Healing The Wounded Heart

Bill Loveless

Christ Is Life Ministries
The Layout of This Study

I want to thank you for choosing to study Healing The Wounded Heart. Before you begin, I believe it would be helpful to give you the layout of the study. The study contains six lessons, and each lesson has five daily readings (Day One, Day Two, etc.). If you are meeting weekly, this will give you seven days to complete the five daily readings. Throughout each lesson will be Questions, Scriptures for Meditation, and an Engaging God section.

Questions

The questions are primarily designed for you to compare what you believe with the truth that you have just read. These questions are key for you to share what you believe about what you have read.

Meditation of Scripture

Some people struggle with the word “meditation” because of the New Age connotations. However, it is a biblical word that we do not need to shy away from. The key is what and Who that we are meditating on. The focus of our meditation will be on God and His truth. My definition of the word “meditate” for this study is to think about the truths that you are reading.

Engaging God

The “Engaging God” sections in each lesson are the most important parts of this study. This section is designed for you to ask the Holy Spirit to give you personal revelation, understanding, and application of what you have just read. This is especially crucial when you come to truths that contradict what you believe. (If we don’t seek God to reveal His truth, then we will never move beyond the false beliefs that we may be believing.) Therefore, be sure and take the time to engage God as you go through the study. I will more of what this looks like in Lesson One.

Revelation

Since I will be using the word “revelation” throughout the study I want to define what I mean when I use this word. “Revelation” simply means that God supernaturally takes His truth and makes it personal to you and to your life situations. Revelation takes you from intellectual understanding to spiritual understanding of God’s truth.

Key Truth

Please remember this key truth as you go through this study:

You will not live beyond what you believe.
If what you believe is a lie, then that is how you will live.

This is key because what you believe affects what you think, your behavior, and the choices that you make. Therefore, one of God’s objectives through this study is to expose your false beliefs, renew your mind and set you free according to John 8:32. Therefore, my prayer for you is that you will seek Him throughout this study to set you free from your false beliefs and the adverse effects that those false beliefs are creating in your life.
### Table of Contents

**Lesson One – The Source of Healing –**
Key Truth About Woundedness.......................... 3

**Lesson Two – The Pathway To Woundedness -Dealing**
With Woundedness Independent of God.... 26

**Lesson Three – Woundedness and Your Identity in**
Christ................................................................. 46

**Lesson Four - The Impact of Woundedness Concerning**
Your Concept of God............................................ 70

**Lesson Five - Satan’s Strategies Concerning**
Woundedness – Forgiveness............................... 100

**Lesson Six - Final Key Truths - Engaging God To Heal**
Your Woundedness............................................. 132
LESSON ONE
The Source of Healing
Key Truths About Woundedness

“He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.” Psalm 147:3

Introduction

I would like to start by saying that the topic of woundedness is very personal to me. You will better understand why when you read the story of my woundedness. I must be honest with you that there was a time when I believed Psalm 147:3 above would never be an experiential reality in my life.

However, the reason that I am writing this study is because I believe, and have experienced, God’s healing power concerning my woundedness. Additionally, I have also witnessed, through one-on-one ministry, God’s healing hand in the lives of hundreds of wounded people. During the course of this study, I will be sharing many of their stories.

I have written this study specifically for hurting and wounded Christians. If you fall into this category, then my prayer for you as you go through this study is that God will use these truths to do one or more of the following:

• to begin your healing process.
• to show you your need for a personal counselor to work with you on a personal basis.
• to heal you of your woundedness.

I want to begin with this encouraging word:

No matter how BADLY you have been wounded in the past, your God who lives within you, ETERNALLY more than you can imagine, WANTS TO heal and WILL heal you of your woundedness.

You may struggle with the truth of this statement at this point. However, I trust that as you go through these truths and seek the Holy Spirit to give you divine insight and begin to heal your woundedness, that you will realize that God can and will heal you. Let’s start with some foundational truths concerning healing.

Foundation For Healing

“For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians 3:11

There are primarily three categories of Christians that I have worked with over the years
concerning the healing of woundedness. The first category is Christians who believe that a counselor, pastor, a book on healing, etc. can be the source of healing. The second category is Christians who believe that they can read the Bible or a book on healing and then they, acting as their own source—by using their own IQ, self-discipline, and willpower—can heal themselves. The third category of Christians, when it comes to healing, believe that God will help them be their own source for healing. The question is: Will any of the above produce true healing? The truth is that none of these will produce true spiritual healing. Why not? Let me begin answering that question by sharing the following foundational truth:

**God and God ALONE is the SOURCE for healing your woundedness.**

It is not to say that God can’t work through counselors, friends, books, or even studies like this for healing. However, they are not the source for healing. Rather, they are the tools or conduits the Lord might use to be a part of your healing process. The only Source for spiritual healing is God. The key to this truth is that God is not going to help you be the source. Rather, He, and He alone is the Source for healing.

This is such a crucial truth for understanding the healing process that I want to spend the next few sections in this lesson laying out the Biblical basis for God being our Source for healing. (For those of you who have read some of my other materials this will be a review and a reminder for you.) The basis for our understanding of this truth begins with a key question:

**What Do You Believe About Living The Christian Life?**

Many Christians have been taught that is up to them with God’s help to live the Christian life. That was my experience for 30 years. I was told to take God’s truth and ask the Holy Spirit to help me make it an experiential reality in my life. This is what I call “A” Christian life. Let me give you a definition of what I mean by “A” Christian life.

**“A” Christian Life**

*It is up to YOU, to be the SOURCE, using your own intellect, willpower, and ability to learn God’s truth and make it an experiential reality in your life with God’s HELP.*

Like many other Christians, I fervently tried to do this. Especially in the area of healing of my woundedness. The problem is that after 30 years of living “A” Christian life, there was no true healing and the effects of my woundedness had only gotten worse. The truth is that what I believed about living the Christian life was not producing healing, victory, freedom, or transformation. Why not?

Before I answer that question, let me ask you some questions. What do you believe about living the Christian life? Do you believe it’s up to you with God’s help to live it? If so, I have another question for you. How is it working for you? Are you experiencing the victory, the freedom, the transformation, and the healing that God promises? If not, is it possible that you have been living “A” Christian life? Now that you have an idea of what it means to live “A” Christian life, let’s look at what Jesus says about living “THE” Christian life.
What Jesus Says Is “THE” Christian Life

Jesus says in John 14:6 and John 11:25:

“…I AM the way, the truth, and THE LIFE…”  
John 14:6

“…I AM the resurrection and THE LIFE.”  
3 John 11:25

What is Jesus saying in these two passages? I believe it is clear that Jesus is saying that He Himself is THE Life. What does He mean when He says that He is THE Life? For many years, I read these verses and concluded that they only meant that He was the source for my eternal life. However, is it possible that Jesus is telling us something more in these passages? Let’s further explore the answer to this question by looking at what Paul said.

What Paul Said About Living “THE” Christian Life

Paul took the truth of Christ as “THE” Life to a more personal level when he said in Colossians 3:4:

“…Christ who is YOUR life…”

What is Paul saying in this verse? He is saying that the life of Christ is more than the eternal life that He gave you at salvation. He is saying that Christ is your life today, at this very moment. At this point you might be scratching your head and asking, “What is Paul talking about? What does it mean that Christ is my life? Is the life that Paul is referring to the Christian life?” I believe that the answer is found in Philippians 1:21 when Paul says:

“For me, to live IS Christ…."

Paul is saying that life for him is Christ being his life. Jesus and Paul are revealing to us an incredible truth, and that is:

{  
   “THE” Christian Life is a PERSON: 
   It is Christ HIMSELF! 
}

Have you understood before now that Christ Himself is THE Christian life? Think about this for a moment. If “THE” Christian life is a Person, does that mean that “THE” Christian life is not about completing a checklist, trying to keep a set of rules, trying to keep from sinning, or trying to do your best to live for God? I believe what Jesus and Paul were saying is that THE Christian life is not a life that we are to produce. It is a life that only Christ can produce.

The truth is that the Christian life is not about living “A” life. It is about living “THE” life. The problem is that you and I cannot live “THE” life. Only Christ can do that. Let me share with you how I discovered “THE” life.
I Finally Understood What It Meant To Live “THE” Life.

Little did I know that during those thirty years of trying to live “A” Christian life, God was in the process of persuading me that living “A” life will never produce God’s truth or His promises. God finally broke through to me on Sunday, October 4, 1998, while sitting in the parking lot of our church. As I was sitting there with defeated attitude, a thought came rolling across my mind in the form of a question.

The question was: “Are you done trying, in your own strength and ability, to make the Christian life work?” There was no doubt in my mind that the Spirit of God was asking the question. My response to God was, “I am done! I can’t do it.” God’s timing was perfect because on that day in church, God used a guest speaker named Ian Thomas to share the truth of “THE” life. When he got up to speak, the first words out of his mouth that Sunday were:

“God never intended for you to live THE LIFE that
ONLY Christ can live in and through you.”

I was stunned by these words because he was the first person in thirty years as a Christian to ever tell me that it was not up to me to try to live THE Christian life. What the Holy Spirit was telling me through Ian Thomas was this key truth:

KEY TRUTH:

There is only ONE Person who truly lived “THE” PERFECT Christian life,
and that was Christ HIMSELF.

This truth may be as startling to you as it was to me when I first heard it. However, isn’t it true? No one other than Jesus has lived a perfect Christian life. Therefore, what makes us think that we can do the same. Think about the following truth:

All that we can do in our own strength and ability is live
“A” FORM of the Christian life.
Only Christ can live “THE” Christian Life.

Meditate: on the verses above and ask God to reveal to you if you have been living “A” form of the Christian life or if you have been living “THE” Christian life.

Engaging God: If this truth is new to you, please take a few moments to go to God and ask Him to make these truths real to you personally. Ask God to reveal to you in a deeper way what it means that Christ is THE Christian life. If this truth contradicts what you have believed about the
Christian life so far, ask God to reveal to you if what you have just read is the truth or not. In this next section, we will look further into what it means that Christ is your life.

Let’s take a further look into what it means for Christ to be your life.

**What Does It Mean That Christ IS Your Life?**

The next question that you may be asking is: “What does it mean that Christ is my life?” I believe that God sums up the meaning in 1 Corinthians 1:30:

> **“He is the SOURCE of your life in Christ Jesus, …” (RSV)**

God gives us the answer in the first part of the verse when He says that He is the SOURCE of your life in Christ. One of the definitions for the word “source” is “the one who produces.” This may be a new truth for you because so many Christians have been taught falsely like I was that they are to be the source for living the Christian life with God’s help. You see, there can only be ONE true Source from which to live the Christian life.

| The truth is that God, NOT you, is the only SOURCE from which to live THE Christian life. |

Look at two other verses that reveal that God is your Source for living the Christian life:

> **“In Him we live and move and have our being.” Acts 17:28**

> **“For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things…..” Romans 11:36**

These are just two of many verses in the Bible that reveal to us that God is to be our Source for living the Christian life. You may be wondering what it means practically that God is your Source. Let me give you two examples.

**1. Christ is your Source to meet your NEEDS.**

We all have needs. Philippians 4:19 tells us that Christ is the Source/supply to meet our needs.

> **“And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”**

**Christ as your need-meeter will Himself meet your need for:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unconditional love</th>
<th>Victory</th>
<th>Worth</th>
<th>Acceptance</th>
<th>Faith</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>Patience</td>
<td>Strength</td>
<td>Peace</td>
<td>Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forgiveness</td>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>Security</td>
<td>Fearlessness</td>
<td>Wisdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discernment</td>
<td>Adequacy</td>
<td>Humility</td>
<td>Christ-confidence</td>
<td>Boldness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Righteousness</td>
<td>Selflessness</td>
<td>Rest</td>
<td>Compassion</td>
<td>Courage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope</td>
<td>Gentleness</td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Faithfulness</td>
<td>Joy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Later in this study, we will discuss further the application of Christ meeting these needs. For now, it is simply important to understand that Christ as your Source will meet those needs.
2. **God is your Source to make ALL His promises an EXPERIENTIAL reality in your life.**

   “And I am sure that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.” Philippians 1:6

God began His good work in you at salvation. Part of God being the Source to bring His work to completion is His being your Source to make His promises an experiential reality in your life. Let’s look at five of those promises:

- **Promise of VICTORY** – God will give you experiential victory over the power of sin, the flesh, the world, and the power of Satan.

  “but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians 15:57

- **Promise of FREEDOM** – God will set you free from your false beliefs, your defeating sin patterns, and your ongoing inner struggles.

  “So Christ has really set us free. Now make sure that you stay free, and don’t get tied up again in slavery to the law.” Galatians 5:1

- **Promise to TRANSFORM your life** – God will transform you into Christ-likeness.

  “For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren.” Romans 8:29

  “And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into His likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.” 2 Corinthians 3:18

  “My children, with whom I am again in labor until Christ is formed in you.” Galatians 4:19

- **Promise of INTIMACY** – He will draw you into a personal, intimate relationship with Himself.

  “His unchanging plan has always been to adopt us into His own family by bringing us to Himself through Jesus Christ. And this gave Him great pleasure.” Ephesians 1:5

These are just a few of the promises for you as a Christian as you let Christ live His life in you.

| God living His life in you results in you EXPERIENCING His promises! |

**Questions:** Are you experiencing the promised freedom, victory, healing, and intimacy with God that you desire? If not, do you want to experience these promises?

**Meditate:** on the promises listed above. Think about which of these promises you most want to experience.
Engaging God: If you are not experiencing these promises to the extent that you would like, ask God to begin making these promises an experiential reality in your life.

Have you tried to be the source to meet your needs or experience God’s promises? If so, how is that working for you? If we are honest with ourselves, we would have to say that it is not working. The truth is that if we try to be the source for living the Christian life, then we are destined to fail. If God is not the Source in our Christian walk (and in all other areas of our life), then we will never experience God’s truth and His promises in our lives.

God as your SOURCE for living THE Christian life means that ONLY God can make His truth and His promises an EXPERIENTIAL reality in your life.


Questions: Have you believed up to this point that you are the source with God’s help to live THE Christian life? Do these three verses give you a clear understanding that Christ and Christ alone is our Source?

Engaging God: Using these three verses, ask the Spirit to give you a deeper understanding of what it means for Him to be your Source for living THE Christian life.

If God Is The Source, Is He Going To HELP You Be The Source?

Ask yourself this question, “If God is the Source, then why would He help you be the source?” The truth is that God is not going to help you be the source for living life because there’s only one Source and that is God. You see, God never intended for man to be the source for living life or to be transformed. We know this because in the garden of Eden before the fall of man, God was the source to meet every one of Adam’s and Eve’s spiritual, physical, and emotional needs. God’s design after the fall has not changed. Let me say it another way that might help you understand this truth:

If Jesus is THE Way, THE Truth, and THE Life then WHY would He help you be the way, the truth and the life?

Psalm 37:5 says this:

“Commit your way to the LORD, trust also in Him, and He will do it.”

What this verse does not say is that God will “help” you do it. Rather, it says that He and He alone will do it. What is the meaning of “it?” “It” is everything God promises to do. In regard to your Christian walk, you will no longer ask God to help you. Rather, you will trust Him as your Source to produce His promises in your life.

Since THE Christian Life Can Only Be Lived By One Person (Jesus) Then How Do We Live THE Christian Life?
Paul gives us the answer in the first part of Galatians 2:20, when he says:

“I am crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me…”

Think about what Paul is saying in this verse. When Paul says, “I no longer live,” he is in effect saying that he CANNOT be the source for living the Christian life. This is amazing considering all of Paul’s credentials, intellect, and capability. He clearly acknowledges that none of those things qualifies him to be the source. Therefore, since he admits that he cannot live the Christian life, he says, “Christ lives in me.” Paul recognizes his absolute need to live in a moment by moment dependence on Christ who is THE Christian life.

Dependence on Christ living His life in you may be a new concept for you. It was a radical concept for me, especially after trying (and failing) for thirty years to live the Christian life on my own. However, as the Lord gave me greater revelation of the meaning of Christ living in me, I became convinced that I cannot live THE life that only Christ can live.

The KEY to living THE Christian life is to DEPEND on Christ to live HIS life in you.

Questions: Have you realized before now that the Christian life is about Christ living His life in you? How might this truth change the way you think about how you are to live the Christian life?

Meditate: on the truth that you can’t live the Christian life. Only Christ living in you will ever create true change your life.

Engaging God: Ask God to give you revelation of what it means for Christ to live His life in you.

How Do These Truths Apply To Healing?

Now that you have a better understanding of God as your Source, let’s apply these truths to the healing of your woundedness.

1. God is Your Source for HEALING.

Based on what we have discussed in the previous section, here is a key truth that applies to your healing:

God and ONLY God will be the Source to HEAL you of your past and present woundedness.
God as your Source for healing will:

- Give you REVELATION of His truth about healing. Ephesians 1:17.
- PERSUADE you that He is able and willing to heal you. Ephesians 3:20.
- Move you from unbelief to BELIEF that He will heal you. Philippians 1:6.
- Give you the WILLINGNESS to say “yes” to whatever He chooses to do to heal you. Matthew 26:39.

**Engaging God:** Begin asking God to give you revelation, persuade you of His ability and willingness to heal you, move you from unbelief to belief, and give you the willingness to say “yes” to His plan for your healing.

2. Christ is your HOPE for healing.

You may be reading this and are feeling, on some level, hopeless that you will ever be truly healed of your woundedness. I understand. I have been where you are. If this is where you are, please read the next two verses carefully.

**“... to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, THE HOPE.....” Colossians 1:27 (emphasis mine)**

"Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your HOPE completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 1:13 (emphasis mine).

Christ is not only THE Life (John 14:6), He is THE Hope. Think of it. Christ embodies hope. Therefore, we can look to Christ to be our hope. What kind of hope are we talking about? The worldview says about hope, “I hope that I will be healed” which means maybe it will or maybe it won’t happen.

Hope in the worldly sense leaves doubt about the certainty of the outcome. However, “hope” defined in the New Testament means “confident expectation or certainty.” This means that if we put our trust in Christ as THE hope for healing then we can say, “I have a confident expectation and a certainty that God will heal me.” Let’s look at a few other examples that differentiate human hope from Christ-hope.

**Human hope says:** “I hope to see the light at the end of the tunnel concerning my healing.”
**Christ-hope says:** “I (Jesus) AM The Light at the end of the tunnel and I will heal you.”

**Human hope says:** “If I read one more book, go to one more counselor, or hear one more sermon, I hope that I will be healed.”
**Christ-hope says:** “I (Jesus) may use a book, a counselor, or a sermon, but I am the ONLY One you can count on to heal.”

**Human hope says:** “I am running out of hope.”
**Christ-hope says:** “I (Jesus) will provide an endless supply of hope because I AM Hope.”

Therefore, my prayer for you as you go through this study is that the Holy Spirit will grow your Christ-hope and your Christ-confidence so that you will experience healing.
Engaging God: If you are feeling, on some level, hopeless about your healing, seek Christ to persuade you that He is your hope.

3. You Have the Holy Spirit’s POWER In You To Heal Your Woundedness

In addition to containing The Life of Christ, we, as Christians contain all of God’s power. We see this in 2 Corinthians 4:7:

“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves.” 2 Corinthians 4:7

Think of it. The treasure within us is the surpassing power of God.

a. What kind of power is God’s power?

The treasure that you and I have is the “surpassing greatness of the power of God.” What kind of power is that? Look at Ephesians 1:19, 20:

“I pray that you will begin to understand the incredible greatness of His power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God’s right hand in the heavenly realms.”

Think of it!

The SAME power that resurrected Jesus from the dead is IN YOU!

In addition, God’s power in you is the same power that:

- Created the heavens and the earth.
- Opened the Red Sea.
- Is holding the universe together.

b. Why do we need God’s power?

Without God’s power there will be no healing and no transformation. Your willpower, strength, ability, and capability will never produce the healing and transformation that God promises. This is why we live from God as our Source because as we **do, we are living from His power to make His promises an experiential reality in our lives.

As we draw on God’s power, we will experience His healing of our woundedness.

Question: Have you realized up to this point the greatness of God’s power that resides in you?

Meditate: on 2 Corinthians 4:7 and Ephesians 1:19, 20 and think about the magnitude of God’s power that lives in you.
Engaging God: Ask God to persuade you in a deeper way concerning His divine power that you possess and how He wants to use that power to set you free.


We see this in Psalm 147:3:

“He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.” Psalm 147:3

What a confirming and affirming promise. I pray that from this moment on that you will see this verse as not just a possibility but rather, as a certainty that God will heal you. We will learn that healing is usually a process rather than an overnight thing but we can be certain that God’s promise of healing is one we can cling to in the process.

Engaging God: Ask the Lord to begin persuading you of the certainty of His healing in your life.

Engaging God

Before we go any further, I would like to share a few key truths on what it means to engage God. I hope this will help you better understand why I insert these sections throughout the study.

1. The WAY We Engage God: By FAITH

“Without faith it is impossible to please God.” Hebrews 11:6

The way we engage God is by FAITH.

Faith, as it relates to woundedness, is simply defined as coming to the realization that we CANNOT accomplish the healing we desire and that God promises.

It IS coming to God and asking/seeking Him, with an attitude of TOTAL dependence on Him to heal you.

I believe there are two parts to faith. The first part is coming to the place of “I can’t” which means that you acknowledge that you cannot produce that transformation or healing of your woundedness that God promises. Secondly, faith is coming to God with an attitude of total dependence on Him to do what He promises to do.

2. The OBJECT of Our Faith

The key issue in faith is the object of our faith. The object of our faith as Christians should be Jesus. We see this in the following verses:

“We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, on Whom our faith depends from start to finish.” Hebrews 12:2 (NLT)

“And on the basis of faith in His name, it is the name of Jesus…” Acts 3:16
Let me explain in this next section why I said that the object of our faith as Christians “should be” Jesus.

3. Is It Possible That There is ANOTHER Object Of Your Faith?

I know that if you have been living the Christian life for some time, you know that the object of your faith should be Jesus Christ. However, As a result of ministering to many Christians (who have been Christians for 10, 20, 30+ years), I have personally experienced and witnessed that there is another object of their faith. The reason I say this is because what they believe about living by faith is not resulting in consistent freedom, victory, transformation, or healing of their woundedness. Here is a question that you might ask yourself about your walk of faith:

Is what I BELIEVE about walking by faith TRANSFORMING my life
and HEALING my woundedness?

If what you believe is not working, then there is a possibility that the “real” object your faith is your own IQ, ability, self-discipline, and willpower. Let me give you an example to explain.

Let’s assume that you believe that it is up to you with God’s help to live the Christian life; therefore, you will take God’s promises of victory, freedom, and transformation and try in your own ability and willpower to make those promises an experiential reality in your life. In essence, what you have done is to put faith in yourself, and then you have asked God to help YOU be the source for making those promises real in your life.

However, what do we know is true? We know from 1 Corinthians 1:30 (that we studied earlier in this lesson) that God is the Source for living life in us and that He is not going to help us be the Source. At this point I want to make it personal by asking you this question:

If you are TRYING in your OWN strength and willpower to live
the Christian life, to be transformed, or to be healed, how well is it working?

I share this because if we are truly walking by faith with Christ as the object of our faith then our lives should be in the process of being transformed and that we should be experiencing healing of our woundedness.

Engaging God: If you are not sure who is the real object of your faith (you or Christ), ask the Lord to reveal that to you.

4. What Happens When You Engage God?

When you engage God by faith, you RELEASE the Holy Spirit to take the
INFORMATION you have learned intellectually and make it
REVELATION which will eventually lead to TRANSFORMATION and HEALING.
Engaging God by faith is the release of the Holy Spirit’s power to give you revelation of the information you know and make it revelation. Revelation, as we said in the introduction, simply means that God supernaturally takes His truth and makes it personal to you and to your life situations. Revelation takes you from intellectual understanding to spiritual understanding of God’s truth.

As we continue to engage God, not only will the Holy Spirit gives us revelation, but He will move us from unbelief to belief with the result that we will experience healing of our woundedness.

**Summary**

Therefore, when you get to the engaging God sections, you are simply asking/seeking God with an attitude of total dependence to do what only He can and will do and that you can’t do. Remember that without engaging God nothing changes.

