

**From PREDATOR to PROTECTOR by Jim Wilder (Condensed by Barbara Moon) This was to men.**

My character is determined by my 'people.' What is being modeled about protecting weakness?

Everyone is born a predator. Our brains are hardwired to notice weakness. We will always notice it. What we do with weakness comes after we notice. We are wasting time trying to stop from noticing weakness. A predator says, "You are my lunch" when noticing weakness. A protector says, "I will help you with your weakness."

Character is what comes into my mind after noticing weakness. Character is learned from what I see my people doing with weakness. A protector has to know what a predator will do, think like one, but have a different response. (Cops and criminals) We learn character when someone reminds us we are a protector. (David, Abigail in 1 Samuel 25:10-25)

We are supposed to learn to be protectors about 12 to 18 months from a bond with our father. As babies feel fear and aggression around this age, dad is supposed to show them we are protectors. If not we reap a mess. We have to learn what to do with our predator thinking, from others who know how, within a good bond. We cannot make it go away; it is hardwired.

We seldom go to church and talk about the hard things like anger, sex, being messed up because it is not a protecting place. No one has our back who will say, "I'm not going to let that get you." (This would involve good shame messages done gently in love.) Not many know other options besides predator.

Example of an option: We get cut off on the highway. Usual to curse, get angry, etc. Instead be a shepherd on the highway. Raise joy levels. Smile at others. Let them in, thank if they let you in. Notice the weakness, but respond differently. Ask other people for ideas of how to be a protector in various situations. Be willing to talk about these things. Example: Thinking of a stripper as someone's daughter.

If we only use weakness as a way to win=predator. Someone disrespects me. Initial move is to make them lose so I can win. Another option: How should a person act under this situation? How would I restore respect? How would I feel proud that I restored respect? Prove so to speak I am respectable.

EXERCISES: What weakness would (men) bring to church if they knew it was OK? Share a time that you knew someone had your back and helped your weakness. Three things that would help me know how to be less of a predator?

## **POINTING THE WAY TO MATURITY** by Jim Wilder (Condensed by Barbara Moon)

We get help from others according to their maturity level. We need to be gentle responders to all maturity levels. Condemnation helps no one. We can only understand a maturity level one above where we are. An infant cannot understand adult, child cannot understand parent level, etc.

We help people with their maturity the most when we are not helping people with their maturity. A loving relationship is the most important. We can easily offend and come across as fixing.

Three things that help point the way to maturity: 1(Structure, here is a list. Here are some useful ways to look at maturity and understand it. Get a discussion going where willing.

2) Telling stories about how I am growing my own and how I am learning. Lament that we did not know when raising our children, but now we can say for example about doing hard things. "I didn't know how to teach you this then. This is how I am learning it. It is an important skill to learn for life."

3) Always see others as God does and treat them as their best self that God intends. Almost overlook their maturity. Remember maturity is not linked to value. Saying, "Stop acting like a baby" means a lack of value. Treat all levels as valuable, as valuable as if at full maturity.

QUESTIONS ASKED on the webinar: How to help an active addict mature? Jim said they are in a non learning mode and have to stop in order to learn. They have to learn to deal with attachment pain and know that better relationships are the answer instead of just feeling better. They have to learn to deal with being close.

Asked: What is codependency versus healthy maturity? Healthy maturity is about joy. "I'm so glad to be with you, to support and help you." Codependency is fueled by fear. "If I don't do this \_\_\_\_\_, this will happen." Jesus did not run after the rich young ruler. He let him go free though he was sad to see him go. Jesus would not change who He is to fit the young man. Needs a long discussion.

To teach a child how to do hard things, be sure they are at least 4. They should know how to build joy and quiet and what to do with the Big Six negative emotions. If too early they will feel hopeless like we would if we had to find square roots in kindergarten. They need a connection with someone who can do it (whatever it is they don't know how to do). Curiosity can come and connection with a guide. We have to model and show what they don't know. "This is how I learned it and I will help you learn it."

To teach a child how to live with mistakes, talk about the mistakes you made today. They will learn it is ok and talk about theirs.

When we function from "What will people think if I \_\_\_\_\_" that is a fragmented identity. I can't be myself. Learn to be myself by expanding my identity to be able to suffer well when it hurts.

If we blow it, come back with something like, "Yesterday I forgot who I was and I did \_\_\_\_\_. I wish I had done \_\_\_\_\_ instead. I'm sorry. Will you forgive me?"