seeking fulfillment** elsewhere which is false. We dig broken cisterns and we drink mud. We try to control others, we look at our phones too much and it's like being stuck in mud. This is who we are.

We also have **dignity and depravity**. There is a sense that Paul is saying you have a new ID which is coming and the OLD is going: it's a reality that is in process.

Psalms 147:3 says we are in process of having our wounds bound and cared for.

This summarizes who we are: running fast, trying to fill up the emptiness inside of us.

Problematic Event

If I ask you "How are you doing?" it's hard to answer this question vulnerably. And maybe I don't really want to know! This is why we are priests: we listen and hold and treasure someone's problematic events. We need to become skilled at helping people "get there." This facilitates the Gospel.

Let's walk through some questions you could ask to process problematic events.

On Any Given Sunday

- How's your week been? Anything standing out as particularly frustrating or surprising?
- What's been the best and worst part of your week?
- Have you had any interactions this week that left you thinking about them longer than you expected?
- You seem a little different today – has anything been weighing on you
- What's something that has been harder than it should have been this week?

This is what a priest does! You are trying to help them articulate. They let people sit and think: most people are introverted and need some time to answer.

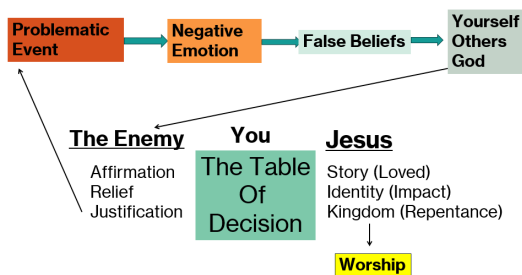
This could be an off-handed comment that we play over and over.

We need to observe people carefully. To go deeper, it helps to go through this in a group context. These questions might help. We aren't good at articulating these and feel put on the spot. We have to help each other learn this!

With a Close Friend/a Spouse/or Pilgrim Group

- Was there a moment in the past week or two when you felt unseen, misunderstood, or hurt by someone?
- Did you experience a situation that left you feeling frustrated, rejected, or ashamed?
- Have you had a moment recently where you withdrew from someone or avoided a conversation because something felt "off"?
- Is there a relationship that feels tense or distant compared to how it usually is?
- Did you have an experience where you expected something good but ended up feeling let down or disappointed?
- Have you been holding onto an interaction or event that you keep replaying in your mind?

These questions are good to ask close friends or your spouse: these will get you talking about things that are happening in your life.



The beauty of the Gospel is that Jesus is saying nonstop throughout his life lived out in the Gospel and in the Spirit in your life, **“You are Loved”** and **You have impact.”**