**How I Define Woundedness**

Woundedness can be defined in many ways, but for the sake of this study I define woundedness as:

| FALSE BELIEFS that you have about yourself, about God, or about others that have resulted from negative or wounding messages you have received, from individual(s) who have wounded you, or from wounding or traumatic event(s) that have taken place in your life. |

The tendency, when it comes to woundedness, is to focus on the memory of the event and the pain that is associated with the event. While those are very real issues, there is deeper issue which has an even greater long-term negative impact on you and that is the false beliefs that result from your woundedness. The two areas of false beliefs that result from our woundedness that most negatively impact our lives are the false beliefs we have about ourselves and about God. (We will explore these two areas more in depth in Lessons 3 and 4.)

However, you may be reading this and can’t remember any overt wounding or traumatic events. As a result, you might conclude that you have not been wounded. Is it possible that someone can escape being wounded? Let me explain in the next section why I believe that no one escapes being wounded on some level.

**A Foundational Truth In Understanding Woundedness: NONE of Us Escapes Being Wounded**

“Therefore, just as through one man (Adam) sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned.” Romans 5:12 (parentheses mine)

I used to think that some people could go through life being able to escape being wounded, but I believe that since all of mankind, according to Romans 5:12, was physically born “in Adam,” then none of us escapes being wounded. Let me explain what I mean by being born in
Adam. Being born “in Adam,” means that we inherited Adam’s fallen DNA. Examples of Adam’s DNA include shame, guilt, inadequacy, insecurity, unworthiness, fear, rejection, and self-condemnation. Let me illustrate this with the following diagram:

![DNA of Being IN Adam Diagram]

Therefore, from the time you were born until you were saved, you had no choice but to interpret life through the lens of your Adamic DNA. We will see in the next section why the result for all of mankind being born in Adam is some form of woundedness. Let’s look at the two forms of woundedness.

**Woundedness Can Be OVERT or COVERT**

I separate woundedness primarily into two categories: “overt” and “covert.” Let’s look at the differences between the two.

**OVERT Woundedness**

“For I am afflicted and needy, and my heart is wounded within me.” Psalm 109:22.

You may be reading this and know with certainty that you have been wounded. You may have clear memories of wounding events that took place in your life. This is called “overt” woundedness.
I believe that overt woundedness comes in primarily three forms: abuse, traumatic events, and verbal and/or non-verbal messages. Let’s take a closer look at each of these categories.

**ABUSE**

You may have experienced wounding events that resulted from one or more of the following:

- **Sexual abuse**
- **Physical abuse**
- **Spiritual abuse**
- **Mother Abuse**
- **Emotional Abuse**
- **Verbal Abuse**
- **Father Abuse**
- **Stepparent Abuse**

There are other forms of abuse but the most common forms of abuse are listed above. Here are some definitions of these various forms of abuse.

**Sexual Abuse** - also referred to as molestation, is forcing undesired sexual behavior by one person upon another, and making threats or taking advantage of a victim’s inability to give consent.

**Physical Abuse** - can be defined as any intentional act causing injury or trauma to another person by way of bodily contact. Physical abuse is physical force or violence that results in bodily injury, pain, or impairment. It includes assault, battery, and inappropriate restraint.

**Emotional Abuse** - Emotional abuse includes non-physical behaviors where another person plays on your fear, guilt, compassion, values, or other "hot buttons" to get what they want. This could include threatening to end the relationship, totally rejecting or abandoning you, giving you the "cold shoulder," or using other fear tactics to control you.

**Verbal Abuse** - is a nonphysical form of abuse that may involve insulting, criticizing and attempting to shame the victim.

**Spiritual Abuse** - abuse administered under the guise of religion, including harassment or humiliation, possibly resulting in psychological trauma. Religious abuse may also include misuse of religion for selfish, secular, or ideological ends such as the abuse of a clerical position.

**Father, Mother, Stepparent Abuse** – Is the use of sexual, emotional, physical, verbal, and/or spiritual abuse by a father, mother, or stepparent towards children or stepchildren.

What are the long-term results of abuse? The results can be feelings or beliefs of rejection, unworthiness, insecurity, shame, and/or guilt.
**Question:** Do any of these forms of abuse apply to you? If so, please write them down. If you feel you were abused in other ways, please write those down.

---

**TRAUMATIC EVENTS**

In addition to forms of abuse, traumatic events can cause woundedness. Here are a few examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Divorce</th>
<th>Premature death of a parent, sibling, or child.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abandonment</td>
<td>Post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I have ministered to a number of wounded Christians who, when they were younger, felt abandoned by the divorce or premature death of their parents. These feelings of abandonment left many of them deeply scarred. For some, these events sent unspoken messages to them that they could not properly interpret with the result that many of them felt that they in some way were responsible for the divorce or the premature death, even though they were helpless to prevent these events.

If you personally have gone through a divorce, I believe you would agree that you don’t go through that event without being wounded on some level.

When it comes to post traumatic stress disorder or PTSD, psychiatrists have concluded that this condition is not relegated only to soldiers involved in battle. PTSD can result from many forms of trauma. This trauma can result in woundedness.

Woundedness resulting from traumatic events can create feelings or beliefs of self-condemnation, unworthiness, rejection, insecurity, inadequacy, guilt, shame, fear, or inferiority.

**Exercise:** Have you experienced any traumatic events in the past that you believe have left you feeling abandoned, rejected, responsible, guilty, inadequate, fearful, shame, insecure? Please write those down.

---

Are there any other feelings that resulted from traumatic events in your life that were not listed above? Please write those feelings down.

---

**VERBAL Negative and Positive Messages**

Before we were saved, our Adamic DNA was susceptible to being “triggered” by verbal messages we heard from our parents, siblings, friends, etc. These verbal messages came primarily in two categories: negative or positive messages. Here are some examples of negative and/or positive messages you might have heard growing up.
**Negative messages:** “You are a failure.” “You will never measure up.” “Is this the best that you can do?” “I don’t love you.” “You could have done better.”

**Positive messages:** “I am proud of you.” “You can do it.” “There is nothing you can’t accomplish.” “You are special.”

I can personally speak to the impact of negative messages because that is predominantly the kind of messages I received growing up. These negative messages triggered my Adamic DNA of inadequacy, insecurity, and unworthiness. These repeated messages along with the abuse that I received, led to a deep-seated woundedness.

On the other hand, the positive messages appear to be the kind of messages that we would all like to hear growing up. While that is true, when a positive messages is filtered through our Adamic DNA it too, can create woundedness. Let me explain.

Remember what we talked about earlier in the lesson about being born with Adam’s DNA. I said that before we were saved, we interpreted all events through this Adamic DNA. We had no “truth” filter by which to filter these messages coming into our minds. The following diagram illustrates this truth:

When a negative message such as “you are a failure” is interpreted through your Adamic filter the result, over time, could be beliefs/feelings of unworthiness, insecurity or self-condemnation. Since it is easier to understand how negative messages can be received by our Adamic filter and create woundedness, let me also give you an example of how positive messages can be interpreted through an Adamic filter that result in woundedness.
I met with a pastor a number of years ago who was addicted to pornography. I asked him to share his story. He told me that he was the first-born son in an Asian family. As such, his father was always affirming him that he was special and there was nothing he couldn’t do if he set his mind to it. The problem was that even though his father constantly spoke positive messages to him, he interpreted them through his Adamic filter as “I could do better.” This interpretation triggered his Adamic DNA of inadequacy and insecurity.

Because of all the positive messages that he received, he initially came across very self-confident and self-sufficient. However, these were just masks covering his inadequacy and insecurity. He then revealed to me that after every sermon that he preached, he heard this message in his mind: “It could have been better.” It was this recurring message that fueled his feelings and beliefs of inadequacy and insecurity which in turn led him into pornography every Sunday afternoon. In light of this story, let me end this section with this truth:

**EVEN if you were raised in a home where you heard mostly positive messages, those messages INTERPRETED through your Adamic filter could leave you feeling WOUNDED.**

**Exercise:** Write down some of the negative and/or positive messages you heard about yourself growing up.

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Write down some of the characteristics of your Adamic DNA listed below that these messages may have triggered in you over time?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-condemnation</th>
<th>Unworthiness</th>
<th>Rejection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insecurity</td>
<td>Inadequacy</td>
<td>Guilt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shame</td>
<td>Fear</td>
<td>Inferiority</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

**NON-VERBAL messages**

In addition to verbal messages that can result in woundedness, non-verbal messages can create woundedness as well. With many people that I have discipled, they have shared that they had parents who neglected them or rejected them in non-verbal ways. These non-verbal messages interpreted through their Adamic DNA left them feeling shame, rejection, or feeling unloved.

My dad never said “I don’t love you.” He just never said that he did love me. Those unspoken words left me feeling and believing that I was unloved and unlovable.
UNSPOKEN words can have just as much or MORE impact as spoken words in producing woundedness.

Exercise: Write down any unspoken messages that come to mind that might have left you feeling insecure, fearful, inadequate, unloved, guilty, shame, or self-condemning.

Engaging God: Ask the Lord to reveal to you any unspoken messages that you may not remember.

BODY language 

Over time, even body language can send wounding messages to children. I have heard folks share that a particular facial expression, body posture, or gesture by someone opened up old wounds because it reminded them of when their parents used the same body language as an expression of dissatisfaction or rejection.

Exercise: If there are any forms of body language that were exhibited by parents, siblings, and teachers, that trigger something from your past, write those down.

Engaging God: Ask the Lord to reveal to you any body language that you may not remember that triggers your past woundedness.

COVERT Woundedness

Woundedness can be “covert” as well. By this I mean that you may not be able to consciously connect your false beliefs or wounded feelings of being unloved, rejected, insecure, unworthy, etc. to abuse, specific wounding events, repeated verbal and non-verbal messages or body language. The reason being is that these things have been buried deep in your heart. I compare covert woundedness to an iceberg. The visible part of the iceberg I would describe as overt woundedness while the submerged part of the iceberg is “covert” woundedness. I define covert woundedness as follows:

COVERT WOUNDEDNESS:

Is woundedness that results from SUBMERGED and/or BURIED messages and wounding events.

I have talked to a number of people who don’t believe they are wounded. This is because they have buried these messages and events. If you can’t recall any messages/wounding events in
your life, you might tend to conclude that you are not wounded. However, just because you can’t recall wounding events doesn't mean they did not happen.

Let me share a story to explain. I recently talked to a Christian lady who tried to commit suicide twice. She had very strong beliefs and feelings of rejection and unworthiness. However, when I asked her how she might have been wounded in the past, she could not tie any of her beliefs/feelings to past wounding events. Yet, she felt so rejected and unworthy that she felt her only option was suicide. In future conversations, those wounding events that were buried eventually came to the surface.

If you feel that you have not been wounded, let me ask you a question: “Are you experiencing ongoing beliefs or feelings such as self-condemnation, rejection, shame, guilt, insecurity, being unloved, inadequate, or being unworthy?” If so, then most likely there is some form of woundedness that took place in your past that reveals itself in these present day beliefs and feelings.

I hope this explanation of overt versus covert woundedness has been helpful. Here is a key reason why I believe that we need to recognize our woundedness:

| Part of God’s process of healing is to EXPOSE those events, abuse, verbal and non-verbal messages that have resulted in OVERT or COVERT woundedness. (Especially covert woundedness.) |

I will further explain this in Lesson Six. There are two final truths that I would like to share about woundedness before we finish this lesson.

**Truth #1 - Even A SINGLE Event Can Trigger LONG-TERM Woundedness.**

To illustrate this point, I have a friend who shared with me that he had a very loving and affirming father while he was growing up. While he was attending college, he realized that he needed to stay an additional year to finish his degree. When he called his dad for financial help, his dad responded by saying this, “You are a loser.”

From that one event, my friend felt that he was being rejected by his dad even though up until this point his father had been loving and affirming. He told me that the message was so wounding that he spent the next thirty years of his life trying to prove to his dad that he was not a loser.

**Exercise:** Write down any single event that you may have perceived from parents, siblings, teachers, that have left you feeling wounded.

______________________________________________________________________________
Truth #2 - Woundedness Can Result From How We Interpret INNOCENT Events

I said previously that children are constantly recording messages and events in their lives but have a difficult time interpreting those events. In addition to having a negative interpretation of wounding events, they can also falsely interpret what I call “innocent” events that can result in woundedness. Let me share a personal story to further explain.

My parents, three siblings, and I were visiting the Garden of the Gods National Park outside of Colorado Springs. I was eight years old at the time. Before we left the park, our parents let us go into the gift shop located in the park. I wandered up and down the aisles looking at all the things I wanted my parents to buy for me. I was so caught up in all the “stuff” that I lost track of time and didn't realize that my family had left the gift shop and were getting back into the car.

My mother asked if everyone was in the car and my three siblings said, “Yes.” She never looked back to get a head count. So as I was coming out of the gift shop, our car was driving down the hill. I started to panic and ran after the car as fast as my eight year old legs would allow. At some point in my pursuit, the car stopped when my mother realized that my siblings were playing a trick on her (and me).

She was in tears when she saw me sobbing. The point of this story is that my parents did not mean to leave me behind but I certainly interpreted it that way. My immediate thoughts were, “They purposely tried to leave me. I must really be the black sheep. I don't really matter.” Even though that was not the truth, it was the way I interpreted this innocent event that wounded me.

Exercise: Think about any events in your past that have been “innocent” but resulted in you feeling wounded. If you can remember any of those events, write down those events and how you they might still be impacting you today.

Engaging God: Ask the Lord to reveal to you any past “innocent” events that you negatively interpreted that you may not remember.

I want to end this lesson by sharing with you more details about my story that led to overt and covert woundedness.

I Experienced Overt and Covert Woundedness

My woundedness began at an early age largely due to my dad. The two primary words to describe my dad were “angry” and “controlling.” My dad had to be in control at all times. His controlling attitude was directed toward his three sons and one daughter. Whenever he felt he was losing control, he would become verbally, physically, and/or emotionally abusive. He had very high standards of performance for his kids, and when we did not meet his expectations, he got angry. We had to succeed at everything that we did because part of his reputation was based on our performance in school, our hobbies, our sports, etc.

For our part we, like every son or daughter, wanted to be loved, valued, and accepted by our dad. We thought that by performing well we would earn those things. Therefore, we all tried to jump over our dad’s bars of expectations, to experience his love, acceptance, and worth. However, for me, every time I thought that I was meeting his expectations, he would raise the
Therefore, even though I performed at a very high level, it was never quite good enough. In addition, when we didn't perform to his standards, then there was physical abuse. Fear of failure and what failure would bring was another result of his verbal and emotional abuse. Therefore, by age 18 instead of feeling loved and valued by my dad, I felt inadequate, insecure, unloved, and most importantly, rejected.

I was covertly wounded by my mother because she did not protect me from my dad’s abuse. The result was that I felt that I was not worthy of being protected. This led to even deeper feelings of rejection and feeling unloved.

I will share more of my story and the effects of my woundedness later in this study.

**Summary**

I hope that through this first lesson that you have a better understanding of:

- The foundation of healing is allowing Christ, THE Life, to live His life in you.
- Your Source for healing is God and God alone.
- The difference between overt and covert woundedness.
- That a single event can trigger woundedness.
- “Innocent” events, improperly interpreted can lead to woundedness.

In the next lesson we will look at how woundedness takes place and the things we do to try to cope with our woundedness independent of God.
Lesson Two

The Pathway To Woundedness

Dealing With Woundedness Independent of God

Introduction

In this lesson, we will focus on the following topics:

• How woundedness occurs.
• The results of our woundedness
• Woundedness and your heart
• Ways that we try to deal with our woundedness independent of God.
• The results of trying to deal with our woundedness independent of God.

This is an important lesson because I believe that you will gain a clearer understanding about how woundedness occurs and the ways that we might try to cope with our woundedness independent of God. Let's begin by looking at the process of woundedness.

How Woundedness Occurs

I would like to share about the pathway to woundedness and the overflow of woundedness in us and through us. Let’s begin by looking at the pathway to woundedness.

**Negative Thoughts**

↓

**Wounded Feelings**

↓

**False Beliefs**

↓

**Fleshly Behaviors**

↓

**STRONGHOLDS**
We see from this illustration that negative thoughts and wounded feelings can lead to false beliefs. From these false beliefs flow fleshly behaviors. If these fleshly behaviors continue to be reinforced they can become strongholds. Let’s look at each one of these more closely.

1. NEGATIVE Thoughts

Negative or wounding messages or wounding events can create negative/wounding thoughts. From these negative/wounding thoughts flow wounded feelings/emotions. If we continue to take ownership of these negative thoughts they will over time produce false beliefs. Before we talk about false beliefs, let’s look at wounded feelings and emotions.

2. WOUNDED Feelings/Emotions

From the beginning God created us with emotions as part of our makeup. These emotions are part of our “human-ness.” Emotions are a gift from God. They allow us to express our feelings about all that has happened or is happening in our lives.

A noted author writes, “Emotions are God’s indicators of what is going on inside. They are neither good nor bad. They are amoral and are just part of your humanity. Just like you respond to the warnings of physical pain, you need to learn to respond to your emotional indicators.”

When emotions are in line with God’s truth, we are then functioning in them as God intended. However, when our feelings are tied to or flow from our woundedness, they become damaged or wounded emotions. Look at the first damaged emotions experienced by Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden after the Fall:

“Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, ‘Where are you?’ So he said, ‘I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.’” Genesis 3:9, 10

The question is, “Why were Adam and Eve experiencing fear?” Before the Fall, they never experienced fear, especially fear of God. Why did they hide themselves from God? They hid themselves as a result of their sin and their false belief that the God they once fully trusted is now a God to be feared. As a result of their independent decision to not to be dependent on God, they experienced a damaged emotion of fear that they had never experienced before. Fear, along with several other damaged emotions, makes up our Adamic DNA. Let’s look once again at our Adamic DNA:
It is one thing to have feelings of rejection, insecurity, unworthiness, etc. from time to time. That is normal. The problem comes when normal feelings become wounded feelings. What are wounded feelings?

**Wounded feelings are RECURRING emotions or feelings that are a DIRECT result of your woundedness.**

If you are experiencing ongoing or recurring feelings of guilt, shame, fear, anger, etc., then most likely these are feelings that can be traced back to your woundedness.

**Exercise:** Write down any of the feelings below that seem to be ongoing or recurring?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fear</th>
<th>Anxiety</th>
<th>Worry</th>
<th>Resentment</th>
<th>Insecurity</th>
<th>Inadequacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unworthy</td>
<td>Rejection</td>
<td>Unloved</td>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>Shame</td>
<td>Abandonment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Hatred</td>
<td>Grief</td>
<td>Defective</td>
<td>Hopelessness</td>
<td>Violated</td>
<td>Neglected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwanted</td>
<td>Loneliness</td>
<td>Self-Condemnation</td>
<td>Guilt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Engaging God:** Ask the Lord to reveal to you if any of your recurring feelings that you listed above are a result of any past or present woundedness.

### 3. FALSE Beliefs

What is the result of ongoing negative thoughts and wounded feelings?

---

**Reinforced negative thoughts with the accompanying wounded feelings will EVENTUALLY lead to FALSE BELIEFS.**

*A FALSE belief is ANY belief that does not line up with God’s TRUTH.*

---

When we think about our wounding events, we tend to focus on feelings surrounding those wounding event(s). Depending upon the severity and longevity of these wounding events, our recurring negative thoughts and wounded feelings will result in false beliefs about ourselves, about God, and about others. Let me give you some examples:

**False belief about ourselves:** “I experienced feelings of rejection from my father’s rejection to a point that I believe that I am rejected and/or rejectable.

**False belief about God:** “I feel angry at God because He allowed my abuse to take place. As a result, I don’t believe He really loves me or that He is really in control.”

**False belief about others:** “This person can’t possibly love me because my feelings of unworthiness from my mother’s abuse have led me to believe that I am unworthy of his/her love.”

What is the result of continuing to believe these false beliefs?

---

**The key truth about wounding events is that it is NOT the wounded feelings that keep us in bondage. Rather, it is the FALSE BELIEFS that come as a result of the wounding events that keep us in bondage to our woundedness.**

---

This is a key truth because we tend to focus on the wounding events rather than the false beliefs that result from those events. The problem is that it does not stop with false beliefs. What flows out of these false beliefs are fleshly behaviors.

### 3. FLESHLY Behaviors

Let me begin this principle by defining the “flesh.”

“For we know that the Law is spiritual; but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin.”

*Romans 7:14*
The biblical meaning of the word “flesh” is man’s DESIRE to live life with HIMSELF as the source, INDEPENDENT or APART from God as the Source.

Prior to salvation, we learned that we had no choice but to depend upon ourselves (our flesh) as the source for solving our problems, dealing with life, and becoming a success. After we became Christians, most of us continued to live life out of our own resources (such as education, IQ, personality, looks, talents, abilities, capabilities, self-discipline, and self-strength) apart from God as our Source. As we did this, it reinforced our desire to BE the source for life which results in living from the flesh.

Now that we understand the biblical meaning of the word “flesh,” then let’s define fleshly behaviors.

**Fleshly behaviors are self-centered, sinful ATTITUDES and BEHAVIORS that result from living from the FLESH.**

Here are some examples of fleshly behaviors in Galatians 5:19-21

“Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these…….” Galatians 5:19-21a

How does this apply to our woundedness?

**Our false beliefs about ourselves, God, and others, born out of woundedness produce FLESHLY BEHAVIORS.**

Let me share more of my story to illustrate this truth. Some of my false beliefs about myself as a result of my woundedness were that I was rejected/rejectable, inadequate, and unworthy. The overflow of these false beliefs triggered fleshly behaviors that negatively affected all my relationships.

I felt angry and bitter towards my father because of his abuse. In addition, I was angry and controlling towards my wife because she could not meet my needs. As a business owner, my false beliefs resulted in my being constantly frustrated with and critical towards my employees because they did not perform well enough for me to feel worthy and adequate. The overflow of my fleshly behaviors was like a poison both to me and to those around me.

**Our false beliefs from our woundedness are not only TOXIC to us but to EVERYONE around us.**
**Exercise:** Pick some reoccurring fleshly behaviors from the FLESHLY BEHAVIORS listed on pages 44 and 45 that you think may flow from your woundedness and write them down below.

---

**Engaging God:** Seek the Spirit to reveal any fleshly behaviors that you might have as a result of your woundedness and how they may be poisoning you and your relationships.

**4. STRONGHOLDS**

From wounded feelings flow false beliefs that produce fleshly behaviors and over time can result in strongholds. Let me define what I mean by a stronghold.


**A STRONGHOLD**

*is any REINFORCED fleshly behavior that has such a grip on you that,*

*apart from the POWER of Christ, you CANNOT be set free from it.*

---

Every one of my fleshly behaviors, that I shared in the previous section, became reinforced with the result that over time they became strongholds. They had such a grip on my life that I never thought I would be set free from them. Can you identify? Having strongholds is dangerous because as you continue live in bondage to them, they can eventually produce a sense of helplessness and hopelessness.

Let me end this section by using sharing a story to illustrate how we move from negative thoughts, wounded feelings, false beliefs, and fleshly behaviors to strongholds.

**Example Of Moving From Wounded Feelings To Strongholds**

A woman that I was ministering to shared with me that as a little girl she was sexually abused many times by her father. Her negative thoughts were: “I must not be lovable or valued because of what my father is doing to me.” This followed with wounded feelings such as, “I feel dirty, worthless, and ashamed.” These recurring negative thoughts and wounded feelings were never dealt with resulting in her false beliefs that she was inadequate, unworthy, and rejected. Out of her false beliefs she had fleshly behaviors of self-pity, playing the victim, and beating herself up. She was married twice to abusive husbands who reinforced her false beliefs and fleshly behaviors to a point that they became strongholds.

She married a third time to a very godly husband who loved and cared for her. However, because of her strongholds, she believed that she was not worthy of such a loving, godly husband. Because of her false beliefs, she could not engage in sexual intimacy which eventually destroyed her marriage.

The following is an illustration of the feelings, the beliefs based on those feelings, and the stronghold that results:
Woundedness and The Heart

Introduction

To further explain woundedness, I would like to talk about its relationship to our makeup as human beings. Let’s start in 1 Thessalonians 5:23 which describes our makeup:

“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete....”

This verse reveals that a person is a three-part being. We are made up of a body, a soul, and a human spirit. Let’s look further into the meaning of the body, soul, and human spirit. The diagram below illustrates this truth.
**Body** - The body represents the physical body or that part of you which is seen. This is where you relate to the physical world. This is the place of your five senses. This is the dwelling place of the next two parts of your being: the soul and the human spirit. They may be a little more difficult to understand because they are unseen. The body will pass away, but the soul and the spirit are eternal.

**Soul** - The soul is your unique personality or the psychological part of you through which you relate to people and to the circumstances of life. The soul is made up of your mind (Proverbs 23:7), will (1 Corinthians 7:37a), and emotions (Luke 10:33).

**Human spirit** - The third part of your being is your human spirit. Your human spirit is not to be confused with the Holy Spirit. Your human spirit is that part of your human makeup that you have from birth. However, you did not receive the Holy Spirit until the point when you trusted Christ by faith for salvation. What is the function of the human spirit?

When God said in Genesis 1:26 that He created man in His likeness, He meant that He created man first and foremost as a “spirit” being. John 4:24 reveals that we, as spirit beings, can worship God:

“God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

In addition to worshiping God from our human spirit, it is also from our human spirit that we learn from Him (Job 32:8), commune with Him (Psalm 51:12), receive revelation and wisdom from Him (Ephesians 1:17), and most importantly have an intimate relationship with God (Romans 8:16).
However, you may have read in your Bible, references to man’s “heart.” So it may seem like that we have four parts instead of just three. Let me try to clear this up.

**What Is The HEART?**

The word “heart” is referred to in the Bible 795 times. The word “heart” refers to the human spirit and the soul. The diagram below illustrates this truth. *(Note: Your fleshly behaviors and woundedness manifest themselves in your body and soul. Not in your human spirit. I will explain in the next lesson why this is an important distinction).*

![Diagram of Heart, Soul, Body, and Woundedness](image)

A passage that associates the heart with the human spirit is found in Ezekiel 11:19:

“I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them; I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh.”

Ezekiel is saying that God, at salvation, will exchange our heart of stone (our old human spirit) with a heart of flesh (a new human spirit).

However, most of the scriptures referring to “heart” are primarily associated with the soul. Therefore, for the purpose of our discussion on woundedness, I will be using “heart” to mean the soul and vice versa. Here are some verses where the heart refers to the soul.
“For out of the HEART (soul) come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.” Matthew 15:19

“Be strong and let your HEART (soul) take courage, All you who hope in the LORD.” Psalm 31:24

“When You said, "Seek My face," my HEART (soul) said to You, "Your face, O LORD, I shall seek.” Psalm 27:8

When it comes to the Christian life, it is about the heart. We believe Jesus with our heart. The Word of God must be sown in our hearts. God speaks to our heart through the Holy Spirit in union with our human spirit. As far as woundedness is concerned, the heart is the place where we build rooms to compartmentalize our woundedness.

We Build ROOMS of Woundedness In Our Hearts

What do we do with our wounding events and resulting woundedness? The way that I like to illustrate the answer to this question is to compare our heart to a house. Like a house, our heart has rooms that we build as a result of wounding events.

If we were to put labels on these rooms, some of the labels might read: sexual abuse, trauma, abandonment, father abuse, mother abuse, or divorce. As we experience more woundedness, we add more rooms.

Exercise: To make this more personal, what labels would you put on your rooms of woundedness? Do any of these apply?

- Sexual abuse
- Physical abuse
- Father Abuse
- Stepparent Abuse
- Abandonment
- Non-verbal messages
- Emotional Abuse
- Verbal Abuse
- Mother Abuse
- Traumatic Events
- Misinterpretation of events

Some of these rooms are smaller than others because their impact on our lives is not as great as some of the larger rooms which have a severe grip on our heart. Unfortunately, as we move through life and do not deal with our woundedness, the rooms will grow and occupy more of our heart.

Eventually, they can totally control our lives and overwhelm us. They are like a “cancer” that will permeate our hearts and eventually kill them. Much like heart disease slowly kills the physical heart, woundedness kills our “soulical” heart. I call this process the “hardening of our heart.” (I will share more about the hardening of our hearts at the end of this lesson.)

Because of the pain created by these rooms, we put locks on these doors. Why? We somehow believe that if we can lock these memories, feelings, and incidents away, they won’t impact us today. At that point, these rooms become prisons in our hearts. We feel that since we have locked
away these wounding events, we can walk away from these prison cells in our souls and live life as if these things never happened.

When God comes knocking on these doors in order to heal and to set us free, we don't want Him to enter in. So we stand in front of the door shaking our heads saying “No” to God. The truth is that we are not in front of the door. We are locked inside what has now become a prison for us.

**Questions:** In what ways do you think these rooms of woundedness may be impacting what you think, the choices you are making, and most importantly, how you feel about yourself as a person, as a spouse, as a parent, and how you feel about God and others? Is it possible that these rooms are restricting or stifling your spiritual and emotional growth?

---

**Engaging God:** If you are having trouble answering these questions, ask the Lord to give you personal insight.

**How We TRY To Deal With Woundedness INDEPENDENT of God**

If we do not seek the Spirit of God for healing, then we will try to deal with our woundedness independent of God in some of the following ways:

1. **DENIAL**

   I think that one of the key ways that we try to deal with our woundedness is through denial. Denial usually comes in two forms in relationship to woundedness:

   a. **Denial that a wounding event ever took place.**

      I have met with a number of people who deny that a wounding event ever took place. However, it was obvious that as I ministered to them that they were exhibiting all the signs of a wounded person.

   b. **Denial that past events impact you today.**

      Another way of dealing with woundedness is simply to deny that some past wounding event affects your life today. It is what I call the **“forget and move on”** syndrome. Wouldn't that be nice if that worked? Have you tried to do this? If so, have you really moved on?

      **The Truth:** We may fool ourselves into believing that we can live in denial, but our behavior dictates otherwise. Whether we acknowledge it or not, the toxic overflow from our woundedness will be a constant reminder that denial is an illusion.

      **Engaging God:** Ask the Lord to reveal if you are living in denial concerning your past woundedness.

2. **SELF-PROTECTION/INSULATION**

   Another method of coping with your pain is through self-protection/insulation. Much like
insulation in a house protects the house from extreme temperatures from the outside, you believe that you can protect or insulate yourself from further pain associated with those events.

Let me give you an example to illustrate. There was a man who was rejected by his mother from the day he was born until the day that she died (I mean this literally because she made rejecting remarks about him on the day she died). He shared with me the many ways that she rejected him and the woundedness that resulted. This man knew and lived Christ as life, but early on in his life he tried to insulate himself from his mother’s ongoing rejection. Before I continue with his story, look at the truth concerning self-protection/insulation.

**The Truth:** The problem is that self-protection and insulation from the pain is an illusion. The reason is that self cannot protect self or insulate self from woundedness.

Going back to my friend who was rejected by his mother, a series of rejecting events came about later in his life from other people. Since he was living in a self-protection mode, he thought that he had sufficiently insulated himself from this rejection. To prove my point that self can’t protect self, these rejecting events exposed his failure to protect himself because he took ownership of their rejection with the result that he lashed out in anger towards them and rejected them back. Therefore, to try and protect yourself from the pain of your woundedness will do nothing to stop the pain.

**Engaging God:** Ask the Lord to reveal any ways that you might be trying to self-protect or insulate yourself as a result of your woundedness.

### 3. STUFF Your Emotions

Another thing we do is to try to stuff our emotions associated with these areas of woundedness. Stuffing your emotions is like trying to put your past woundedness into a trash bag or bank vault where you believe they will be locked away forever, and that they will go away or, at the very least, no longer negatively impact your life.

One of the results of stuffing is your wearing masks that portray an image that everything is “okay” in your life and that those events (or the results of those events) are no longer impacting your life.

**The Truth:** The truth is that damaged emotions that are stuffed or buried are in reality buried alive. They are like a time bomb that can explode every time those emotions are triggered.

Like insulation or self-protection, stuffing is an illusion. Why? Instead of a bank vault, your pain really ends up in a “soulical” colander where it flows or “oozes” out to negatively impact you, your relationships, and your circumstances. As the old joke goes, it is like putting a screen door on a submarine.

**Engaging God:** Ask the Lord to reveal any ways that you may be trying to stuff the pain of your past woundedness.

### 4. ESCAPE or ANESTHETITIZE

If we can’t insulate or compartmentalize the pain, we look for ways to escape or anesthetize it.
Here are some examples of ways that we try to escape or anesthetize the pain that can become addictive:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workaholism</th>
<th>Hobbies</th>
<th>Social media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shopaholic</td>
<td>Sex Addiction</td>
<td>Video games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td>Overeating</td>
<td>Exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pornography</td>
<td>Movies</td>
<td>Texting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medication</td>
<td>Computer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here is a key truth concerning these escape options:

| Using these methods of ESCAPE will only bring TEMPORARY relief from the pain but will NEVER produce healing or freedom. |

Most of these are self-explanatory, but you may be a little puzzled why I put “working for God” as a way of escape. I know of pastors and lay people who have used God to run from God. By this I mean that they are using Christian activity as an unconscious attempt to escape from the pain and from God who will heal their pain. In other words, we can minister to others or work for God to try to cover over our own pain.

Another ploy of working for God is what I call the “let’s make a deal” plan. We make a deal with God by thinking that if we do enough for God that He will heal us. This is a ploy that is very familiar to “doers” like me. It was this “let’s make a deal” plan that drove me for years in my Christian life. I kept thinking that the more I did for God the more He would do for me. Sadly, nothing changed, and the effects of my woundedness only got worse.

**Exercise:** From the list above, write down the method(s) of escape you may be using to try to escape your pain.

---

**The Truth:** There is no man-centered method of escape from the pain. Trying to anesthetize the pain will only produce momentary relief but will never produce true healing and freedom.

**Engaging God:** If you are struggling with identifying your methods of escape from your pain, ask the Lord to reveal any ways that you may be trying to escape the pain of your past woundedness.

**5. IGNORING Your Emotions.**

When feelings such as anger, sadness, and fear surface that are tied to our woundedness, we simply ignore them. We feel that if we ignore them long enough, they will subside and eventually not resurface again.

You have heard the expression concerning the “elephant in the room.” Imagine yourself being in a room full of elephants that represent the feelings you have that are attached to your woundedness. You think that if you simply turn your back on them or walk around them that they will go away.
The Truth: There is no real ignoring or going around your wounded feelings. They are like the wolves at the door of your heart, always waiting for the chance to attack.

Engaging God: Ask the Lord to reveal any ways that you may be trying to ignore the feelings caused by your past woundedness.

6. SPIRITUALIZING AWAY Your Woundedness: “This is my cross to bear.”

Another way that we deal with woundedness is to try to “spiritualize” it away. There are a number of ways that we can do this. One way is to say that our woundedness is like Paul’s thorn in the flesh. We just need to accept it as a spiritual reality, not seek healing, and move on. In addition, people have told me that their woundedness “is just my cross to bear.” Below is a story to illustrate this.

There was a lady who had two children who died as adults with the result that this created great woundedness. However, instead of seeking divine healing for her woundedness, she felt that this was her cross to bear, and she would make it a point to tell everyone her story. (I don't share this in any way to minimize the grief that she must have felt.)

Instead of her seeking the Spirit for healing, her self-pity produced by the woundedness continued to grow and was being reinforced each time that I heard her tell the story. The result was that her self-pity had become such a deep-seated stronghold that people did not want to be around her.

I am not refuting that we can’t have thorns or experience suffering like Paul, but when we use these spiritual or biblical phrases to justify perpetuating our woundedness, then we have crossed a line that really says, “I can’t be healed or I don’t want to be healed.”

These phrases may sound very spiritual, but I simply call this practice “chocolate covered Alpo” (if you didn't know it, Alpo is a brand of dog food). In my example, Alpo represents our woundedness and the chocolate syrup represents our spiritual sayings or justifications that we use to cover over our woundedness. While it may look appealing, I have never been able get anyone to take a bite. Would you?

The Truth: Trying to spiritualize away our woundedness will only serve to kick the can of our woundedness down the road and will not allow the Spirit to accomplish a healing work in you.

Question: Is it possible that you are trying to justify your woundedness by believing it is just your cross to bear?

Engaging God: Ask the Lord to reveal if you are, in any way, trying to spiritualize away your woundedness.

7. Playing the VICTIM

Another way of dealing with the pain independent of God is “playing the victim.” By this I mean that we use our wounds to get attention, sympathy, and validation from others. If playing the “victim” card works, then it will become a manipulation tool to remain unhealthy and control others to be validated.
The Truth: As we allow the Spirit to renew our minds to the truth and set us free, we no longer have to remain victims of our woundedness.

Engaging God: Ask the Lord to reveal if you are, in any way, trying to play the victim.

Exercise: Please write down which one or more of the seven ways listed above of trying to deal with your woundedness independent of God applies to you. Are there some other ways that you may be trying to deal with your woundedness independent of God? Please write those down.

If you choose to continue walking in the ways that you listed, let me ask you a question:

What will be the RESULTS if you DON’T let God into your heart to heal?

What do you think the results might be? I will give you some answers to that question in the next section.

What Are Some Of The RESULTS If You Don’t Let God Heal Your Heart?

1. “DEFAULT” feelings are created.

Apart from the healing process we will keep replaying the wounding events over and over with the result that we reinforce the pain and the associated wounding feelings caused by those events. As these wounding feelings are reinforced, they will become the “default” feelings that we go to every time the event comes to mind.

Here is a personal example to illustrate this point:

Every time that I replayed one of the many wounding events in my mind caused by my father, I would feel anger and unforgiveness rising up in me. These feelings eventually became my “default” feelings becoming automatic every time my dad or a wounding event that reminded me of him would come to mind.

2. Your strongholds resulting from your woundedness will be REINFORCED.

In addition to the default feelings, every time you replay the wounding events you will be reinforcing the strongholds that have resulted from your woundedness.

Here is a story to illustrate this point. Two of my strongholds were anger and unforgiveness. Can you imagine after 48 years of replaying these wounding events and not engaging God to deal with these strongholds how reinforced they became?

3. We open ourselves to FURTHER woundedness.

If we don't allow the Spirit to heal our woundedness, we open ourselves up to further woundedness.
Let me make this point by sharing a story about a man who was made to feel unworthy and rejected by the woundedness from his dad. He did not allow the Spirit to heal that woundedness with the result that over time, the woundedness grew deeper and more entrenched. When others caused similar wounding events as those caused by his dad, that peeled the scabs off his unhealed wounds and he experienced the pain from his woundedness once again.

**4. We make COVENANTS or PROMISES to ourselves as a result of woundedness.**

Here are some examples of some promises/covenants that you might have made when you were wounded:

- I will never trust anyone again.
- I will never be weak or vulnerable again.
- I will never let anyone get too close.
- I will never feel again.
- I will never love again.
- I will always be strong.
- I will always be in control.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Truth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>These covenants or promises can NEGATIVELY impact our lives and eventually those of our spouse, kids, friends, and co-workers.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Let me share a story about my dad to illustrate. I will never forget my dad telling me a story about when he was a boy and his dad was a farmer. Even though my dad was only 11 years old, his dad told him it was time for him to learn how to plow (it was a mule and plow; they didn't own a tractor).

However, my dad was too small to make the plow work resulting in his dad severely beating him. After the beating, my dad made a covenant with himself. That covenant was: “I will never fail again. I will succeed at all costs.” The result of that promise not only negatively impacted his life but negatively impacted my life and my siblings’ lives as well.

**Note:** These self-made covenants can be unspoken as well as spoken.

**Question:** Have you made any covenants with yourself as a result of your woundedness? If so, please write those down.

---

**Engaging God:** If you can’t remember making any covenants, ask the Lord to reveal any covenants or promises you may have made to yourself as a result of your woundedness.

**5. RESIGNATION – “This is as good as it gets.”**

Another result of not letting God heal can move you to a place of resignation. Let’s assume that you received counseling or read books about healing, but no healing took place. Maybe, for
awhile, you sought God for healing, but He didn't produce the healing that you expected.

Over time these unmet expectations can take you to the place of resignation where you say, “This is as good as it gets.” This is a very dangerous place to be because you have not only given up on God, but you have opened the door for Satan/demons to use your resignation to keep you in bondage to your woundedness.

Remember that resignation can either be conscious or subconscious. You may be overtly thinking that you haven’t given up on God, but your actions and decisions dictate otherwise.

**Question:** Do you have any feelings of resignation concerning your fleshly behaviors, false beliefs, or strongholds that have resulted from your woundedness?

**6. Unhealed woundedness can produce feelings of HOPELESSNESS.**

A continuing attitude of resignation can eventually lead to experiencing hopelessness that you will ever be healed. Hopelessness is like a “soulical abyss” whereby you are so consumed by the darkness that you believe your healing is beyond even God’s ability to heal. If you continue in this hopelessness and despair, it can become a self-fulfilling prophecy, and no healing will ever take place.

**Question:** Do you have any feelings of hopelessness concerning your fleshly behaviors, false beliefs, or strongholds that resulted from your woundedness?

**7. PSYCHOLOGICAL and PHYSIOLOGICAL disorders can eventually develop.**

I have worked with a number of people over the years who have developed psychological disorders as a result of not allowing God to heal their woundedness. Such conditions as depression, obsessive-compulsive disorders, panic attacks, eating disorders, etc. resulted. It is tragic to see how the “cancer” of woundedness invaded not only their minds but their bodies as well.

I won’t be going into this area any deeper because I am not qualified to connect our woundedness to psychological or physiological disorders that we may be experiencing. However, I can bear witness to this point because out of my woundedness came psychological depression and physiological condition called chronic fatigue syndrome.

**Note:** If you feel you are experiencing any psychological struggles, I would strongly advise you to seek counseling or psychiatric help.

**All Of These Things Lead To The HARDENING Of Our Hearts.**

All of the things listed in the previous section will lead us to what I call the “hardening” of our hearts. I define the hardening of the heart as:

**The DEATH that occurs in your heart from continuing to live from your woundedness and from RESISTING God’s healing power.**

One of the results of not inviting the Spirit to heal you of your woundedness is a growing
desire to protect yourself from further pain. However, through trying to protect yourself from the pain, you end up stiff-arming or blocking the Holy Spirit from healing that pain.

I liken hardening of the heart to compounding interest on a certificate of deposit (when they actually made real interest). We know that the interest on a CD compounds the longer we keep the CD. It is the same way with our woundedness.

As time goes by and you don't allow God into your locked rooms to heal, then you compound or add to the existing pain with more pain. Over time this “compounding” or hardening of the heart causes you to move further and further away from seeking God as the solution. Eventually you can turn away from God completely and will no longer seek Him as the Source for healing. Let me share a story to illustrate:

There was a man that I was discipling who shared with me that his fiancé was run over by a drunk driver the day of their rehearsal dinner. This event happened 15 years prior to our meeting. However, he told (and felt) the story like it had just happened. He said with deep anger: “God killed the only person in the world who ever really loved me.” It was obvious that over the past 15 years He was resisting God and His healing power resulting in his heart being hardened against God.

**Question:** Do you feel that there is a growing desire to protect yourself or to resist God’s healing of your woundedness?

**Engaging God:** Because of the subtlety of the hardening of your heart, ask the Lord to reveal to you if you are resisting His healing work in your life.

**Summary**

I hope that through this lesson that you have learned more about:

- Moving from negative thoughts, to wounded feelings, false beliefs, fleshly behaviors and eventually strongholds.
- What the “heart” is.
- Ways that we try to deal with our woundedness apart from God.
- The results of trying to deal with our woundedness apart from God.

In the next lesson, we will be looking at how our woundedness impacts our identity.
**Fleshly Behaviors**

**Be self-absorbed**
become overly introspective  
feel sorry for myself  
get depressed  
beat up on myself  
play the role of victim/martyr  
focus on my suffering to get attention and sympathy  
be jealous of another's success and happiness

**Withdraw** (isolate myself)
be aloof (pull away)  
distance myself from others  
avoid others (be a loner)  
go into a shell  
become unapproachable  
give them the silent treatment  
refuse to communicate

**Escape** (pain/pressure) by using:
promiscuity  
carousing  
drugs and alcohol  
talking  
staying busy  
school  
hobbies/games  
reading  
computers  
fantasy  
television  
movies  
pornography  
sleep  
overeating  
religion  
work/career  
sex

**Be anxious** (worry and fret)
be fearful (aprehensive)  
lack peace and rest  
become paralyzed (numb)  
be paranoid (overly suspicious)  
refuse to see the positive  
assume the worst

**Seek guidance from:**
astrology/horoscopes,  
fortune telling and/or the occult

**Be self-disciplined** (self-reliant)
base acceptance of self and others on performance  
become a perfectionist  
try hard so as not to fail  
fear making mistakes  
be legalistic:  
live "by the book"  
feel obligated (have to, should, ought to)  
be too hard on myself/others  
set unrealistic standards for myself/others

**Become obsessed with:**
accomplishments  
recognition/status  
acquiring material things  
what others think of me  
how I look physically  
my physical health  
the past (especially past hurts and failures)  
a devotion to a cause  
structure, order and regulations

**Become dominant**
be dictatorial (bossy)  
be demanding (pushy)  
be overbearing (controlling)  
immitidate others  
refuse to give in

**Stay in control** through:
blackmail (making threats)  
manipulation (use of guilt, pity, silence, flattery, etc.)  
coercion (physical threats)  
profanity (swearing)  
passivity (playing helpless)  
not eating (anorexia/bulimia)

**Lack compassion, gentleness**
understanding, kindness, love, become defensive

**Be self-righteous** (self-justifying)
make excuses (rationalize)  
cover up and hide mistakes  
have to prove my point  
assume I am never the problem  
blame someone or something else as the problem  
avoid taking responsibility for failure or problems  
have difficulty: apologizing, admitting I was wrong, asking for forgiveness, asking for help, and/or expressing gratitude  
have a superior attitude (saying in effect):  
"I know what is best"  
"My way is the right way"

**Be critical** (judgmental)
find fault with others, myself and everything around me  
nit-pick things to death  
be prejudiced (intolerant)  
complain a lot (nothing is ever good enough)

**Be self-assured** (self-confident)
depend on myself instead of God or others  
become proud (haughty)  
be egocentric (act pompous)  
brag (be boastful)  
become arrogant (cocky)  
become conceited (smug)

**Come across as insensitive,**
uncaring, unsympathetic, indifferent or unconcerned

**Be complacent** (nonchalant)
say things like, "it's okay" or "it doesn't matter."
Be pessimistic (negative)
lack confidence and optimism
be skeptical (suspicious)
distrust others, myself, God, church and/or government
expect the worst
never pleased with self or others
never be satisfied or content

Become hostile
be unfriendly
be sarcastic (caustic)
be cynical (contemptuous)
be hateful (mean-spirited)
be cruel (malicious)
have a quick temper
rant and rave to vent my anger
be physically abusive
be verbally abusive
break things

Hold a grudge (be resentful)
become moody (sulk)
harbor bitterness
be unforgiving
keep a scorecard of offenses
try to get even (seek revenge)
want others to fail or get hurt
punish myself or others

Fight unfair
be slandering
misrepresent the situation
gossip (talk behind their back)
engage in passive-aggressive behavior: use humor to hide real feelings, forget things, refuse to communicate, be late, procrastinate, etc.

Be self-deprecating
assume I am always the problem
become overly apologetic
be too hard on myself
uncomfortable with success

have difficulty receiving: love, compliments, forgiveness
be unable to forgive myself

Challenge others
resist authority
be uncooperative (inflexible)
be unteachable (close-minded)
cause dissention (strife)
be irritating (aggravate others)
be argumentative
be stubborn (unyielding)
be unreasonable

Deny reality
ignore problems and hope they will go away
deny anything is bad or wrong
be subjective
deceive others and myself
lie to self and others
exaggerate (overstate matters)
play games to hide real intent

Put up a front
hide what I really think
pretend
to impress others
and/or get attention
fake it (act like I know something even when I don't)
be pretentious (phony, unreal)
be superficial (never let anyone get too close)

Be passive (lack initiative)
quit too easily (give up)
don't take chances
wait for someone to tell me how to think and what to do
vacillate (be too changeable)
be indecisive
avoid failure at all costs
procrastinate (put things off)
be irresponsible (unreliable)
be lazy (apathetic, lethargic)

Be tense ("on guard")
find it hard to relax
be restless
become impatient
be easily agitated

Become emotionally insulated
avoid intimacy
have difficulty expressing feelings and opinions
suppress (stuff) emotions
be inhibited (restrained)

Live by my feelings
believe that truth is what I feel
be too sensitive to criticism
be hypersensitive
be touchy (irritable)
be controlled by fear, anger, doubts and insecurities
automatically read in rejection

Be a pleaser (be nice)
try to keep everyone happy
avoid conflict/keep the peace
say what I think others want
overly submissive
have difficulty saying "no"
can't stand up for myself
afraid to disappoint others
give in to others too easily

Be a caretaker (rescuer)
be overprotective
be overly responsible
become too involved with other's affairs/concerns
be possessive (too invested)
talk too much and listen poorly
make decisions for others

Be too serious (intense)
be overly analytical
not be able to have fun
lack joy or life
Lesson Three  
Woundedness and Your Identity In Christ

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”
2 Corinthians 5:17

Introduction

We talked earlier about false beliefs being formed as a result of our woundedness. These are false beliefs about ourselves, God and others. In this lesson we are going to focus on our false beliefs about ourselves as a result of our woundedness and how those false beliefs negatively impact our lives and the lives of those around us. In addition, we are going to talk about the truth of our true identity and how God uses this truth in our healing process.

What Is Our Identity?

Therefore, let’s begin by looking once again at the circle diagram depicting the body, soul, and human spirit.

Your Human Spirit Is The Place Of Your True Identity

In this diagram we see that our identity is located in our human spirit. Let me define what I mean by the word “identity.”
Your IDENTITY is made up of what you THINK, BELIEVE, and FEEL is the truth about yourself.

I base this definition on Proverbs 23:7:

“As a man thinks in his heart, so is he.”

The crucial question that we must ask ourselves is this: Does what I think, believe, and feel about myself line up with God’s truth? Why is this so important?

What you believe about yourself will AFFECT the decisions you make and will impact EVERY one of your relationships.

Therefore, it is VITAL to understand if you are believing the TRUTH or if you have FALSE beliefs about yourself.

Having said that, let’s contrast our false identity with our true identity to determine whether you have false beliefs or believe the truth of your true identity.

What Do You BELIEVE Or FEEL Is True Of You?

As we discussed in the previous lesson, woundedness occurs from wounding events, traumatic events and how we interpreted positive or negative messages from parents, siblings, friends, teachers, etc. These reinforced messages and wounding/traumatic events can eventually produce false beliefs about ourselves. Remember our definition of false beliefs:

A FALSE belief is any belief that does NOT line up with God’s truth.

Here are some examples of negative false beliefs we can have about ourselves as a result of our woundedness:

I believe or feel that I am:

- Unworthy/worthless
- Rejected/Rejectable
- Anxious
- Weak
- Insecure
- Self-hating
- Shameful
- Unwanted
- Insignificant
- Unforgiving

Unacceptable
A failure
Inadequate
Defeated
Fearful
Defective
Guilty
Unloved/unlovable
A disappointment
Not valuable or valued

Exercise: Write down all of the above beliefs that you feel or believe are true of you as a result of wounding events, traumatic events, or positive/negative messages. Write down any other false beliefs that you have about yourself that may not be listed above.
Engaging God: If it is not readily apparent what your false beliefs are, ask the Lord to reveal to you what you believe is true of you.

As a result of my abuse and my negative messages, I came to believe that I was a rejectable, insecure, inadequate, and unworthy person. These false beliefs formed my false identity.

A FALSE identity is made up of ALL your false beliefs.

Living From Your False Identity Produces FLESHLY Behaviors

As we talked about in Lesson Two, the overflow of false beliefs is fleshly behaviors. Another way of saying this is that we exhibit certain fleshly behaviors based on our false beliefs about ourselves. Let me share with you some examples of what I mean. The false belief is in bold and examples of fleshly behaviors follow.

1. Unworthy - overly introspective, self-condemning, being critical of others to build yourself up.
2. Unacceptable - jealousy, envy, being a people-pleaser.
3. Rejected - angry, defensive, rejecting others.
4. A failure - fear of making mistakes, introspective, being envious of others’ successes, become a loner.
5. Inadequate - critical and judgmental of others, denial, people-pleaser, escape through such things as your job, hobbies, alcohol, pornography, etc.
6. Fear - isolate yourself, self-protection, avoid failure at all costs.
7. Insecure - depression, stay in control, obsessed with accomplishments.

Exercise: Go back to the list of fleshly behaviors on pages 44 and 45 and write down any fleshly behaviors that you feel or believe are attached to your false beliefs.

Question: Write down how your fleshly behaviors might be negatively impacting yourself, your spouse, your kids, your friends, and/or your co-workers.
Engaging God: If you are having difficulty tying your fleshly behaviors to your false beliefs, ask the Lord to reveal those fleshly behaviors to you.

**Living From False Identity and Fleshy Behaviors Produces DEATH**

“For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.”  
Romans 8:6

This verse says that continuing to live from your flesh leads to death! What kind of death is referred to in Romans 8:6? It is not spiritual death because we know that as a result of trusting Christ for salvation, we have eternal life in Christ and can never die again spiritually.

**The “DEATH” referred to in Romans 8:6 is defined in Strong’s Lexicon as**

“the MISERY of the soul as a result of SIN.”

In other words, if we continue to live from the fleshly behaviors that result from our false beliefs about ourselves, the inevitable result will be misery in our souls.

The following are some examples of what misery of the soul looks like.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condemnation</th>
<th>Stress</th>
<th>Anxiety</th>
<th>Shame</th>
<th>Unforgiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>Guilt</td>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>Bitterness</td>
<td>Selfishness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-pity</td>
<td>Inadequacy</td>
<td>Fear</td>
<td>Worry</td>
<td>Frustration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unworthiness</td>
<td>Blame</td>
<td>Rejection</td>
<td>Insecurity</td>
<td>Dissatisfaction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using the diagram of the body, soul, and human spirit, let’s look at an illustration of the misery of the soul.

**Death = Misery Of The Soul**
**Exercise:** From the list above on the previous page, write down the things that most characterize the misery of the soul that you may be experiencing now as the result of your fleshly behaviors.

---

**Question:** Would you like to be set free from your fleshly behaviors?

**Remember:** That if you keep living from your false beliefs about yourself, then you are like the person in 2 Peter 2:22:

> “Of them the proverbs are true: ‘A dog returns to its vomit’ and, ‘A sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud.’”

The dog returning to its vomit or a pig returning to wallowing in the mud are great pictures of what it is like to continue living from your fleshly behaviors that flow from your false beliefs. If this is the case, why do we keep going back to the flesh? Here again, it is what we are used to. As sick as it sounds, we have learned to be at home and to be comfortable with the misery of our flesh.

To make this point, let me share with you about a man that I was ministering to who told me that he grew up with a domineering mother who controlled every move that he made. When he did not perform to her standards, she made a point of letting him know that. Her controlling actions created wounded feelings in him that over time resulted in his false beliefs that he was inadequate and worthless. As a result of his false beliefs, he exhibited very strong fleshly behaviors of anger and being controlling. These eventually became strongholds in his life that negatively impacted his marriage and all his other relationships. However, he had lived with them long enough that he was “comfortable” with his angry and controlling behavior.

Let’s look at three other ways that living from your false identity negatively impacts your life.

**How Your False Identity Negatively IMPACTS Your Life**

How will continuing to live from your false identity negatively impact your life?

1. **Keeps you TRAPPED and in BONDAGE to your woundedness and the fleshly behaviors that result.**

   The longer your live from your false identity, the more entrenched will be your bondage to your woundedness. I can personally bear witness to this because continuing to live out of my false identity for 48 years kept me trapped in my woundedness.

   Paul bears this truth out by calling his bondage to the flesh “this body of death” in the second half of Romans 7:24:

   > “Who will set me free from this body of this death?”

   Paul is in misery! He is in such misery that it seems like he is pleading when he asks to be set free. The “body of this death” is referring to the flesh and the associated misery that is within
him. Isn’t it interesting that Paul didn’t ask, “Which self-help program or what ten steps will set me free?” He asked,

“WHO will set me free?”

He answers this question in Romans 7:25 when he says:

“Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!”

2. HARDENS your heart towards God.

“….Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts….” Hebrews 3:15

As we mentioned earlier, continuing to live out of our woundedness hardens our hearts toward God. It is the same with living out of our false identity. I know for myself that over the years that I grew colder in my relationship with the Lord, the longer I lived from my false identity.

3. Hardens your heart towards the TRUTH.

Because your false identity continues to be reinforced, it also hardens your heart towards God’s truth concerning your true identity. Let me give you an example to illustrate.

I had a very strong false belief that I was rejected and rejectable. When I first read Romans 15:7, that I am accepted and acceptable in Christ, I really struggled with believing it. Why? My false belief was so entrenched that it was very difficult to receive and believe God’s truth. In other words, my false belief was so strong that it was “truth” to me. So when my “truth” came up against God’s truth, my tendency was to believe it instead of God’s truth.

The result of living from false beliefs (false identity) is summed up very well by the words of my counselor friend, Perri Dupree, who said:

“Those wounds become your internal experience of self and block God’s view of self from ever becoming experiential.”

The good news is that you no longer have to live from a false identity because God did something in you at salvation to give you a new identity.

**What God Did At SALVATION To Give You A New Identity**

1. Before salvation, your human spirit contained your OLD identity.

As we said earlier in this lesson, your identity is part of your human spirit. Your “old” identity was made up of all the false beliefs you had about yourself prior to salvation. Look at the following diagram to illustrate.
Before we see what God did with your human spirit and your old identity at salvation, I would like to conclude this section with this key truth:

**Your old identity is who you really WERE before salvation.**

I will explain the importance of this truth in the next section.

2. **At salvation, God did TWO things concerning your identity**

a. **He CRUCIFIED Your Old Identity.**

Your human spirit before salvation is called in the Bible your “old self” (See Romans 6:6 below). Since your identity is located in your human spirit, your old identity is part of your “old self.” Before God could give you a new human spirit and a new identity, He had to deal with your old self and old identity. Therefore, He **crucified** your old self and old identity (with all of your false beliefs) **with Christ** on the cross. We see this truth in the following verses:

“knowing this, that our old self (human spirit and old identity) was crucified with Him (Christ), that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin.” Romans 6:6 (parentheses mine)
“I (the human spirit and the old identity) was crucified with Christ and I (the human spirit and the old identity) no longer live....” Galatians 2:20a (parentheses mine)

The next diagram depicts your old identity being crucified with Christ at the cross:

![Diagram of God CRUCIFIED Your Old Self Including Your Old Identity On The Cross - Romans 6:6](image)

**Note:** You may be asking, “How can my old self and old identity be crucified with Christ since the crucifixion of Jesus took place over 2000 years ago?” The answer is that in the eternal realm with God there is no time. Everything is present with God so that regardless of when you were saved, God sees your old self and old identity being crucified with Christ on the cross at the moment you were saved. This is truly beyond man’s comprehension. Like the rest of scripture, this is a place where we must believe it by faith.

**Question:** Based on what we just learned, what happened to your false beliefs about yourself at salvation according to Romans 6:6 and Galatians 2:20?

**Meditate:** on Romans 6:6 and Galatians 2:20 and ask God to give you revelation and a deeper understanding of the significance that your old human spirit and old identity were crucified with Christ.

**Engaging God:** Ask God to give you a deeper revelation of the truth that the false beliefs you still have about yourself were crucified at the cross.
KEY QUESTION:
If your false beliefs are part of your old identity that was CRUCIFIED at the cross, then do you NEED to continue believing your false beliefs any longer?

b. God EXCHANGED Your Old Self and Old Identity For A NEW Human Spirit and A NEW Identity.

“Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creation (new identity): the old things (old self and old identity) passed away; behold, new things (new self and a new identity) have come.” 2 Corinthians 5:17

This verse says that when you trusted Christ for salvation, you became a new creation. Becoming a new creation means that you now have a new human spirit and a new identity in Christ. The “old things” in 2 Corinthians 5:17 (referring to your human spirit and your old identity) were crucified (passed away), and the “new things” (your new human spirit and new identity) were given to you by God at salvation. In other words, at salvation God exchanged your old identity for a new identity.

The next diagram illustrates how God EXCHANGED your old self and old identity for a new human spirit and a new identity.
Now that you have a **NEW Identity** you NO longer have to continue believing your false beliefs.

**Let Me Illustrate This Same Truth In Another Way**

Remember that we discussed that we were all born in Adam with his DNA. What God did at salvation was to take you out of being IN Adam and place you IN Christ. Let’s look again at 2 Corinthians 5:17:

> “Therefore if any man is **in Christ** (now that you are saved), he is a **new creation** (IN Christ): the **old things** (IN Adam) passed away; behold, **new things** (IN Christ) have come.” 2 Corinthians 5:17

Another way of saying it is this:

*God replaced your ADAMIC DNA with CHRIST’S DNA.*

The following diagram illustrates this truth:

---

**God Took You Out Of Being **IN** Adam and Put You **IN** Christ**

**IN ADAM**

**Old Identity:**

Self-condemning
unworthy, unlovable,
insecure, fearful
inadequate, defeated,
defective, rejected,
guilty, shameful,
unforgiving.

**IN CHRIST**

**NEW IDENTITY:**

Righteous, Worthy, Humble,
Unconditionally loved, Secure,
Acceptable, Patient,
Forgiving, Complete, Wise,
Compassionate,
Discerning, Adequate,
Thankful, Confident,
Selfless, Joyful,
Peaceful, Sacrificial
Now that you know that you have a new identity, let me give you a list of some of the characteristics of your new identity:

**The Characteristics Of Your NEW, TRUE Identity**

Here are some of the characteristics of your TRUE IDENTITY in Christ:

- Romans 8:35, 38-39, 39 In Christ, I am unconditionally loved.
- 1 Corinthians 15:57 In Christ, I am victorious.
- Psalm 71:5 In Christ, I am confident.
- Psalm 56:4 In Christ, I am fearless.
- 2 Corinthians 9:8 In Christ, I am sufficient.
- Psalm 139:14 In Christ, I am valued/worthy.
- 2 Corinthians 3:5 In Christ, I am adequate.
- Romans 8:37 In Christ, I am more than a conqueror.
- Ephesians 6:10 In Christ, I am strong.
- Romans 15:7 In Christ, I am accepted and acceptable.
- Ephesians 4:24 In Christ, I am righteous and holy.
- Colossians 3:10 In Christ, I am a forgiving person.
- Colossians 2:10 In Christ, I am complete in Him.
- Galatians 5:1 In Christ, I am free.
- Colossians 3:12 In Christ, I am compassionate, humble, kind, patient.
- Psalm 139:5 In Christ, I am secure.
- Ephesians 1:1 In Christ, I am a saint.
- John 15:13 In Christ, I am sacrificial.
- Philippians 2:3 In Christ, I am others focused.
- Galatians 5:22, 23 In Christ, I am joyful, peacefull, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle.
- John 1:12 In Christ, I am a child of God
- John 15:15 In Christ, I am Christ's friend.
- Colossians 3:12 In Christ, I am chosen of God, holy, and dearly loved.
- Hebrews 3:14 In Christ, I am a partaker of Christ.

**Question:** Write down three of the characteristics listed above that you most want to experience?

______________________________________________________________________________

**Question:** What are some of the characteristics of your true identity listed above that you don't believe are true of you?

______________________________________________________________________________

**Question:** Is it possible that you are not experiencing those characteristics due in part to how your woundedness has impacted what you believe about yourself?

______________________________________________________________________________

Let’s look at an illustration of the characteristics of your new identity as part of your human spirit:
The Condition of Your Soul Prior To God’s Transformation

Even though God removed your old human spirit and your old identity and exchanged it for completely new human spirit with a new identity at salvation, He did not transform your soul. Look at the following diagram to better understand this truth:
What we see from the diagram is that even though you have a new identity, the condition of the soul looks like this prior to transformation:

- **MIND** – still contains false beliefs about yourself based on your woundedness.
- **EMOTIONS** – are damaged and are tied your false beliefs about yourself
- **WILL** – is making choices based on your false beliefs.
- **FLESHLY BEHAVIORS** – are the result of choosing to live from your false beliefs.
- **WOUNDEDNESS** – is the result of your false beliefs about yourself.

Here is a key truth:

*Even though you have a NEW identity in your HUMAN SPIRIT, your SOUL is that part of you that still needs to be TRANSFORMED.*

You can see in the following diagram what changes occur as your soul is being transformed.
• **MIND** – is being renewed so that you will think and believe the truth of your true identity.

• **EMOTIONS** – will begin healing and will more and more line up with the truth.

• **WILL** – you begin making choices based on the truth of your true identity versus your false beliefs.

• **GODLY/CHRIST-LIKE BEHAVIORS** – will replace your fleshly behaviors.

• **HEALING** – will result as your mind, emotions, will and behavior line up with the truth of your true identity.

As your mind is being renewed to the truth, your wounded emotions will subside; you will no longer make choices from your false beliefs; and your fleshly behaviors will be replaced by Christ-like behaviors. The result will be the healing of your soul.

**The key word to remember concerning transformation is PROCESS.**

Let’s look at the process of being transformed to walk from your true identity.

**The Line Analogy And Your True Identity**

I want to introduce an illustration called “The Line” which I will be using in a number of ways for the rest of the study.

**“THE LINE”**

Human Spirit

ABOVE THE LINE

BELOW THE LINE

SOUL

Above the line is our human spirit and below the line is our soul. Based on this illustration, let’s look at your new identity above the line versus your false beliefs below the line.
Finally let’s look at the truth of your true identity in your human spirit above the line versus the condition of your soul prior to salvation below the line:

### Your True Identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Human Spirit</th>
<th>SOUL</th>
<th>False Beliefs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unconditional Love</td>
<td>Righteous</td>
<td>Humble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secure</td>
<td>Acceptable</td>
<td>Patient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forgiving</td>
<td>Fearless</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compassionate</td>
<td>Discerning</td>
<td>Wise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>Thankful</td>
<td>Christ-Confident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacrificial</td>
<td>Sufficient</td>
<td>Selfless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Victorious</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joyful</td>
<td>Patient</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### False Beliefs

- Unworthy/worthless
- A failure
- Weak
- Fearful
- Shameful
- Unloved/unlovable
- Unforgiving

- Unacceptable
- Anxious
- Defeated
- Self-hating
- Guilty
- Insignificant
- Not valuable or valued

- Rejected/Rejectable
- Inadequate
- Insecure
- Defective
- Unwanted
- A disappointment

Finally let’s look at the truth of your true identity in your human spirit above the line versus the condition of your soul prior to salvation below the line:
Your True Identity Versus The Condition of The Soul

**Human Spirit**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unconditional Love</th>
<th>Righteous</th>
<th>Humble</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secure</td>
<td>Acceptable</td>
<td>Patient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forgiving</td>
<td>Fearless</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compassionate</td>
<td>Discerning</td>
<td>Wise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>Thankful</td>
<td>Christ-Confident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacrificial</td>
<td>Sufficient</td>
<td>Selfless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Victorious</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joyful</td>
<td>Peaceful</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOUL**

False beliefs about yourself

Negative/Damaged Emotions Tied To False Beliefs
Will choosing to live from your false beliefs.

**Fleshly Behaviors**

Woundedness

When you look at these illustrations, where do you want to live: above or below the line?

*The PROCESS of Moving From A False Identity To Living From Your True Identity*

"Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your MIND...."

Romans 12:2a

The key truth to remember concerning healing of your woundedness and your true identity is this:

*The KEY to the healing of your woundedness is the RENEWING of your MIND.*

You might think that we need to address our damaged emotions before renewing our minds. However, remember that your woundedness began through your interpretation of wounding and traumatic events in your mind and through taking ownership of negative or wounding messages. These produced wounding thoughts which eventually formed false beliefs. Therefore, the key to healing is for the Holy Spirit to renew the mind and transform our false beliefs into the truth as illustrated below:
Therefore, what God wants to do is to use His truth to renew your mind and to set you free from your false beliefs. Remember what we have discussed before is that knowing the truth and believing the truth are two separate issues. You now know you have a new identity. The question is do you really believe it? As you seek the Spirit to renew your mind, He will take you from knowing the truth to believing the truth that you have a new identity.

**God wants to RENEW your mind to the truth of your new identity so that your BELIEFS about yourself will line up with your true identity.**

**Meditate:** on Romans 12:2.

**Engaging God:** Ask God to moving you from knowing this verse to believing it.

**Personal Testimony:** Remember that I shared that I had strongholds of fear and rejection. They were such a strong reality to me that in the beginning when I read in God’s word that in my true identity I am fearless and accepted, I did not believe that those things were true of me. However, the fact that I did not believe God’s truth at that time did not change the fact that it was true. As God began renewing my mind to His truth, I began to believe that I am fearless and accepted.

**FAITH Is The Key To Healing**

When Jesus said in the last part of John 15:5 that “apart from Me you can do nothing,” that “nothing” included healing your woundedness. Therefore, healing can only come from God Himself. Remember from Lesson One that God is not going to help you heal. He is going to be the Source to heal you. However, you have a vital part to play in the healing process. As we
discussed in Lesson One, your part in God’s process of healing is faith (moment by moment dependence) and the object of your faith is Christ. Therefore, we are going to look at steps of faith and how they apply to the renewing of your mind to be transformed to believe and live from your true identity

The Journey Of Healing Begins With A STEP of Faith.

“*The mind of a man plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps.*” Proverbs 16:9

Imagine that you have moved from your home to Indonesia. You would be moving from a very familiar culture to one that is 180 degrees different from the one that you have been living in. You will now have to learn how to live in this new culture. In the same way, God is moving you away from the “self” culture of living from your own abilities to a new “spiritual” culture of living from His infinite ability. It too is a very difficult transition. However, God promises that as we take steps of faith, He will make real to us the transformation and abundant life that He promises. Therefore, let me begin by defining a step of faith:

**STEP OF FAITH**

is a **MOMENT in time** where you

**ENGAGE God and His LIFE and POWER by faith.**

If you have been a Christian for any length of time, you know that the Christian walk is a walk of faith. However, there are two key things that I want to emphasize about our walk of faith. One, I would like for us to look at what happens when we take a step of faith. The second is to take a look at the object of our faith.

What Happens At That MOMENT When You Take A Step of Faith?

Remember from Lesson One the truth that at this very moment within you is ALL of God’s life and power according to Colossians 2:9, 10:

"*For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness IN Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.*"

Since you contain all of God’s life and power, what happens when you take a step of faith?

**When you take a step of faith, ALL of God’s LIFE and POWER is**

**RELEASED in you to transform your thinking, your beliefs, and your behavior.**

We will talk more about God’s life released in us at the end of this lesson. However, let’s take a closer look at God’s power and what happens when it is released in us. Look at how Paul ties faith in with the power of God:

“so that your *faith* would not *rest* on the wisdom of men, but on the *power of God.*”

1 Corinthians 2:5
“To this end also we pray for you always, that our God will count you worthy of your calling, and fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith with power.” 2 Thessalonians 1:11

When you take a step of faith, God is not giving you just a part of His life and power. He releases the full force of His power in you to transform every area of your life.

**Steps of Faith Concerning Your False Beliefs**

**Engaging God:** Take one of your false beliefs that you listed earlier in this lesson. Using the examples below begin taking steps of faith for God to renew your mind to the truth. Some examples of steps of faith might be:

**Example #1:** “Lord, I am believing the lie that I am an unforgiving person. I am entrusting (giving over to You) that false belief to You and I am asking you to renew my mind.”

**Key Point:** “Entrust” is a key faith word. It means giving over to God something or someone you are holding onto. Think about your false belief being like a piece of burning coal. If you hold on to that piece of burning coal, what happens? What God wants you to do is to entrust or give over your false beliefs to him so that he can renew your mind to the truth.

**Example #2:** “Lord, I am believing the lie that I am inadequate. Your word says in 2 Corinthians 3:5 that I am totally adequate in You. I am trusting You to renew my mind to the truth.”

**Key Point:** I believe it is important to verbalize God’s truth as you take steps of faith.

**Example #2:** “I am believing the lie that I am self-sufficient because of my IQ or ability. Persuade me that my sufficiency can only be in You and not in myself as I walk in my true identity.”
**The Line And Steps of Faith**

Let’s look at the line illustration concerning your walk of faith. As you take steps of faith, the Holy Spirit’s power is released to transform your soul to believe the truth rather than believing your false beliefs:

**Human Spirit**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unconditional Love</th>
<th>Righteous</th>
<th>Humble</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secure</td>
<td>Acceptable</td>
<td>Patient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forgiving</td>
<td>Fearless</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compassionate</td>
<td>Discerning</td>
<td>Wise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>Thankful</td>
<td>Christ-Confident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacrificial</td>
<td>Sufficient</td>
<td>Selfless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Victorious</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joyful</td>
<td>Peaceful</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOUL**

False beliefs about yourself

*Negative/Damaged Emotions Tied To False Beliefs*

Will choosing to live from your false beliefs.

**Fleshly Behaviors**

**Woundedness**

**Steps of Faith Concerning Living From Your True Identity**

**Engaging God:** Refer back to the list of the characteristics of your true identity. Choose one or more characteristics that you want to experience more of and using the examples below, begin taking faith steps asking/trusting God to renew your mind to the truth.

**Example #1:** “Lord, the truth is that in my true identity I am totally secure in You, and because of that nothing or no one can rob me of that security. I am asking You to persuade me of the truth.”

**Example #2:** “Lord, the truth is that in my true identity I am totally accepted. Therefore I am entrusting my rejection to you and trusting you to renew my mind that I am totally accepted.”
Steps Of Faith To Transform Fleshly Behavior Associated With Your True Identity

Exercise: Look at the fleshly behaviors flowing from your false beliefs that you wrote down earlier in this lesson. Using the examples below, begin taking steps of faith to engage God to transform your life in those areas.

Example #1: “Lord, I know that my false belief of inadequacy is causing me to be a people-pleaser and a controller. I am trusting You to renew my mind to the truth that I am totally adequate in my true identity. I am asking You to move me away from my fleshly behavior of people-pleasing and controlling.”

Example #2: “Lord, I want to protect or insulate myself from my fears. Renew my mind to the truth that in my true identity, I am fearless. Remove that fleshly desire to protect or insulate myself.”

Remember: Your behavior does not determine your identity. If you struggle in this area, take steps of faith for God to persuade you of this truth. The following are some examples of what that might look like:

Step of faith: “Lord, even though my behavior is telling me a lie that I am not accepted or an acceptable person, I am trusting You to transform my life so that I will believe by faith the truth that in You I am totally accepted and acceptable.”

Step of faith: “Lord, I feel so much guilt and shame over what I have done in the past. I am struggling with believing that I am righteous in Christ. Persuade me that You dealt with that guilt and shame on the cross and that I am righteous according to Your truth.”

Key Truths To Remember As You Engage God By Faith To Replace Your False Beliefs With The Truth of Your True Identity

- It is crucial to understand that being transformed to live out of your true identity is a PROCESS. It is a journey and not a sprint.
- You will not necessarily FEEL or EXPERIENCE God’s power flowing in you as you begin taking steps of faith but know by faith that God IS working.
- God is NOT telling you how He is working. We trust by faith that He is transforming us as we walk by faith.
- There will be resistance to our walk of faith by the flesh, the power of sin, Satan, and our minds.
- You may have to take SEVERAL steps of faith before you experience any changes in how you think or feel about yourself.
- If you walk LONG enough by faith, transformation and healing WILL take place.

Key Truth:

Even though your mind is being renewed to the truth, you still have to make the CHOICE to walk in and live from the truth moment by moment.
How Do We Know That Changes Are Taking Place?

The promise is that you will eventually experience the changes God is making in your thoughts, emotions, choices and behavior which will lead to the healing of your woundedness. Let’s take a closer look at what you can expect.

- You begin to have thoughts that line up with the truth versus your false beliefs.
- As your mind is being renewed, your emotions will begin to line up with your thinking.
- This does not mean that you won’t have feelings that are tied to your false beliefs, but you will find yourself not responding to them as often.
- As your mind is being renewed and your emotions line up with the truth, you will find yourself making choices based on your true identity.
- As you are being transformed, God will transform your fleshly behaviors into Christ-like behaviors.
- Healing will be the result.

Please remember this key truth:

**As God RENEWS your mind to the truth of your true identity, you NO longer have to live from your false identity and the woundedness associated with it.**

Let me share a story to illustrate. There was a lady who was sexually abused by her stepfather. As a result, she believed and felt that she was rejected and unworthy to be married. When she got married, her false beliefs of unworthiness and rejection along with her woundedness from her stepfather began to sabotage her marriage.

However, when she learned and began to walk in the truth that she was totally worthy and adequate in Christ, her damaged emotions of inadequacy and unworthiness caused by her woundedness were replaced by feelings of adequacy and worthiness. As a result, she and her husband eventually experienced a Christ-centered marriage.

**Engaging God:** Ask the Lord to begin persuading you that you have a new identity and no longer have to live from the woundedness produced by your old identity.

**Understanding My True Identity and My Healing**

The truths of my true identity were the key to my healing. As God began to renew my mind to the truth, I moved from believing I was rejected/rejectable to believing I was accepted; from believing that I was unworthy to believing my worthiness in Christ; and from believing and living from my inadequacy to living from my adequacy in my true identity. Because of how entrenched these false beliefs were, it was a process of being set free. However, as I kept taking steps of faith, God persuaded me with each step of my true identity.

Now those false beliefs born out of my woundedness no longer have a grip on my soul. I am still in process but I want to encourage you through my journey that freedom, healing, and transformation will eventually be part of your experience as you allow the Holy Spirit to renew your mind to the truth of your true identity.
**Line and Transformation of the Soul**

I want to end this lesson with a two line illustrations. In the first illustration, above the line is your true identity in your human spirit and below the line is the transformation of the soul as you are being healed:

**Your True Identity And The Transformation of Your Soul**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Human Spirit</th>
<th>Unconditional Love</th>
<th>Righteous</th>
<th>Secure</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Patient</th>
<th>Forgiving</th>
<th>Fearless</th>
<th>Complete</th>
<th>Forgive</th>
<th>Compassionate</th>
<th>Discerning</th>
<th>Wise</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Thankful</th>
<th>Christ-Confident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOUL</td>
<td>Renewing of the mind to believe your true identity</td>
<td>Healing of your damaged emotions</td>
<td>Will choosing to live from your true identity</td>
<td><strong>Christ-Like Behaviors</strong></td>
<td><strong>HEALING</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the second illustration, as we are being transformed, the truth of our true identity above the line will be experienced in our soul below the line. The following illustration bears this out:
Summary

What you feel or what you believe about yourself as a result of your woundedness that contradicts God’s truth is a lie. You have a new identity. It is who you REALLY are regardless of how you otherwise feel or believe. God crucified your old identity (Romans 6:6) and gave you a new identity (2 Corinthians 5:17). Therefore, it is crucial to allow the Spirit to heal your woundedness so that you can walk in the truth of your true identity.

Note: If you would like a more in-depth study of your true identity, I would encourage you to go to our ministry website: www.christislifeministries.com. On the home page you will find a DISCIPLESHIP icon. Click on that icon and it will take you to the Discipleship page. On that page you will see a study called Do You Know Your True Identity? There is a curriculum that you can download and a DVD series based on the study that you can watch online.
Lesson Four

The Impact of Woundedness Concerning Your Concept of GOD

Introduction

I hope that the study on your woundedness and identity was helpful in your healing process. I believe that another crucial connection is the impact of your woundedness on your concept of God. I say this because any false concept you have of God flowing from your woundedness can create doubt, distrust, or unrealistic expectations. The result will be that you won’t seek the Holy Spirit for healing. Therefore, I would like to focus in this lesson how our woundedness negatively impacts our concept of God and how to engage God to renew our minds to the truth. This process is crucial to the healing process. Why?

Part of the healing of your woundedness will take place when your false beliefs about God associated with your woundedness are replaced with the truth.

Something We Need To Understand Before We Go Any Further

What I see in many Christians is that they have two Gods. One God is what I call the “theological” God. Our “theological” God is the One we know from what the Bible tells us about God. Our other God is what I call our “experiential” God. What we know intellectually about God is what I call our “theological” God. How we truly feel and what we believe about God is what I call the “experiential” God. I make this distinction because what we have learned about God may not necessarily line up with what we feel or believe about God, especially when it comes to our woundedness. Let me illustrate. Let’s assume that you experienced a wounding events. Look at the illustration below to reveal the difference between a “theological” God versus an “experiential” God.
The guy in the illustration “knows” intellectually and theologically that God is good because the Bible says it is so; but when it comes down to what he feels and believes, we see that he is at least questioning God if not distrusting Him. What we know about God does not always translate into what we believe about God. I share this with you because we are going to be doing some exercises where it is important for you to answer questions using how you feel and think instead of what the theologically correct answer is. Let’s start by looking at how parents create woundedness and distort our concept of God.

**How PARENTS Create Woundedness and Distort Our Concept of God**

I believe that the most influential people in shaping your beliefs about God were your parents during your childhood. The repeated negative verbal and non-verbal messages that you may have received from them, or the way they mistreated or abused you, could have created a distorted image of God. As a result, you may have transferred some of these false beliefs you got from your earthly parents to your heavenly Father. (Although I am using “Father/Mother,” since parents are usually the most influential people shaping your beliefs about God, you may need to mentally substitute some other authority figure, like a stepparent, grandparent, teacher, coach, etc., when I use the term “Father/Mother.”)

Let’s look at five examples:

**a. The Authoritarian Father/Mother is more concerned with compliance than relationship.** They insist on things being done their way. They are not interested in their children's opinions, desires, or goals. They desire no real intimacy with their children. They only want obedience. When they don’t get their way, there is a price to pay.

**Distorted View of God:** “God expects me to do things His way, and if I don’t…”

**The Result:** This distorted view of God usually results either in our rebelling against Him or trying harder to please Him.

**b. The Abusive Father/Mother deliberately inflicts pain on their children, hurting them emotionally, verbally, mentally, physically, and/or sexually.** This type of relationship destroys their children’s sense of worth and robs them of their natural ability to trust. The children see themselves as someone to be used rather than someone who is valued in relationships.

**Distorted view of God:** “God is out to inflict pain and suffering in my life. He is the cause of that pain and suffering.”

**The Result:** This distorted view of God can destroy our ability to trust God and to relate emotionally to Him.

**c. The Distant/Passive Father/Mother expresses little affection.** They may be good providers but interact very little with their children. They rarely show emotion or say, “I love you.” They don’t share in their children’s joys or pains. This can produce covert woundedness.

**Distorted view of God:** “God is not concerned with my life and He really doesn’t love me.”

**The Result:** This distorted view of God can result in us distancing ourselves from God.
d. The Accusing Father/Mother is critical and judges every failure. They think this will motivate their children to do better and to try harder. They rarely give encouragement or affirm their children.

Distorted view of God: “God is angry with me. He is judging me and is never satisfied with me.”

The Result: This distorted view of God can result in either an unhealthy fear of God or else trying harder to do whatever it takes to not be judged by Him.

e. The Absent Father/Mother is one who is absent because of death, divorce, work, or disinterest. Unlike the passive parent who is there but who never communicates, the absent parent is just not there at all. His/her children feel abandoned and neglected not only by their earthly parents but also by God as well.

Distorted view of God: “God is neglecting me. He has abandoned me.”

The Result: This distorted view of God can result in either believing God has given up on us and therefore we give up on Him or trying to gain His attention by working harder for Him.

Question: Which one (if any) of the parenting models describes your parents while you were growing up? What are some false beliefs about God that may have resulted from your parents’ impact on your life?

Question: When you see God, do you see Him with your father’s or your mother’s face?

Engaging God: Begin seeking God to reveal to you how your parents have shaped what you believe about God.

Key Point: It would be very easy at this point to blame your false beliefs about God on your parents. I caution you to not do that. If your parents were not walking in and parenting from God’s truth, then they were only passing along the false beliefs that they learned from their parents. I am not excusing their fleshly behaviors towards you. They were simply living out of those fleshly behaviors because they did not live from Christ as their Life.

My Personal False Beliefs About God Based On An Abusive and Authoritarian Father

In addition to being an abusive father, my father was an authoritarian one. As I mentioned before, things had to be done his way. He was totally in control. He was detached from his emotions, and he was not able to have any degree of intimacy with me or my siblings. He was much more interested in compliance than in relationship.

My father set bars of expectations that I had to jump over and when I didn’t, I was made to feel unworthy, inadequate, and rejectable. His verbal, emotional, and physical abuse flowed out of his being authoritarian. Therefore, when I became a Christian and someone referred to God as
the Father, you can only imagine how my upbringing by my earthly father impacted my beliefs about my heavenly Father.

The truth is that I put my earthly father’s face on my heavenly Father. As a result, these were some of the things that I believed about God early on in my Christian walk:

- God was angry with me and judging me.
- I needed to perform for God (evangelize, get involved in ministry, etc.) so that He would love and accept me.
- I needed to follow the rules (keep the law) so that God wouldn’t get mad at me.
- God did not really care about me personally. He only wanted obedience.
- If I didn’t measure up to what I was told that God expected of me, I would feel unworthy, condemned and a failure as a Christian.
- God could not possibly love me or be good because of all that He let happen between me and my dad.
- God was not to be trusted.

Some of you may be able to relate to my false beliefs. The result of my false beliefs was that initially I worked very hard for God and did whatever I thought it took to please Him. I tried to follow all His rules, because like with my earthly dad, I believed there would be a price to pay for breaking the rules. For the most part, I felt that I did not measure up to the standards that I thought God had for me, so I lived most of the time in self-condemnation.

**How Abuse, Verbal and Non-Verbal Messages, and/or Negative Circumstances Negatively Impact What You Believe About God**

Whether it was abuse, negative verbal and non-verbal messages, divorce, or other wounding events, they all can have a negative impact on your concept of God. Let me share some examples to help you better understand this truth.

**ABUSE**

**Sexual abuse** – can lead you to believe God is not safe and that He does not value your life.

**Emotional abuse** – can distort your concept of God by believing that He is angry with you, will condemn you or will reject you.

**Physical abuse** – can lead you to believe or feel that God will punish you when you step out of line or that He is stern and demanding.

**Question:** What false beliefs about God do you feel that you have as a result of your abuse?

**NEGATIVE VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL MESSAGES**

**Repeated negative verbal or non-verbal messages** – such as “I don’t love you” or “You are a failure” can lead not only to false beliefs about yourself, but they can also lead you to believe that God doesn't love you or that in His eyes you are a failure.
**Question:** What false beliefs about God do you feel that you have as a result of your repeated negative verbal and non-verbal messages?

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

**ADVERSE CIRCUMSTANCES**

**Divorce** – if you parents got divorced while you were young, you may have been left with thoughts and feelings of being unloved or unworthy. These thoughts and feelings could lead to a false belief that God doesn’t love you or value you. If you have been through a divorce yourself, then you could conclude that God did not care enough to save your marriage, or that He condemns you as a failure.

**Premature death of a parent or sibling** – if you lost a parent or sibling at a young age, then you could develop thoughts and feelings of abandonment or you could feel out of control. These thoughts and feelings could distort your image of God by believing that God will eventually abandon you or that God is not in control.

**Question:** What false beliefs about God do you feel that you have as a result of adverse circumstances in your life?

_________________________________________________________________________

**Engaging God:** If you are having trouble connecting these areas listed above to your false beliefs about God, ask Him to reveal your false beliefs.

**Relating Your Woundedness To Your Concept of God**

The following exercise is another way that will help determine how you really feel about or what you believe about God. The key is to write down honest answers based on how you feel or what you think. (Not the theologically correct answers.) It also might be helpful as you complete this exercise to think back to your wounding events in order to more honestly answer these questions.

1. When I think about God, I feel___________________________________________.

2. In my relationship with God, I really wish that He ____________________________

3. The thing that frustrates me most about God is______________________________

4. When it comes to trusting God, I __________________________________________

5. If I could change one thing in my relationship with God, it would be ____________

________________________________________________________

6. In my relationship with God, I am always sure that He will____________________

________________________________________________________

7. The one thing that I would change about myself to be pleasing to God is ______________
8. The one secret thought about God that I struggle with the most is _________________________

9. The one thing that I am afraid God will do is ________________________________

**Engaging God:** Go back through your answers, and ask God to reveal to you the false beliefs that you may have about Him based upon what you wrote.

**Examples of False Concepts of God**

The following are some examples of false concepts of God:

- **Conditional lover:** “I feel He only loves me if I do something for Him.”
- **A traffic cop:** “I feel God is always waiting to punish me when I break the rules.”
- **Distant or cold:** “I feel He doesn’t make Himself truly available to be intimate with me.”
- **A taskmaster:** “I feel God expects me to do certain things, and I better do them or else.”
- **Not Good:** “He always acts unkindly towards me.”
- **A harsh judge:** “I feel He punishes or threatens to punish me when I don’t do the right things.”
- **Unforgiving:** “I feel I can’t approach Him easily because He still holds against me things I have done in the past.”
- **A rejector:** “I feel eventually God will reject me like everyone else has.”
- **A manipulator:** “I feel He controls the events of my life, not for my good but to get me to do what He selfishly wants.”
- **Indifferent:** “I feel He doesn’t really want to be close to me.”
- **Unaccepting:** “I feel I can never quite measure up to His expectations of me with the result that He rejects me or finds me unacceptable.”
- **Angry:** “I feel He is angry with me when I make mistakes and sin.”
- **Not trustworthy:** “I feel I can’t trust Him because of what He allowed to happen to me.”
- **Not a protector:** “I feel He really won’t protect me.”

**Exercise:** Write down any of the above false beliefs about God that you feel apply to you.

**How Woundedness Impacts Your Soul and Your Beliefs About God**

In the last lesson, we learned about the body, soul, and human spirit. Using that same illustration, let’s look at how woundedness negatively impacts your mind, emotions, and will.
MIND – As we mentioned earlier, abuse, wounding events, verbal and non-verbal messages, etc. can create false thinking and false beliefs about God.

EMOTIONS – Our emotions tend to line up with our false beliefs about God. Examples of those emotions are that we fear God (in an unhealthy way), we are angry with God, or feel condemned by God.

WILL – as a responder to the false beliefs that we think and believe about God and our emotions associated with those false beliefs, our will chooses to doubt, distrust, or simply not believe God.

FLESHLY BEHAVIORS – such as anger, unforgiveness of the one who wounded you, and seeking revenge will result from your false beliefs about God.

The Overflow Of Your False Beliefs About God

Let’s look at what flows out of your false beliefs about God as a result of your woundedness.

1. Leads to UNBELIEF.

“As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew, and were not walking with Him anymore.”

John 6:66
False beliefs about God will eventually lead to unbelief. For example, if I believe that God is condemning me, then I won’t believe He will ever heal me. If I believe that God is insensitive and uncaring, then I won’t believe He will comfort me in my woundedness.

**Exercise:** Using your answers from the section on False Concepts of God on page 98-99, fill in the following blanks below:

Since I believe that God is ____________________________,
then I don’t believe that God ____________________________

Since I believe that God is ____________________________,
then I don’t believe that God ____________________________

**Engaging God:** Seek the Lord to transform you in the areas where you struggle believing God. Ask Him to renew your mind to the truth and move you from unbelief to belief.

## 2. You become DISTRUSTFUL of God

False beliefs as a result of woundedness can lead you to distrust God. If you believe that from your woundedness that God is not safe or secure or in control, then you may not trust God to heal you of your woundedness.

**Exercise:** Fill in the following blanks if you struggle with trusting God:

Because of my woundedness and resultant false beliefs I don’t trust God to ____________________________

**Engaging God:** Seek the Lord to transform you from distrusting Him to the truth that He is trustworthy.

## 3. You can develop an UNHEALTHY FEAR of God

We need to understand that there are two kinds of fear when it comes to fearing God. One definition of “fear” is defined as a “reverence and awe” of God. This is a healthy fear in that this flows from believing the truth about God. Look at an example of this healthy fear in the first part of Genesis 22:12:

“You who fear the **Lord,** praise Him; All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him, And stand in **awe** of Him, all you descendants of Israel.” Psalm 22:23

However, there is an unhealthy fear of God which flows from your false beliefs about God. For example, if you have been physically abused, you may be fearful that God will punish and condemn you like your abuser did. This unhealthy fear is driven by your false beliefs and can feed on itself by creating even greater fears about God.
Exercise: Fill in the following blanks below:

Because of my woundedness and resultant false beliefs, I am fearful that God

Engaging God: Begin entrusting those fears to God and ask Him to root out all the unhealthy fears you have about Him.

4. Leads to DOUBTING God

“And He (Jesus) said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?” Luke 24:38

I believe that unbelief, distrust, and fear of God eventually lead us to doubting God. What are some doubts about God that we might develop from our woundedness?

Because of my woundedness, I doubt that God:

• Is for me.
• Is good.
• Is loving.
• Is trustworthy.
• Is safe.
• Is in control.
• Is able and willing to heal me.

Exercise: Fill in the following blanks below.

Because of my woundedness and resultant false beliefs I doubt that God

Engaging God: Begin asking God to replace your doubt with the truth that God is really who He says He is and will do what He promises to do.

The Result of Living From Unbelief, Distrust, Fear, Doubt Towards God

The diagram on the next page illustrates the process of moving from unbelief to eventually turning back to self.
UNBELIEF

DISTRUST

FEAR

DOUBT

TURNING BACK TO SELF

The result of living from UNBELIEF, DISTRUST, FEAR, and DOUBT towards God is going back to yourself as the SOURCE to try to COPE with your woundedness.

When you no longer believe in God, or distrust, fear, or doubt Him, then your only option is to try to heal yourself or simply cope with the pain of your woundedness. Coping with your woundedness is another way of saying that it is up to you, independent of God, to deal with your woundedness. In Lesson Two, we talked about some of the ways you’ve chosen to cope, such as stuffing your woundedness, denial, escape, etc.

As we discussed in Lesson One, there is only one Source from which to be healed and that is God. However, if you live out of your false beliefs about God and turn away from Him as the Source for healing, then no true healing can take place. This could eventually lead to despair and hopelessness. This creates a dilemma, doesn’t it?

If you turn AWAY from God for healing, then you have turned your back on the ONLY One who can heal you.
In order to get past this dilemma, it is crucial that you seek God (as difficult as that may be for some) so He will supernaturally replace your false beliefs about Him—and the resultant unbelief, distrust, fear, and doubt—with His truth.

**Engaging God:** If you feel stuck because you are struggling with unbelief, fears, distrust, or doubts about God, ask Him to renew your mind to the truth about Him and set you free. Remember, this is usually a process that takes place over time.

**The Overflow of Going Back To Self**

In addition to coping with your woundedness, there is another problem with going back to self:

**Going back to self will keep you LOCKED INTO your FLESHLY behaviors flowing from your woundedness.**

Think about the fleshly behaviors flowing out of your woundedness. It may be frustration, anger, unforgiveness, etc. If we don't allow the Holy Spirit to transform our false beliefs about God, then we remain imprisoned to the very behaviors we want to be set free from. Therefore, the truth is that:

**Turning back to self to be the source is NOT an option if you want to be FREE.**

**Engaging God:** If you feel tempted to give up on God and turn back to self, ask the Lord to show you the death that comes with that, especially in the area of your fleshly behaviors.

**EXPECTATIONS Versus The TRUTH About God And Your Woundedness**

“From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ‘Never, Lord!’ he said. ‘This shall never happen to you!’” Matthew 16:21, 22

Like Peter in the verse above, we all have expectations of God based either on God’s truth or our expectations concerning what we believe about God. For example, God says that He is good, that He loves us, and that He is in control. If He really is all of those things, we ask: “Why didn’t He intervene or prevent these wounding events from occurring?” When God does not meet our expectations, we tend to doubt His goodness, His love, and His sovereignty.

The questions we need to ask ourselves are: “Are our expectations of God realistic or unrealistic? What is the difference?” Expectations based on the truth are what I call “realistic” expectations and expectations based on our false beliefs are what I call “unrealistic expectations.” An example of an unrealistic expectation is in the verse above. Peter’s unrealistic expectation was that Jesus would not be crucified because he had a false belief that Jesus would become the king of Israel.
Therefore, I would like to explore three unrealistic expectations about God concerning our woundedness that I hear most often.

1. **Expectation #1: God Should Not Have Let This Happen To Me If He Is In CONTROL.**

“The Lord has established His throne in the heavens, and His sovereignty rules over all.” Psalm 103:19

If you have been wounded in the past but believe that God is sovereign, then you might have the expectation that since God is sovereign and in control, He could have prevented this (these) wounding events

a. **The truth is that God IS sovereign and IN control**

   So that we are all on the same page, let’s start by looking at how Webster's Dictionary defines *sovereign:* One who is “possessed of supreme power, unlimited in extent, and one who is free from external control.” To say that God is sovereign is to say that He is the absolute King over all of creation, that He has absolute power over all, and that He is in control of all that happens in the universe.

   “Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty; indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Yours is the dominion, O Lord, and You exalt Yourself as head over all.” 1 Chronicles 29:11

   “For I know that the Lord is great, and that our Lord is above all gods. Whatever the Lord pleases, He does, in heaven and in earth. . .” Psalm 135:5-6

   Now that we have established that God is in control, then let’s answer the question of why He allowed the wounding events in your life to take place.

b. **If God is in control, then why did He ALLOW these wounding events to take place?**

   The answer to this question begins with the following truth:

   **Even though God is in control, He gives man FREE WILL to CHOOSE how he will live.**

   One of the greatest debates in Christianity is where God’s sovereignty ends and man’s free will begins. The truth is that God is always sovereign, and man always has the free will to choose. We understand this when we look back at Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden before the Fall. In Genesis 2:16, 17 we see that God gave man a choice:

   “The Lord God commanded the man, saying, ‘From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.’” Genesis 2:16, 17

   The choice was that Adam and Eve could eat of every tree in the Garden but one. If they ate of that one tree, they would die spiritually. We know how this choice played out in Genesis 3:6:
“When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.”

God could have prevented Adam and Eve from eating of the tree; however, since He gave man free choice, He did not prevent this from happening. The result was not only spiritual death for Adam and Eve, but it meant that you and I were born into a fallen world. However, what would the result have been if God hadn’t given us free will choice?

If God did not give man free will choice, then we would be like ROBOTS or PUPPETS on a string being totally controlled by God.

Let’s take another look at Adamic DNA that we all inherited from Adam.

DNA of Being IN Adam

IN ADAM
Self-Condemnation
Unworthiness
Insecurity
Inadequacy
Rejection
Guilt
Shame
Fear

As we discussed, we were all (including the one(s) who wounded you born with this DNA. In addition, we were all born with fleshly behaviors. Our Adamic DNA combined with our inherent fleshly behaviors, make a toxic combination. In spite of that, God still allowed man to make free
will decisions. “Consequently,” those who wounded you chose to live from their Adamic DNA and fleshly behaviors with the result that they wounded you.

Another key thing to remember is that those who wounded you most likely did not know the truths that you are learning and therefore were living out of their flesh instead of living from the Spirit. I am in no way condoning what they did in creating your woundedness. I am only saying that God allowed them to make free will choices that unfortunately created woundedness in you.

The truth is that God IS in control but even in His sovereignty,
He allows man to have FREE WILL.

**Question:** How does this explanation resonate in your heart? Does it answer the question of God’s sovereignty and man’s free will choice? Does this help you understand that even though God is in control, He allows man to make free will choices that include wounding others like yourself?

**Engaging God:** If you are still struggling with God’s sovereignty and man’s free will concerning your woundedness, ask the Lord to give you understanding and revelation.

2. Expectation #2: If God Is A God of LOVE, Then Why Would He Allow Wounding Events To Take Place?

I often hear this question because of our expectations concerning what a loving God will do or not do. It is only natural to think that if God loves you then how could He allow these wounding events to take place? Before we answer that question, let’s look at some basic truths about God’s love.

**a. Key Truths About God’s Love**

1. Truth #1 – God in His ESSENCE is love.

“God is love” 1 John 4:16

A light bulb can only emit light. Its essence determines its function. It was designed to emit light, and that is the source of its function. This is its makeup. So too with God. 1 John 4:16 says that God is love. It is His essence. Therefore, God by His very nature loves you because love is Who He is. He can’t NOT love you, as His child, because His very being embodies love.

2. Truth #2 - God has loved you for [delete “an”] ETERNITY!

“Long ago, even before He made the world, God loved us (you) and chose us (you) in Christ...” (parentheses mine). Ephesians 1:4 (NLT)

According to this scripture, the truth is that God has loved you for eternity. His love for you stretches from eternity past through the present and to eternity future. Can you imagine God’s anticipation and excitement when you were born so that you could experience the unconditional love that He has loved you with for eternity? Not only has He loved you for eternity, but He also created you to be your unique self. Look at Psalm 139:13-16 to confirm this:
“For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother’s womb. I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Your works, And my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth; Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; And in Your book were all writtenThe days that were ordained for me,When as yet there was not one of them.” Psalm 139:13-16

**God’s love for you is so great in that at conception there were approximately 500 million possible genetic combinations, and God chose YOU to be the unique person that you are!**

3. Truth #3 - You can NEVER be separated from His love.

“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:38, 39

Some Christians believe that they can do something to lose their salvation or can do something to separate themselves from God’s love. That “something” usually comes in the form of sin. However, that is why God died for your sin so that sin is no longer a barrier to His love. Romans 8:38, 39 destroys that lie. There is NOTHING that you can do (or not do) to separate you from His love. Therefore, you can never lose your salvation or be separated from His love.

4. Truth #4 - God is PURSUING you with His love.

“Surely, goodness and unfailing love will pursue me all the days of my life.” Psalm 23:6

Psalm 23:6 tells you that God’s love towards you is not passive. He is actively pursuing you with His love every moment of your life. He will not stop until He has totally captured you with His love. When I think of a pursuing love, I remember when I was dating my wife. I was pursuing her intentionally and intensely with my love. Infinitely more than we can pursue someone with our love, God is pursuing you with His. God’s greatest desire is for you to understand and experience His love in full measure (Ephesians 3:16-19).

5. Truth #5 - God’s love is UNCONDITIONAL.

Many Christians struggle with the truth that God unconditionally loves them. The main reason for this is that we, as humans, cannot and do not love one another unconditionally. However, God can and does love you unconditionally.

What does it mean that God loves you unconditionally?

- God’s love does not change towards you based upon what you do (or do not do).
- Even if you decide to walk away from God, He still loves you.
- When you are angry, upset, or frustrated with God, He still loves you.
• Even when you sin, God loves you. (Remember that He does not condone sin, but that does not change His love for you.)

Micah 7:18 refers to God’s love as “unchanging”:

“Who is a God like You, who pardons iniquity and passes over the rebellious act of the remnant of His possession? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in unchanging love.”

David calls it unfailing love in Psalm 25:6:

“Remember, O Lord, your unfailing love and compassion, which you have shown from long ages past.”

“Praise the Lord, for he has shown me the wonders of His unfailing love...” Psalm 3:21

b. If God Loves Me Then, Why Did He ALLOW My Woundedness To Take Place?

I would initially like to answer this question with the following thought:

We try to compare God’s love with man’s definition of love.

Defining God’s love according to man’s definition leads us to compare the two. We must realize that God’s love does look much different from how we perceive human love. The problem is that we, in our finite minds, are trying to understand why God’s love can allow wounding events in our lives and in the lives of others.

If we define God’s love on our terms, this can lead to doubt and distrust of God. It can limit how we see God, and it prevents us from understanding] Him as He really is. Satan/demons can use our definition of love to build a case against trusting a God who does not meet our definition of love. I believe there is no better way to understand God’s definition of love than to look at the crucifixion of Jesus. Could we not ask the question: “How could a loving God allow His Son to die in such a horrific way?”

God the Father, in His love for Jesus, could have prevented His Son from being crucified. However, He did not. He allowed sinful man to make a free will choice to crucify a totally righteous person who did nothing to deserve crucifixion. Can you imagine the immense pain the Father must have felt watching the nails pierce His dear Son’s hands? How must He have felt as His Son agonized for hours on the cross, dying a slow, painful death, taking on the whole sins of the world (you and me). Even as much love as the Father had for Jesus, He still allowed man to wound and kill His Son. The same is true for you

God’s unconditional love for you still ALLOWS man to have free will CHOICE even if that choice is a SINFUL choice to wound you.
My friends, our finite minds have a very difficult time comprehending this truth because of our expectations concerning God’s love. However, I trust that in the next section, you will better understand God’s love and His promise concerning your woundedness.

**Question:** Did what you just read give you any clarity or understanding of God’s love for you, man’s free will choice, and your woundedness?

**Engaging God:** If it didn’t, ask the Lord to reconcile His love for you and the person or persons who wounded you.

### 3. Expectation #3: If God Is GOOD And Is FOR ME, Then Why Did He Allow These Wounding Events To Take Place

**a. The Truth Is That God Is GOOD And Is FOR You.**

“I am the **good** shepherd; the **good** shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.” John 10:11

“What then shall we say to these things? If **(Since) God is for us**, who is against us?” Romans 8:31 (parenthesis mine)

God says in Romans 8:31 that He is **for** YOU! The word “if” in Romans 8:31 is translated “since.” Here are some other examples of God’s goodness and proof that He is for you:

1. Christ died for all of your sins. 1 Peter 3:18 (This includes past, present, and even future sins.)
2. He has **removed your sins** as far as the east is from the west. Psalm 103:12
3. He **set you free from the power of sin and death.** Romans 8:2
4. He **gave you His life.** Romans 8:11; 1 John 5:11, 12
5. He **put the fullness of Himself into you** at salvation **to restore the relationship with you.** Colossians 2:9, 10
6. He put His life in you so that you **no longer must be the source for living life.**
   2 Corinthians 5:15; John 14:6
7. He **crucified your old identity and gave you a new identity.** Romans 6:6;
   2 Corinthians 5:17
8. He **joined His Spirit with your human spirit.** 1 Corinthians 6:17
9. He **placed the fullness of His power** in you to transform you. Ephesians 1:19, 20
10. He is in continuous process of working in us **to replace the lies with His truth and to restore our soul.** Philippians 2:13; Romans 12:2; Psalm 23:3
11. He is **conforming us to the image of His Son.** Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18
12. He is **available at every moment to meet our every need.** Philippians 4:19

**b. If God Is Good and Is For Me, Then Why Did He Allow These Wounding Events In My Life?**

I would like to begin answering this question with this key truth:

> **What happened to you to cause your woundedness was NOT good.**

> **However, God promises to take this very bad things that happened to you and work them together for GOOD.**
“And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.” Romans 8:28

I am sure that you probably have read or heard this verse before. However, I believe that this is one of the most misunderstood verses in the Bible. Why? It is because we don't truly understand the word “good” in this verse.

I would like to go back to the crucifixion to explain what the word “good” means. None of us would call our Lord’s crucifixion a “good” thing; but what was the “good” that God worked out from His horrific death? Eternal life for anyone who trusts in Jesus for salvation; His life for you and me. Based on the “good” that came from the cross, do you believe that it is possible for God to work your woundedness together for “good”?

I know this is a very hard but crucial truth to understand, especially if you are experiencing deep-seated woundedness. Like Jesus, you would rather have not gone through what you went through. However, also like Jesus, God promises to work your woundedness together for good.

One of the Greek translations for the word “good” is the word “benefit.” The application of this verse is that God is capable of taking the events that have caused you woundedness and using them for your benefit. Let’s look at three benefits that result from God’s healing process.

**BENEFIT #1 – God will use your woundedness to PERSUADE you of your need to depend on Him as Your SOURCE for healing rather than depending on yourself.**

“...I am THE WAY...” John 14:6a

“Come to Me....”Matthew 11:28a

When Jesus says that He is The Way, one of the ways He fulfills this verse is to be The Way to your healing. He will use your woundedness to reveal your need to depend on Him moment by moment as your Source for healing. Why? It is because there is no other source outside of Christ whereby you can be healed. And after you are healed, Christ is the only Source by which to live your life.

**BENEFIT #2 - God uses your woundedness to expose your false beliefs about yourself and to transform you into your TRUE IDENTITY.**

In the last lesson we discussed how woundedness produces false beliefs about yourself. However, the “good” is the truth that you now know your true identity and no longer have to stay stuck in those false beliefs. In addition, the “good” is that God promises to transform you to believe your true identity and to set you free from your false beliefs.

**Would you call it GOOD if you were transformed through your woundedness to experience your TRUE Identity in Christ?**
BENEFIT #3 – God will set you free from your fleshly behaviors.

“It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.” Galatians 5:1

Another benefit is that the Lord will set you free from the fleshly behaviors that flow out of your woundedness. He can set you free from your anger, insecurities, unforgiveness, etc. Can you imagine what that kind of freedom must feel like? It can happen and will happen as you seek God to heal your heart.

BENEFIT #4 – God WILL heal you.

“...He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted...” Luke 4:18

“He who began a good work in you WILL perfect it (accomplish it) until the day of Christ Jesus.” Philippians 1:6 (emphasis and parenthesis mine)

“The Lord WILL accomplish what concerns me; Your lovingkindness, O Lord, is everlasting ...” Psalm 138:8 (emphasis mine)

The ultimate good or benefit that God will work together is that He will heal your woundedness as you seek Him to do so. Healing will, for most people, be a process but God’s promise of healing can become an experiential reality if you persist in seeking Him and applying His truth.

Question: Has this section helped you to better understand God’s love, man’s free will, and the “good” that God promises to work in the healing of your woundedness?

Engaging God: If not, ask the Lord to give you divine understanding of Romans 8:28.

The “Good” That Came Out Of My Woundedness

Before I understood God’s pathway to healing, there were many times that I would shake my fist at God and ask Him: “Why did you let this happen to me?” I would recount in my mind all these terrible wounding events that took place and get angrier and angrier. Can you imagine how hardened my heart was after 48 years of anger? I would read Romans 8:28 but I could not understand how God could work all my woundedness for good. However, when I began to understand what it meant for Christ to live His life in me, that is when things began to change.

On my road to healing, I learned that part of my father’s abuse of me resulted from his dad’s abuse of him. I was stunned when I heard about the horrible abuse that my dad suffered from his dad. The “generational” sins of his father were definitely passed down to me. Trust me; I am not excusing my dad’s abuse. It was sin. However, God gave me one of the answers to my “why” questions when I realized that even though my dad was a Christian, he was never taught about The Life we have in Christ. Therefore, no transformation ever took place with the result that he lived his entire life out of his angry, controlling, and abusive flesh. My dad was like anyone else who is not being transformed into Christ-likeness. They will remain in bondage to wherever their fleshly behaviors may take them. Part of God’s “good” for me was His gift of divine understanding of what drove my dad’s anger and abusive flesh.
As I shared with you in the last lesson, part of God’s “good” was to expose my false beliefs about my false identity that I was inadequate, unloved, and rejected. Instead, He transformed me to believe that in my true identity in Christ, I am adequate, loved, and accepted. This supernatural transformation did more for me than anything else could have done to enable me to understand God’s sovereignty, His love, man’s free will choice, and God’s “good.”

Finally, God showed me His goodness by healing and transforming my heart to a point that I was able to forgive my dad. That truly was a “Red Sea” experience that convinced me that God is good and is for me. It was through the healing and the freedom that the Lord produced that I realized that God is a loving God even though He allowed the abuse to take place.

**Another Example of God’s Divine Good**

I would like to go back to the story about the man whose fiancée was killed the day before his wedding and share with you the “good” that came out of that. As I mentioned, when he came to me, he was very angry with God and had stayed angry for 15 years. However, that did not change the fact that God could and eventually did work this whole situation for good. Over time, God persuaded this man that even though He allowed this event to take place, He loved him and was in no way trying to punish him. It was truly supernatural to watch the Lord open this man’s eyes to the truth of God’s love and goodness. Out of this terrible tragedy came an understanding and experience of God’s love that this man had never experienced before.

I want to end this section with the following truth, especially if you are still struggling with the truths we have discussed so far in this lesson:

```
Regardless of how you feel or what you believe that does NOT line up with the
truth about God, this does NOT change the fact that God’s truth is true.

The key is to DEPEND on God to REVEAL to you, to give you DIVINE
UNDERSTANDING and to TRANSFORM you so that you will believe the truth.
```

**“The Line” and Believing The Truth About God**

Let’s look at “The Line” analogy to give you a visual understanding of God’s truth versus your woundedness. Above “The Line” we see God’s truth. Below the line, we see the results of our woundedness.
We need to understand from this illustration that as long as we continue to live “below” the line out of our woundedness, we will continue to live in unbelief, distrust, fear, and doubt that God’s truth is true. However, if we walk by faith and depend on God to heal and transform us, we will, over time, begin to believe and live from His truth. Therefore, let’s look at some examples of what it looks like to move from living below the line to living above the line.

**Examples of Moving from The Lies To God’s Truth**

Let’s look at some examples of how we engage God by faith to move us from continuing to live from our woundedness below the line to living from God’s healing above the line.

**EXAMPLE #1:**

**The False Belief:** God does not really love me because He allowed me to be wounded.

**The Truth:** God is a loving God even though He allowed your woundedness.

**Steps of Faith:** “Lord, your Word says that You are a loving God. However, I am doubting how You can be loving and still have allowed my woundedness to take place. I am entrusting my doubt to You and I am asking You to persuade me that You are a loving God even though You allowed me to be wounded.” An illustration of these steps of faith are on the following page.
**EXAMPLE #2:**

**The False Belief:** If God were really in control, He would not have allowed me to be wounded.

**The Truth:** God is in control but He allows man to have free will choice (in your case, to wound you.)

**Steps of Faith:** “Lord, I believe that if you were really in control that You would not have allowed me to be wounded. I am struggling with why You allowed this person to wound me. I am entrusting my belief to you and I am asking You to renew my mind by giving me divine understanding of Your sovereignty and man’s free will choice.”
EXAMPLE #3:

The False Belief: God is not good and He is not for me because He let me be wounded.

The Truth: The fact that God allowed your woundedness does not change the truth that God is good and is for you. However, He will work your woundedness for “good.”

Steps of faith: “Lord, because of my woundedness, I don't believe that you are a good God. I am giving that false belief over to You and I am asking You to move me from unbelief to believing that You will work my woundedness for good, (i.e., see You as my Source for healing; walk in my true identity, and experience true healing taking place.)”
I hope these three examples have given you a glimpse of what it looks like to take steps of faith to move from living below the line.

**How Will You Know That Healing Is Taking Place?**

As you take steps of faith, God will be working in your life to persuade you of the truth about Himself. Below are some ways that God confirms in you that He is healing you and transforming you:

1. As your mind is being renewed, you begin to live more and more above the line and think and believe God’s truth about Himself rather than believing your false beliefs.

2. How you feel about God will begin to line up with His truth.

3. Your will begins to make choices based upon the truth of what you are now thinking and feeling about God.

4. As you begin to experience supernatural transformation, God will transform your fleshly attitudes and behaviors into Christ-like behaviors.

5. You will begin to experience healing from your woundedness.
6. You will discover growth in your Christ-confidence in God’s ability and willingness to heal you and to transform your life.

7. You will find yourself increasingly being stunned, overwhelmed, and in awe of this loving, gracious, and merciful God that lives within you.

The following illustration shows how your soul is transformed as you begin to believe the truth about God:

**The Line Illustration and the Transformation of Your Soul**

In the following line illustration, you will see that as you take steps of faith, you release the Holy Spirit’s power to transform your soul to believe that God loves you, is good, is for you, will work your woundedness together for good, and will heal you.
Summary

For some of you, this is a very difficult lesson. I understand. The truths in this lesson were hard for me to swallow in the beginning. However, as you begin the process of taking steps of faith, God will persuade you of the truth over time.
Exercises That The Lord May Use To Expose Your False Beliefs and Move You From Living From Your False Beliefs To Living From The Truth

I would encourage you to go through the following exercises. I trust that the Lord will use them to expose your false beliefs and make you willing to take steps of faith to move from your false beliefs to the truth about God.

**Exercise #1: Who Is God To You?**

Below are verses that describe who God is to you. Before you read these verses, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal God’s truths that you do not feel are really true as they apply to you.

**Genesis 15:1** He is your shield (defense) and your very great reward.
**Jeremiah 32:17** Nothing is too difficult for Him.
**Ephesians 3:20** He is able to do immeasurably more than all you can think or ask.
**Romans 8:31** If God is for you, who can be against you?
**Romans 8:38-39** Nothing in all creation can separate you from His love.
**John 17:23** He loves you as much as He loves Jesus.
**Isaiah 40:12-31** He is absolutely sovereign and knows the end from the beginning.
**Isaiah 46:3-10** His purposes will stand.
**Psalm 103** His love for you is greater than the height of the heavens above the earth. He's removed our sins from us and has compassion on us as a loving father on a son or a daughter.
**Hebrews 13:5** He will never ever leave you nor forsake you.
**Psalm 86:15** He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, and abounding in love and faithfulness.

**Matthew 11:29** He is gentle, tender, and humble in heart. He gives you rest for your soul.
**Ephesians 3:16-19** His love for you is beyond your natural mind's ability to grasp it.
**Colossians 3:12** He has chosen you and loves you dearly.

**Psalm 23** He is your shepherd. He guides you and supplies all your needs.
**John 10:14-15** He restores your soul.
**Psalm 25:3 & Romans 10:11** No one who puts their hope in Him will be put to shame or be disappointed.
**Psalm 86:5** He is kind, forgiving, and abounding in love to all who call upon Him.
**John 3:1** He has made you His own child.

**I Corinthians 1:25** His "foolishness" is wiser than man's wisdom.
**Philippians 4:19** He meets all of your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ.
**Ephesians 1:3** He has blessed you with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ.
**Psalm 91** He is your shelter, your refuge, and your fortress.
**Psalm 34:15** His eyes are upon you, and His ears are open to your cry.
**Psalm 34:18** He is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.
**John 6:37** Whoever comes to Him, He will not cast out.
**Psalm 37:23-24** Though you stumble, He upholds you with His hand.
**Proverbs 19:21** & He is absolutely sovereign, and your interests are safe with Him.
**I Corinthians 6:17** He has joined Himself with you.
**Psalm 62:8** He is your refuge and the One to whom you can always pour out your heart.
**Isaiah 54:17** He will not allow any weapon which is formed against you to prevail.
**Exercise:** Write down three of the above truths about God that you don’t really feel or believe are true for you.

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

Engaging God: Entrust your lying beliefs to God and ask Him to persuade you that what He says about who He is to you is the truth.

**Exercise #2: Your False Beliefs About God and The Results Of Your False Beliefs**

**I Feel/Believe that God IS:**

a. The cause of my woundedness  
b. Cold and distant  
c. Judging me  
d. Angry or unhappy with me  
e. Condemning me  
f. Indifferent  
g. Out of control  
h. Like my earthly father in that_______________________________________________

i. Like my earthly mother in that______________________________________________

**Exercise:** Choose those feelings/beliefs that you believe about God and write them below.

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

I Feel/Believe That God ISN’T:

1. Safe  
2. Loving  
3. Compassionate  
4. Secure  
5. Willing  
6. Merciful  
7. Trustworthy  
8. Caring  
9. Able  
10. Sovereign  
11. ____________________________

12. ____________________________

**Exercise:** Choose those feeling/beliefs above that you believe are true and write them below.
This makes me FEEL that:

1. I will never be healed.
2. I am not loved.
3. I am not acceptable.
4. I am not worthy.
5. I am not secure.
6. I am condemned.
7. I have to try to heal myself.
8. I don’t matter.
9. ________________________________
10. ________________________________

Exercise: Choose those feeling/beliefs above that you believe are true and write them below.

As a result of my false beliefs, I DON’T:

1. Believe that He will heal me.
2. Trust Him.
3. Want a relationship with Him.
4. Want to give Him my woundedness and false beliefs.
5. Surrender my unrealistic expectations about Him.
6. Want to believe the truth.
7. Believe He will______________________

Exercise: Choose those results above that apply to you.

Exercise #3: Moving You From The Lies To The Truth

I am entrusting my false beliefs that I have about my HEAVENLY Father that He is:

1. Distant and disinterested.
2. Insensitive and uncaring.
3. Passive and cold.
4. Not caring and compassionate.
5. Able or willing to heal me.
6. Condemning or unforgiving.
8. Impatient or angry.
9. ________________________________
Exercise: Choose what you are going to trust God to do and begin taking steps of faith for Him to renew your mind to His truth.

I am trusting my heavenly Father to renew my mind to the truth that He is:

1. Loving
2. Kind and compassionate.
3. Sensitive and can empathize with my pain.
4. Good.
5. Willing to heal me.
6. For me.
7. Accepting of me.
8. Trustworthy.
9. In control.
10. ________________________________
11. ________________________________

Exercise: Choose what you are going to trust God to do and begin taking steps of faith for Him to renew your mind to His truth.
Lesson Five

Satan’s Strategies Concerning Woundedness

Forgiveness

Satan’s Strategies Concerning Woundedness

Introduction

(Note: In this lesson, when I refer to ‘Satan,’ I am also including all the demons under his evil control.)

I believe that we need to spend some time learning about the part that Satan and his demonic forces play in preventing you from being healed of your woundedness. The key to this section is learning the truth about Satan’s strategies so that we can engage God to do battle with him. Why?

Because Satan’s greatest fear is that:

- You will learn God’s truth.
- You will believe God’s truth.
- You will engage God for Him to transform you and heal you with His truth.

You see, Satan knows God’s word (probably better than most Christians). He knows how the Christian life works, all about your woundedness, and the truth about God’s healing process. Therefore, Satan/demons will do everything within their power to keep you from knowing, believing, and living from God’s truth in order to keep you imprisoned in your woundedness.

Why wouldn't he since the Lord told us that Satan has a three-fold strategy concerning you and me. That strategy is to:

**STEAL, KILL, and DESTROY**

*John 10:10a*

Let’s apply Satan’s/demons’ strategy to your woundedness:

**Steal** – Satan wants to try to steal all that you have in Christ, e.g, healing, transformation, forgiveness, etc.

**Kill** – Satan wants to kill your spiritual momentum to prevent your healing and to cause you to resist God’s healing process.

**Destroy** – Satan knows that if he can keep you in bondage to your woundedness, it will slowly destroy (poison) your relationship with God, your marriage, your family, and most importantly, with you yourself.

Satan will stop at nothing to keep you in bondage to your woundedness and the false beliefs
and fleshly behaviors that are tied to your woundedness. They are strategizing non-stop to keep you locked away in your “soulical” prisons so that you will continue to live from the pain, misery, and hopelessness that those prison cells create. This is part of the “devouring” that Peter refers to in 1 Peter 5:8:

“Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.” 1 Peter 5:8

Satan knows that if you resist God’s healing process, you will continue being “stuck” and will eventually lose your spiritual momentum to seek the Holy Spirit for healing. Therefore, we will first look at seven strategies Satan uses to keep us in bondage to our woundedness. Then we will apply God’s truth to these strategies and look at steps of faith on how to engage God to “devour” Satan.

1. STRATEGY #1 - Satan helped you MISINTERPRET the messages you were hearing as a young person and TIE those messages to your fleshly behaviors.

I believe Satan start the minute you are born to help you interpret the messages you heard from your parents, siblings, friends, etc. Here is why:

**Kids are the world’s best RECORDERS but they are NOT able to INTERPRET what they are recording.**

I believe that Satan interpret for children both verbal and non-verbal messages. Part of their interpretation includes attaching these messages to your Adamic DNA. If you received mostly negative messages, then it was very easy for the enemy to attach those messages to your Adamic DNA of guilt, shame, self-condemnation, etc. Satan can also interpret the positive messages by distorting them similarly to what I shared concerning the Asian pastor who received positive messages from his dad but misinterpreted them causing him to believe that he was inadequate as a pastor.

Satan interpreted your messages by inserting thoughts into your mind that were tied to your fleshly behaviors. Let’s use a positive message as an example. Let’s say that your dad said to you when you were young, “You did a good job.” Let’s assume that you have perfectionistic tendencies. The enemy might insert the messages: “I could have done better” or “I wanted him to say that I did a ‘great job.’” Buying into these kinds of messages could leave you feeling “less than” or inadequate. If these messages continue to be falsely interpreted, this is the result:

**Over time these FALSELY INTERPRETED messages can evolve into FALSE BELIEFS about yourself and CREATE woundedness.**

This is why it is so critical that parents learn Biblical truths and convey them to their kids to counteract the work of the enemy in their kids’ minds.

**Engaging God:** Ask the Lord to reveal to you any misinterpreted messages from your youth that might have created false beliefs about yourself.
2. **STRATEGY #2** - Keep **REPLAYING past wounding events in your mind** to **REINFORCE** or **THICKEN** the walls of your prison cell of woundedness.

The old expression concerning woundedness is “forget and forgive.” We will talk about forgiveness later in this lesson. However, the truth is that, for the most part, you will not forget your wounding events. Why? These memories are permanently stored in your brain. They are like photos on your cell phone or computer that are always there and readily available.

Satan’s strategy is to keep bringing up those memories and the feelings surrounding them like a non-stop running slide show. He knows that if you keep taking ownership of the thoughts and feelings surrounding your wounding events, then you will never be healed.

**Question:** Do you find yourself replaying the wounding events over and over again? Is it possible that the source of those recurring memories could be Satan/demons?

3. **STRATEGY #3** - If you start down the path of spiritual healing, then Satan will pull out ALL the stops to RESIST you and DRAG you back to the prison.

You probably have already discovered that when you started your new journey of living from Christ, you felt resistance from Satan. This is because as long as you live in the “default” position of living from yourself as the source, he has no reason to resist you.

However, when you start learning, believing, and choosing to walk in the truth that Christ is your Source and that the Holy Spirit can heal you, then Satan must resist you because, as we talked about in the introduction, the greatest fear of Satan is that you will learn the truth, engage God to renew your mind to the truth, and eventually be healed. Satan primarily resists you by using the next strategy.

4. **STRATEGY #4** - Satan/demons will INSERT unbelieving, doubting, tempting, fleshly, and condemning THOUGHTS tied to your woundedness.

“Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, ‘God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You.’ But He turned and said to Peter, ‘Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God’s interests, but man’s.’” Matthew 16:22-23

How do we know that Satan can insert thoughts into our minds? The best example of that is Matthew 16:22-23 above. Jesus addressed Satan instead of Peter because He knew the source for inserting those thoughts into Peter’s mind was Satan. Therefore, I believe that Satan’s #1 strategy with believers is to insert thoughts into our minds. These thoughts usually fall into the following categories:

- **UNBELIEVING thoughts.**
- **DOUBTING thoughts.**
- **TEMPTING thoughts.**
- **FLESHLY thoughts.**
- **CONDEMNING thoughts.**

Let’s look at examples of each of these kinds of thoughts the enemy can choose to insert in your mind. Please keep this key truth in mind as you read through this section:
The messages that Satan insert into our minds ALWAYS come in FIRST person.

Satan will never insert a “third” person thought like “You are a failure.” It will always come in first person, “I am a failure.” Having said that, let’s look at examples of these types of thoughts.

a. **Unbelieving thoughts** can be inserted, such as: “I don’t believe that I can ever be healed.” “I can’t let God in because the pain is too great for Him to heal.” “I can’t let God in to heal because His grace is not greater than my pain.” “God’s power is not enough to set me free from the pain, fear, unforgiveness, anger, and inferiority that flows from what happened to me.”

b. **Doubting thoughts** can be inserted, such as: “I doubt that God really cares about my pain?” “I don't think God really is able or willing to heal me and set me free?”

c. **Tempting thoughts** can be inserted, such as: “I need to try harder to heal myself because God is not healing me.” “I might as well give up because I know that I will never be healed.”

d. **Fleshly thoughts** can be inserted, such as: “I have the fleshly right to be __________ (bitter, angry, unforgiving, self-hating, inadequate, etc.) because of what happened to me. My __________ (dad, mom, stepparent, sibling, former spouse, etc.) doesn’t deserve forgiveness for what he/she did to me. I must retaliate.”

e. **Self-Condemning thoughts** can be inserted, such as: “I deserved the __________ (abuse, woundedness, divorce, abandonment, etc.) that I received.” “I am worthless or dirty.” “I am unworthy to be healed by God.”

Here is an illustration of some of the types of thoughts that Satan inserts into our minds.
Exercise: Write down any recurring unbelieving, doubting, tempting, fleshly, and/or self-condemning thoughts.

Engaging God: Ask the Lord to reveal/expose any recurring thoughts that might originate with Satan.

5. STRATEGY #5 - Satan will TEMPT you to keep using your ESCAPE MECHANISMS to try to stop or anesthetize the pain.

We talked in the previous section about how we try to escape or anesthetize our pain. The enemy will “help” you accomplish this by bringing escape mechanisms to mind and tempting you to use them over and over as you try to anesthetize or escape the pain. Ultimately, they want you to turn your escape mechanisms into addictions/strongholds.

Example: Let’s assume that your escape mechanism is overeating. The enemy brings to mind a wounding event and then tempts you to overeat to anesthetize the pain created by the event.

Engaging God: Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any areas where Satan/demons are tempting you to use your escape mechanisms.
6. STRATEGY #6 - Satan will tempt you to stay BUSY to distract you from the pain or from dealing with your woundedness.

This is a subtle but very effective tool. This is one tool that the enemy has tried to use on me for several years. If Satan can keep us focused on staying busy, then we will try to use that busy-ness to distract us from our pain and to keep us from seeking the Lord to heal the woundedness.

**Engaging God:** Ask the Lord to reveal to you if you are using busy-ness to distract or escape the pain of your woundedness.

STRATEGY #7 - Satan will try to keep you in bondage to any UNFORGIVENESS by triggering your FLESHLY RIGHTS.

This strategy is crucial because Satan knows very well that unforgiveness greatly hinders the flow of Christ’s life in us. He knows that unforgiveness is like a poison that creates internal bondage and external fleshly behaviors such as anger, bitterness, etc.

One of the ways the enemy tries to keep us in bondage to unforgiveness is to tempt us to live from our “fleshly rights.” I define fleshly rights as:

| Fleshly behaviors that create TRIGGERS inside you to justify your anger, bitterness, or unforgiveness and justify your right to express these to the ones who have wounded you. |

Here are some examples of fleshly rights concerning woundedness:

**I have the fleshy right to:**

- not forgive my offender
- reject my offender
- be angry and bitter towards my offender.
- not love my offender.

Satan/demons will use wounding events to trigger your fleshly rights. They will do this by bringing the event to mind, reminding you of all the pain the person perpetrated on you and stirring up again and again your right to be angry, bitter, unforgiving, etc.

**Engaging God:** Ask the Lord to expose to you where Satan/demons are “triggering” your fleshly rights to be angry, unforgiving, rejecting, not loving, etc.

**The Line Analogy and Satan’s Strategies**

Now that we better understand Satan’s strategies to keep us in bondage to our woundedness, let’s use the line analogy to illustrate that living below line will keep us in bondage versus living above the line from God’s truth and power.
God’s Truth and Power

Satans’/Demons’ Strategies

REPLAY wounding events.
RESIST your faith walk to healing.
INSERT thoughts into your mind.
TEMPT you to continue to try and escape the pain.
Use BUSY-NESS to distract you or keep you in denial.
Keep you in BONDAGE to your “fleshly rights” to be angry, unforgiving, unloving, rejecting, etc.

Ultimately Satan Wants To Persuade You That Healing Is HOPELESS

As Satan employs these seven strategies, his ultimate objective is to convince you it is hopeless that you will ever be healed. This is one of the reasons that many people, including Christians, commit suicide. They become so hopeless, they believe that healing will never take place and so see no need to continue living. However, even if you are not tempted to take your life, living in hopelessness can be like a living hell. Hopelessness and despair are two sides of the same coin.

Four Key Truths Concerning Satan, You, and Your Woundedness

Now that we have looked at some of Satan’s strategies, let’s turn the corner and look at four key truths concerning Satan. Here is the foundational truth that we need to start with.

1. Satan Has Been DEFEATED

   Satan was DEFEATED at the cross.

   “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall crush you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel.” Genesis 3:15

   In Genesis 3:15 above, when God was speaking to Satan after the Fall of Adam and Eve, He
said, “He shall crush you on the head.” “He” in this verse refers to Jesus and the crushing of Satan’s head refers to the ultimate defeat of Satan which would take place at the crucifixion of Christ. One of the glorious results of Christ’s death on the cross and His resurrection was that Satan and his demonic forces were defeated once and for all.

**Question:** How might it change how you view Satan’s involvement in your woundedness if you truly believed that he has been defeated?

**Engaging God:** If you struggle with believing Satan and his demonic forces have been defeated, ask the Lord to persuade you that this is the truth.

2. **You Have The HOLY SPIRIT’S Power Over Satan In You**

   Since we are fighting an unseen enemy, we can’t possibly fight Satan and his demonic forces. That is why we see in the following verse that we need a power greater than our own to defeat Satan and his strategies.

   “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves.” 2 Corinthians 4:7

   Not only do we need a greater power than our own, Jesus said that He rendered Satan powerless in Hebrews 2:14:

   “Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He (Jesus) might render powerless him (Satan) who had the power of death, that is, the devil.” Hebrews 2:14 (Parentheses mine)

   What does this verse mean for you and me? It means that as we walk by faith, we are walking in God’s power over Satan/demons. Another way of saying this is that Satan is a “toothless” lion when we depend upon, rest upon, and draw upon God’s power. We see this truth confirmed in 1 John 4:4:

   “You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.” 1 John 4:4

   Since you, as a Christian, contain all of the Holy Spirit’s power, you can walk in dependence on that power to defeat every one of Satan’s strategies to keep you in bondage to your woundedness.

   **Question:** How might it change how you view Satan’s involvement in your woundedness if you truly believed you have the Holy Spirit’s power available to you every moment to defeat Satan?

   **Engaging God:** Seek God to persuade you in a deeper way that you have available to you every moment the Holy Spirit’s power over Satan.
3. God Will Protect You From Satan Through The ARMOR of Christ

“Put on the full armor of God so that you (in God’s power) can take your stand against the devil’s schemes.” Ephesians 6:11 (parentheses mine)

The moment you are saved, God makes His spiritual armor available to you. Your spiritual armor is Christ Himself. However, you have a choice to either put on the armor or not. As you walk in moment by moment dependence upon God, you are wearing (and have the full protection of) His armor.

However, when you choose to walk in fleshly independence apart from God, then you, in effect, have taken off your armor. God’s armor can no longer offer you protection against Satan and his demonic forces. Therefore, it is crucial that you continue to walk by faith so that the armor of God will continually protect you from the “fiery darts” of Satan. We see this in Ephesians 6:16:

“... above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.” Ephesians 6:16

**Question:** How might it change how you view Satan’s involvement in your woundedness if you truly believed you can put on the armor of Christ and resist the fiery darts of Satan/demons?

**Engaging God:** Seek God to give you a greater desire to walk in His spiritual armor so that you will be able to withstand the fiery darts of the enemy.

4. As A Result, You No Longer Have To SUCCUMB To Satan’s Strategies To Keep You In Bondage To Your Woundedness

“The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.” Romans 16:20

“Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.” James 4:7

If Satan/demons have been defeated and you have the Holy Spirit’s power over Satan and you are putting on your spiritual armor, then you no longer have to fall for any of their schemes to keep you in bondage to your woundedness. You can choose to walk in the Spirit’s power over Satan. The key truth concerning this point is this:

---

**God wants to move you from just KNOWING the truth about Satan’s schemes to BELIEVING the truth and CHOOSING to walk in His truth and power MOMENT by MOMENT.**

---

As we have discussed before, knowing the truth intellectually doesn’t necessarily mean that we believe the truth. Therefore, we need the Holy Spirit to renew our minds to believe and choose to walk in His truth and His power over every strategy of Satan.
**Question:** How might it change how you view Satan’s involvement in your woundedness if you truly believed that you no longer have to be defeated by Satan’s schemes?

**Engaging God:** Seek the Holy Spirit to further persuade you of the truth that you no longer have to succumb to the schemes of Satan/demons.

Based on these truths, let’s look at some practical examples of steps of faith that will engage the Holy Spirit’s power to thwart the strategies of Satan.

**Your Part In Defeating Satan’s Schemes To Keep You In Bondage To Woundedness**

1. **Be VIGILANT concerning the schemes and strategies of Satan/demons.**

   “Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.” 1 Peter 5:8

   We have already discussed several of Satan’s strategies. The key in dealing with his strategies is spiritual vigilance. I simply define spiritual vigilance as being spiritually aware and sensitive to the Holy Spirit’s revelation of Satan’s schemes. As we abide/depend on Christ, He will be our vigilance in that He will reveal and expose any scheme or thought Satan is working against you.

   **Engaging God:** Ask Christ to be your spiritual vigilance in order to discern where the Satan/demons may be working in your life.

2. **LEARN the truth about Satan from God’s Word which develops your spiritual filter.**

   “For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.” Hebrews 4:12

   Learning God’s truth will build what I call a “spiritual filter” in your mind. As you learn the truth, and receive revelation from the Holy Spirit about the truth, then your spiritual filter will grow. As it grows, then you will be able to more clearly discern God’s truth versus your false beliefs. You will also be able to discern whether your thoughts are from the Lord or are from Satan/demons.

   On the following page is an illustration of a spiritual filter rejecting thoughts inserted by Satan.
Engaging God: Seek the Lord to build a “spiritual” filter as you learn the truth of God’s word so that you will be able to discern the origin of your thoughts.

3. Ask the Holy Spirit to REVEAL to you if the thoughts that you are thinking are of Satan.

“Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God.” 1 John 4:1

In these next three points, I would like to give some practical examples of engaging God to deal with thoughts that come from Satan. Let’s assume that you have a thought that comes to you saying, “I can’t possibly forgive that person for what they did to me.” Before you act on that thought, ask God to tell you who was the origin of that thought. Listen closely to what the Holy Spirit reveals to you. The following is an illustration of what this might look like:
Engaging God: Develop a habit of asking the Holy Spirit to reveal the origin of your thoughts, especially, your lying, tempting, doubting, fleshly and self-condemning thoughts. Ask Him to expose those thoughts that are coming from Satan.

4. ENTRUST the Satanic-inserted thoughts to God, and SPEAK God’s truth against those thoughts and take them captive.

Once the Holy Spirit reveals to you that the thoughts are coming from Satan/demons, entrust those thoughts to Him for Him to take captive. Entrusting your thoughts to God means that you are not taking ownership of those Satanic/demonic thoughts. Then, speak God’s truth against those thoughts. If they don't line up with God’s truth then reject them. Below is an illustration of this truth.
If the Satanic/demonic inserted thoughts keep coming, KEEP drawing on God’s POWER to remove those thoughts.

“Submit [keep submitting] therefore to God. Resist (keep resisting) the devil, and he will [eventually] flee from you.” James 4:7 (Parenthesis mine)

Many times Satan/demons continuously assault you with the same thoughts concerning your woundedness. Why?

Satan will CONTINUOUSLY bombard you with recurring thoughts concerning your woundedness to WEAR YOU DOWN so that you will eventually GIVE UP and TAKE OWNERSHIP of those thoughts.

Therefore, you must persist in drawing upon God’s power to remove those thoughts. That is why I added in James 4:7 that submitting and resisting are continuous actions when it comes to engaging God to take your thoughts captive.

We must see this as a constant battle because Satan/demons will not give up easily when it comes to your thought life, especially in areas of deep-seated false beliefs attached to your woundedness. Here is an illustration to make this point:
It may take some time before Satan FINALLY gives up, so continue to seek God to REMOVE any Satanic/demonic thoughts.

Steps of Faith In Dealing With Satan’s Strategies

What I would like to do in this section is to restate Satan’s strategies; then share the truth concerning that strategy; then give a practical example, followed by other examples of what steps of faith might look like in dealing with Satan’s strategies.

STRATEGY #1 – Interpreting messages you heard from family members, friends, etc.

The Truth: Regardless of how the enemy has helped you misinterpret the messages from others, the Lord promises to renew your mind to the truth.

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind…” Romans 12:2

Example: Let’s assume that as a result of Satan helping you to misinterpret your messages when you were young, you have a false belief that God is like your angry, abusive and controlling father. What is an example of a step of faith to draw on the truth of Romans 12:2?
Steps of faith: “Lord, I am putting my earthly father’s face on Your face. Renew my mind to the truth that unlike my earthly father, You are for me and love me unconditionally.”

STRATEGY #2 – Satan keeps replaying past wounding events in your mind to reinforce the walls of your prison cells.

The Truth: Since you have the mind of Christ, you can draw on His discernment recognize when Satan/demons want to replay your wounding events and simply choose to not allow them to do that.

“...we have the mind of Christ.” 1 Corinthians 2:16

Example: Let’s assume that you were physically abused as a child and that Satan keep replaying those wounding events in your mind. Let’s look at a step of faith to engage God with His truth.

Steps of faith: “Lord, I am asking you to BE my discernment so that not only will I be aware when the enemy is replaying those events in my mind, but that I will know that I can say, “no” to Satan/demons when they try to replay those events.”

STRATEGY #3 - If you start down the path of spiritual healing, then Satan will pull out ALL the stops to RESIST you and DRAG you back to the prison.

The Truth: You have God’s power within you to resist Satan’s attempts to cause you to resist God.

“Submit therefore to God. Resist (in the Spirit’s power) the devil and he will flee from you.” James 4:7 (Parenthesis mine)

Example: Let’s assume that you are seeking the Lord to renew your mind to the truth that you can be set free from the anger towards the one who caused you woundedness, but that Satan is thwarting your efforts.

Steps of faith: “Lord, I am trusting in Your power to break the resistance that Satan is trying to create in my faith walk.”

STRATEGY #4 - Satan will INSERT unbelieving, doubting, tempting, fleshly, and condemning THOUGHTS to pull you back into your prisons.

The Truth: Through the power of the Spirit and through God’s truth, you can take every thought captive.

“We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.” 2 Corinthians 10:5

Example: Let’s assume that you are being tempted to seek revenge on some level towards your mom who wounded you.

Steps of faith: “Lord, I am being tempted to retaliate in some way towards my mother. I am asking You to take that tempting thought captive and move me away from seeking that revenge.”
STRATEGY #5 - Satan will TEMPT you to keep using your ESCAPE MECHANISMS to try to stop or anesthetize the pain.

The Truth: The one true Way of escape from your woundedness is Jesus, The Way.

“.... I am THE WAY, the truth and the Life....” John 14:6

“No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.” 1 Corinthians 10:13

Example: Let’s assume that your escape mechanism is ______________________.

Steps of faith: “Lord, the pain is too great. I want to escape by __________________ but I am asking You to transform me so that I will no longer go to __________________ to escape or anesthetize my pain.”

STRATEGY #6 - Satan will tempt you to STAY BUSY in order to distract you from dealing with your woundedness.

The Truth: As we walk in a moment by moment dependence on Christ, fixing our eyes on Jesus, then we will not let Satan distract us with busy-ness.

“... fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith....” Hebrews 12:2

“Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.” Ephesians 6:11

Example: Let’s assume that Satan continually tempts you to use busy-ness as an excuse to not seek healing.

Steps of faith: “Lord, you have revealed to me that I am falling for Satan’s temptation to use busy-ness to keep me from seeking You for healing. I am asking You in your power to move me away from this distraction and give me the willingness to seek You to be healed.”

STRATEGY #7 - Satan will try to keep you in BONDAGE to any UNFORGIVENESS you have towards the one(s) who wounded you.

The Truth: As you realize and walk in the truth that you are a forgiving person in Christ, then the enemy will no longer be able to keep you in bondage to unforgiveness. We will look at the issue of forgiveness in greater depth later in this lesson.

“Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.” Ephesians 4:32

Example: Let’s assume that Satan is constantly strategizing to keep you in the bondage of unforgiveness towards your brother who molested you.

Steps of faith: “Lord, I am continually being tempted to not forgive my brother for what He did to me. I am asking You in your power to set me free from the bondage of unforgiveness towards him and give me a heart of forgiveness towards him.”
Over Time, God’s Truth and Power WILL Prevail

The diagram below uses “The Line” analogy to show how, as we continue to walk by faith in God’s truth and power, we will no longer be defeated by the enemy and live below the line. Rather, our minds will be renewed to the truth so that we can live from the above the line truths.

**Satan’s/Demons Strategies**
- **REPLAY** wounding events.
- **RESIST** your faith walk to healing.
- **INSERT** thoughts into your mind.
- **TEMPT** you to continue to try and escape the pain.
- **Use BUSY-NESS** to distract or keep you in denial.
- **Keep you in BONDAGE** to your “fleshly rights” to be angry, unforgiving, unloving, rejecting, etc.

**Personal Note:**

I don't know your spiritual background but I do not talk to Satan or demons directly. I believe that is God’s job. Therefore, I believe our part is to engage God and His power in order that He will speak to and deal with Satan and his demonic forces. We see an example of this in Jude 1:9.

“But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not himself dare to condemn him for slander but said, ‘The Lord rebuke you!’” Jude 1:9

**Summary**

I hope that this will make you aware of some of the strategies of the enemy to keep you in bondage. We need to be aware that Satan/demons will pull out all the stops to keep you in the prison cells of your woundedness. Before we leave this topic, I want to give you one more key truth:

**Key Truth:** Keep in mind that even if Satan were not in existence, we would still have the flesh...
within us that can accomplish the same objectives as the enemy. However, since Satan and the demonic exist, then it is crucial to our healing process to learn the truth about Satan’s schemes and engage God to thwart those schemes.

**Forgiveness and Healing**

“Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.” Colossians 3:13

The issue of forgiveness is paramount to the healing process because most people’s woundedness was created by others. That is why I want to spend the rest of this lesson on this subject. Therefore, let’s begin by looking at three types of forgiveness:

- Forgiving the person(s) who wounded you.
- Forgiving God
- Forgiving yourself.

Before we talk about forgiveness, let’s look at unforgiveness and the consequences of continuing to live from it.

**A. UNFORGIVENESS**

**1. What is UNFORGIVENESS?**

Unforgiveness results when you:

- **take ownership of someone else’s offense** towards you with the result that
- **you engage your flesh** which says, “I don’t have to, or I don’t want to, forgive that person.”

Taking ownership of someone else’s offense towards you simply means that you receive that offense and allow your flesh to act on it.

Some examples of offenses would be:

- Verbal and non-verbal words of rejection, anger, guilt, shame, condemnation, etc.
- Abuse (sexual, physical, emotional, and/or verbal)
- Lack of being valued, loved, and/or accepted in the ways you expected or needed.
- Adultery
- Abandonment
- Being fired from your job.

**Question:** Can you think of someone in your life who has offended you and then you have taken ownership of their offense? Write that person’s name down and the way(s) they offended you.

____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
**Question:** What feelings come to mind when you think about that person and/or what they have done to offend or wound you?

**Engaging God:** If no one immediately comes to mind, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal if there is anyone that you can’t bring to mind that you have not forgiven.

**2. Unforgiveness Leads To Exercising Our FLESHLY Right NOT To Forgive**

Concerning unforgiveness, we can move from not wanting to forgive to what I call a “fleshly right” to not forgive. In other words:

**When someone offends you, wounds you, or is sinful to you in some way, you BELIEVE that you have the RIGHT NOT to forgive them.**

When our flesh has been offended, it often must fight back. It is like a prosecutor who builds a case against the person that has wounded us. As a result, the flesh demands, justifies, and defends it’s fleshly right not to forgive the offender.

Over the years, my flesh continued building a case against my abusive dad and why, because of that abuse, I had the right to not forgive him. The longer I spent in unforgiveness, the more reinforced my fleshly right became.

Before we go to the next section, I would like to ask you a question.

**Question:** Do you have the right to not forgive your offender? ____________________________

**3. REASONS Why We Feel/Believe That We Have The Fleshly Right Not To Forgive**

The following are some examples of reasons why we feel/believe that we have the fleshly right not to forgive.

1. This person does not deserve forgiveness.
2. This person has ruined my life.
   - Forgiving this person makes me look weak.
3. Because of my woundedness, this person has to pay for it. They need to be punished.
4. If I forgive this person, it would mean that I’m overlooking or condoning their offenses towards me.

**Questions:** Are you holding offenses against anyone? If so, do any of the reasons given above apply to you? Please write those reasons down. Are there any other reasons not listed above that you believe/feel are justifications for not forgiving your offender? Please write those down.
**Question:** Do you believe that in God’s eyes you have the right not to forgive that person for any of the reasons you listed? __________________________  

4. **What Are Some of the RESULTS of Unforgiveness?**  

Unforgiveness is like living in a toxic waste dump in that it is toxic to you and every one around you. Below are some of the short and long term results of unforgiveness.  

**If we choose not to forgive, what will be some of the consequences?**  

a. In your mind, you continue to think and rethink about the wounding events and the person(s) who offended you.  
b. Emotionally it can cause stress, anxiety, and even depression.  
c. It can lead to unresolved frustration, anger, and bitterness towards your offender.  
d. You continue to take ownership of offenses from the person(s) offending you.  
e. It opens you up for Satan/demons to gain a foothold and, eventually, a stronghold in your life.  
f. On some level, it will poison every one of your relationships.  

**Question:** Are you experiencing any of the consequences listed above due to your unforgiveness? Please write those down. Write down any other consequences you are experiencing due to your unforgiveness.  

______________________________________________________  

______________________________________________________  

**Engaging God:** If it is not readily apparent what your unforgiveness is causing in you or through you, ask God to reveal/expose that to you.  

5. **Unforgiveness Eventually Builds A “WALL” Between You and The Person That You Have Not Forgiven.**  

When you build a brick wall, you have to do so one brick at a time. Imagine each offense being a brick. When an offense occurs between you and another person and is not dealt with, then brick by brick a wall is being built between you and them. The longer you live in unforgiveness, the higher and thicker the wall becomes.  

**Engaging God:** Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you if you have built a wall between you and another person due to past offenses.  

6. **Your Unforgiveness Leads To You Being CONTROLLED By Your Offender.**  

Your unforgiveness means that every time you think of your offender, you have recurring negative/fleshly thoughts and emotions associated with your wounding events that keep you in continual bondage to them. In a sense, that person has control over you because of your unforgiving thoughts and emotions towards him/her.
This is like being permanently shackled or chained to your offender. As long as you continue in unforgiveness, you are shackled to this person resulting in your dragging this person around with you wherever you go.

7. Unforgiveness Effectively CUTS Off The Flow of Christ’s Life In You and Through You

I believe that the most damaging consequence of unforgiveness is that it effectively cuts off the flow of Christ’s life in you with the result that you experience the “death” talked about in Romans 8:6

“The mind set on the flesh is DEATH....” Romans 8:6

What does the word “death” mean in this passage?

“Death,” as it applies to unforgiveness, is the result of the flow of Christ’s life being effectively CUT OFF in you and through you.

By way of a reminder, here are some examples of Christ’s life that are available to you:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unconditional love</th>
<th>Victory</th>
<th>Worth</th>
<th>Acceptance</th>
<th>Faith</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>Patience</td>
<td>Strength</td>
<td>Peace</td>
<td>Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forgiveness</td>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>Security</td>
<td>Fearlessness</td>
<td>Wisdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discernment</td>
<td>Adequacy</td>
<td>Humility</td>
<td>Christ-confidence</td>
<td>Boldness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Righteousness</td>
<td>Selflessness</td>
<td>Rest</td>
<td>Compassion</td>
<td>Courage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope</td>
<td>Gentleness</td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Faithfulness</td>
<td>Joy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Why is the consequence of unforgiveness the most devastating to your walk in Christ? Because you have effectively cut off the flow of all of the above characteristics of Christ’s life in you. In other words, your unforgiveness hinders the flow of Christ’s freedom, victory, forgiveness, etc. in you and through you.

Let’s look at this truth in light of the branch-vine example used by Jesus in John 15. In this passage, you are the branch and Jesus is the Vine. As long as there is no unforgiveness (or any other unconfessed sin) in your heart, then there is an ongoing flow of Christ’s life in and through you. However, when you choose not to forgive someone then you have effectively cut yourself off from the flow of Christ’s life.

Let me give you an example to further explain.

The truth is that you have in you, through Christ, all of the Spirit’s power. However, if you choose to live in unforgiveness, you effectively cut off the Holy Spirit’s power to overpower your flesh and Satan/demons. Not only that, you have limited the very power that is going to set you free from your unforgiveness, heal your wounded heart, and transform you to live with an attitude of forgiveness towards your offender. Therefore, we must take a long look at this consequence of unforgiveness because of the damage it can do to our spiritual progress and transformation.

**Question:** Can you see how serious unforgiveness is in relationship to Christ’s life flowing in you?
Meditate: On the truth that your unforgiveness creates “death” in you because it stops the flow of all of those characteristics listed above.

Engaging God: As the Lord to reveal to you in a deeper way the death that is created when you choose to live in unforgiveness.


When you have an attitude of unforgiveness toward someone, you have placed yourself in your own prison. Since you have effectively limited Christ’s life and power flowing in you, the result will be that you build a prison made up of walls of anger, bitterness, and unforgiveness. Here is a further problem:

The LONGER you live in unforgiveness the more FORTIFIED and REINFORCED your prison walls become.

Question: Have you realized before now that the only person imprisoned by unforgiveness is the one who is not forgiving?

Engaging God: Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you if you have any unforgiveness in your heart or if you are holding on to any offenses against anyone.

9. Finally, Unforgiveness Results In HARDENING YOUR HEART Towards God.

Just like false beliefs about God can harden our hearts towards God, unforgiveness will result in the same thing. If Christ’s life is no longer flowing in you and you continue to reinforce your prison walls, then you will move further and further away from God and His healing power.

Therefore, unforgiveness is not only toxic to you and those around you, it DISTANCES you from experiencing God and HARDENS your heart towards Him.

Question: Do you feel that your unforgiveness is creating a greater distancing between you and God?

I hope this section on unforgiveness has given you a clearer picture of unforgiveness and the consequences that result. Now, let’s look at what God’s truth has to say about forgiveness.

B. The TRUTH About Forgiveness

I believe that there are four key truths that are crucial in understanding forgiveness. Let’s take a look at them.

“Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord.” Romans 12:19

The temptation of your flesh is to retaliate or get revenge on your offender. This will not lead to forgiveness. It will only lead to more sin and a greater resistance to the work of the Holy Spirit to heal you. Remember, there are always consequences of sin, so your offender does not get off the hook if he/she is not repentant. There is a price to pay but that price will be determined by God and not by you. Believe me when I say this, God does not condone what happened to you and there will be consequences. Therefore, leave your offender in the hands of God and move towards forgiveness, not revenge.

2. Truth #2 - In The Midst Of Your Sin God Forgave You UNCONDITIONALLY

"And when you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions” Colossians 2:13

God did not wait for you to confess and repent of your sins before you were forgiven. His forgiveness took place over 2000 years ago on the cross. Long before you ever had the chance to repent of your sin. Your flesh recoils at this truth because it demands your offender confess and repent before you offer forgiveness.” Where would we be today if God dealt with us in the same way? The good news for you and me is that God’s forgiveness is unconditional. The same applies to you and forgiving your offender.

Your forgiveness is UNCONDITIONAL in that you forgive WHETHER or NOT your offender ever repents of his/her offenses against you.

Question: If you are struggling with this truth, is it possible that you are believing that your forgiveness of your offender is contingent upon his/her repenting to you first?

Meditate: If this truth is a struggle for you, meditate on Colossians 2:13.

Engaging God: Seek the Lord to persuade you that your forgiveness towards your offender must be the same unconditional forgiveness the Lord has extended to you.

3. Truth #3 – God’s Forgiveness Is COMPLETE.

“‘It is finished.” John 19:30

“...having forgiven us all our transgressions” Colossians 2:13

When Jesus said on the cross “It is finished,” He was saying, “I have paid everything in full.” This means past, present and future sins have all been paid for. Therefore, as Christ has totally forgiven you, so should you totally forgive your offender. To confirm this truth, look again at the last part of Colossians 2:13.

Meditate: on John 19:30
Engaging God: Seek the Spirit to transform your heart so that you can totally forgive your offender.

4. Truth #4 - Since God Forgave You, He NO Longer Holds ANY Sin Against You.

“He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west.” Psalm 103:12

“I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more.” Isaiah 43:25

“... having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us and which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.” Colossians 2:14

When we read the passages above, we can see that God has not only removed our sins, but He also no longer remembers them. In other words, He no longer holds the offense against us.

If you were deep in debt to your creditors, how would you feel if you got a call from a friend saying that he/she has totally paid off your debt? Joy? Freedom? Relief? We should feel that and even more because the Lord has totally canceled our debt of sin. He will never hold your sin against you. How do you think this applies to the debt created by the person who wounded you?

Because God has totally canceled your debt, then you are to CANCEL (forgive) the debt that was created by the person who wounded you.

Meditate: on Psalm 103:12, Isaiah 43:25, and Colossians 2:14 and think about the truth that the Lord totally canceled the debt of your sin and how that should affect your attitude towards your offender.

Engaging God: If you are struggling with totally forgiving your offender, ask the Lord to transform your heart and give you the willingness to forgive.

C. What Are The RESULTS of Forgiveness?

Now that we know some of the key truths about forgiveness, let’s explore some of the results when we do forgive.

1. First and foremost it RESTORES Christ’s life flowing in and through you.

“I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit: for apart from Me you can do nothing.” John 15:5

“He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’ ” John 7:38

We said earlier that unforgiveness effectively cuts off the flow of Christ’s life in you. Conversely, forgiveness allows the flow of Christ’s life, love, acceptance, etc., to continue flowing in and through you.

2. Forgiveness TEARS DOWN the walls of your prison and sets you FREE.
“... you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” John 8:32

“It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.” Galatians 5:1

Like unforgiveness built the walls of your prison, so forgiveness will tear your prison walls down and set you free. You freedom will come in two categories: What you will be free FROM and what you will be free TO. Let’s look at some examples of both.

**You are free FROM:**

6. Bondage and death caused by your unforgiveness.
7. The frustration, anger, and bitterness towards your offender.
8. The pain associated with your woundedness.
9. Having to hold the offense(s) against your offender.

**You are free TO:**

10. Love your offender with Christ’s love.
11. Experience Christ’s life in and through you. (i.e., His peace, rest, etc.).
12. Have compassion for your offender.
13. Be used of the Lord to move your offender to repent of their offense.

**3. Forgiveness allows you to DIE to your fleshly right not to forgive.**

“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone: but if it dies, it bears much fruit.” John 12:24

The “death” referred to in this verse as it relates to forgiveness is a turning away or realizing the death that your fleshly right not to forgive produces. Therefore, as the Lord transforms your heart to forgive your offender, you will die to or move away from wanting to exercise your fleshly right not to forgive.

**4. Forgiveness will be part of the HEALING**

Forgiveness is an essential key to healing. We said earlier that forgiveness opens the way for you to be able to experience the flow of Christ’s life in you. It also opens the door for the Holy Spirit’s power to flow in you to begin the healing process. Therefore, the longer you stay in unforgiveness, the longer it will take you to heal.

**5. Forgiveness sets the stage for RECONCILING the relationship with your offender.**

“If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.” Matthew 5:23, 24

When it comes to reconciliation with your offender, forgiveness is the first step. Reconciliation involves both parties so if your offender is not willing to reconcile, then reconciliation won’t take place. However, if you are walking in Christ’s humility and forgive your offender, God honors that step on your part in restoring the relationship.
If you have forgiven your offender, but you have not reconciled, then I would encourage you to pray for reconciliation. I have personally witnessed a number of situations where the person who was wounded prayed for their offender and reconciliation took place. It is nothing short of supernatural but it can happen.

Now that you have a better understanding of forgiveness towards others, let’s look at two other areas of forgiveness: forgiving God and forgiving yourself.

E. Forgiving God

You may be struggling with forgiving God for what He allowed to happen to you. Just to reiterate what I said in the previous chapter on woundedness and our concept of God, the key is that God allows man’s free will to function. Because of the evil nature of mankind, terrible things can and do happen. We can try to hold God accountable for those terrible **things, but this is what He has allowed. However, you do not have to be held hostage to the woundedness He allowed. You can seek Him to give you the willingness to forgive Him and allow Him to heal your woundedness.

**Note:** God is not the source of, nor does He initiate, the evil things that happen in this world. But God has the ability to bring good out of the bad things that happen to us, including our woundedness, if we let Him.

**Engaging God:** If you struggle with forgiving God, seek Him to give you the willingness to do so.

F. Forgiving Yourself

You may be able to forgive the person who wounded you and God but you can’t forgive yourself. You may have to forgive yourself because you may be holding yourself responsible for the wounding event. This is especially true when you were too young to understand that what happened was not your fault.

If that is where you are, please go back to the section in this lesson titled: The Truths About Forgiveness. Please read and pray through these truths again keeping in mind that if God forgave you, you can forgive yourself.

**Engaging God:** If you struggle with forgiving yourself, seek the Lord to give you the willingness to do so.

**The Line and Forgiveness**

Now that we have explored the truths about unforgiveness and forgiveness, I think the Line illustration will help you summarize the consequences of both. You can see the consequences of living below the line in unforgiveness versus taking steps of faith and learning to live above the line. Look at God’s transforming work in your heart as you seek Him to give you a heart of forgiveness.
Steps of Faith Concerning The Healing Process

Example #1: Let’s assume that you are unwilling to forgive the person who wounded you.

The Truth: God knows you are unwilling and He is the only One who can transform your unwillingness into having a willing heart to forgive your offender.

Steps of faith: “Lord. I can’t forgive this person for what they did to me. I know that I have no excuse for not forgiving but I simply am unwilling to do so. I am asking you to transform my heart so that I will be willing to forgive.”

The following diagram illustrates other steps you could take if you are unwilling to forgive.
**Example #2:** Your flesh is persuading you that you have the right not to forgive.

**The Truth:** God completely forgave you for your past, present and even future offenses towards Him. (i.e., sin). Therefore, since He forgave you unconditionally, then you have no right not to forgive.

**Steps of faith:** “Lord, continue to remind me that you extended me unconditional forgiveness and that I have no right not to forgive. Remind me that you went to the cross for me so that I have no excuse for not forgiving.”

**Example #3:** You are saying to yourself, “If I forgive this person they may think that I am overlooking or condoning their sin.”

**The Truth:** God never condones or overlooks sin and neither should you. However, forgiveness does not in any way mean that you are overlooking or condoning their sin. In addition, you do not have to concern yourself with what your offender thinks. Your part is to forgive. Also, remember that God will deal with your offender’s sin. Since there are always consequences to sin, God will repay your offender.

**Steps of faith:** “I am afraid that if I forgive, I am telling my offender that I am overlooking their sin. Lord, persuade me that is a lie, that my part is to forgive, and that you will deal with my offender’s sin.”

**Example #4:** You don’t feel like forgiving.

**The Truth:** Forgiveness is a choice not a feeling. If you are walking in the power of the Holy Spirit, you can choose to forgive whether you feel like it or not.
**Steps of faith:** “Lord, I don't feel like forgiving _____________ for what they did to me. I am asking You to give me the willingness to choose to forgive even though nothing in my emotions agrees with that choice.”

**D. ACTS Versus ATTITUDE of Forgiveness**

“So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a HEART of .... forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.” Colossians 3:12b, 13a (Emphasis mine)

People have told me that they have forgiven their offender. However, that does not mean that they have an attitude or a heart of forgiveness towards that person. You see, there can be an “act” of forgiveness toward someone in a moment for the wounding event that they caused. In my case with my dad, there were several “acts” of forgiveness as the Holy Spirit would bring to mind specific events that I had to forgive my dad for.

Depending upon how deep the wound is, obtaining an “attitude” or a heart of forgiveness may be a much longer process. God’s ultimate objective is to transform you so that you will have an attitude of forgiveness. Let me give you an example of what I mean.

A man was sharing how three men in his life rejected him in different ways. He told me that he had forgiven them, but every time that he or I brought them up, it was, for him, like sticking a knife into that wound and feeling the pain all over again. What I concluded was that even though he had extended acts of forgiveness towards them, he did not have an attitude of forgiveness because his woundedness had not yet been healed. This brings us to a key truth concerning an attitude of forgiveness:

**An ATTITUDE of forgiveness takes place when the woundedness associated with the wounding event(s) has been HEALED.**

Think about this: If your woundedness is not healed, you will have to forgive over and over again every time that person or the offense comes to mind. Therefore, God wants to heal you so that person no longer pushes your buttons of unforgiveness.

This is one of the great freedoms of unforgiveness. Over time I experienced this with my dad. Even though I had forgiven him, it took the Spirit some years to heal me from that woundedness. The result is that I can think of my dad, and I no longer harbor unforgiveness toward him. In fact, it freed me up to eventually love him even though he passed away prior to my healing.

Therefore, even though you may have made acts of forgiveness, an attitude of forgiveness may be a longer process because healing may be an extended process. Another way of looking at a heart of forgiveness is in Matthew 18:21,22:

“Then Peter came and said to Him, ‘Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?’ 22 Jesus said to him, ‘I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.’” Matthew 18:21,22
What is Jesus telling us in this verse? Is He telling us that we are to forgive only up to 490 times? I don’t believe so. I believe what the Lord is pointing out is that we are to live from a Christ-like attitude or heart of forgiveness. This attitude will come when the healing is complete.

The illustration on the next page reveals how initially there must be acts of forgiveness which eventually lead to healing of your woundedness resulting in an attitude of forgiveness.

### Summary

I pray that this section on forgiveness, at the very least, gives you an understanding of how seriously God takes this issue of unforgiveness and forgiveness. However, even more important than an understanding, I pray that you have taken steps of faith in order to move from acts of forgiveness to the freedom found in an attitude of forgiveness.

### Juli’s Journey To Forgiveness

This is a testimony by a lady named Juli that I believe will impact you in a profound way, especially if you have had trouble forgiving your abuser/offender. Here is Juli in her own words:

“The sexual abuse began when I was age 5. My parents had divorced at the age of 4. I still remember standing at the front door, looking out of the glass crying, ‘Daddy, don’t leave. Come back. Come back.’ He did not come back. When my mother remarried a year later I thought, ’Maybe this daddy will love me. Maybe this daddy will take care of me.’ This other daddy was broken and angry and would not know how to take care of me, and so began the secret story of abuse.
"My stepfather was abusive in many ways – physically, verbally, mentally, and sexually. Both my mother and stepfather were alcoholics, so I lived in a world of uncertainty at best and in darkness, isolation, and secrecy every single day. I felt so much shame, unworthiness, and abandonment, and I felt that I was all alone. I believed that I was a failure and that I was not worthy to be loved. I believed that I must be very bad (I felt so bad, and I believed that I was bad). In addition, there was self-protection, unforgiveness, and fear. One of my ways of escape was excelling in school. I received various awards and accomplishments and had wonderful friends while keeping my secret hidden from everyone who knew me.

"In my sophomore year in college, it was time - time to tell the truth - time to uncover the horror and the lies that we all had been living in. I will never forget going home to confront my mother and stepfather. As we sat to talk, I actually thought, ‘Now we will get some help and counseling. Now they will admit what has been going on, and we will begin to heal as a family.’ All of the years of pretending that someone would actually care for me came to an end as they denied the truth. My stepfather said, ‘Well, if anything did happen, it is your fault.’ Instead of my mother coming to protect me, she accusingly looked at me saying, ‘Well, is it true? Did you provoke him?’ My heart shattered, my life unraveled, and I clung to Jesus, the only hope and love I knew through some of the darkest days that I have known.

“I married, and as I held my firstborn daughter in my hands, I heard the Lord sweetly whisper, ‘This is how beautiful you are to me. This is how precious you are to my heart.’ Through the love that I had for my daughter, God continued to open up my heart to His unfathomable love and grace and mercy to heal my broken life. I began to grasp that Jesus is my life. He is my hope, my strength, and my resurrection. Jesus is the truth that I had longed for all of my life. I would not allow my stepfather to see my children (I had two more daughters) until he admitted the truth and sought counsel. This did not happen. It would be 7 years after my first daughter’s birth until I would see my stepfather again.

***"My sister called me one day (she was my stepfather’s daughter with my mother) in tears telling me that he was very sick and most likely was dying. At the time I was living in Dallas, and he was in a care facility in Austin. I just happened to be going to Austin that weekend and said that I would go see him for her. My first reaction was what I thought was righteous anger and vengeance for the pain and destruction that he had caused me all of those years. And so the Lord and I went to battle for my heart once again.

“Most often the Shepherd’s voice is so kind and tender when He speaks to me. This time He was firm and unrelenting. He showed me a picture of the Grand Canyon, and my stepfather and I were standing on opposite sides. He said, ’There is only one difference between Joe and you, and that is the blood of my Son. That is the only difference. Do you really want him to be eternally separated from My love?’ The battle raged in my soul. How could I forgive Joe? How could I release the weight of suffering that I had carried for so much of my life? Yet, when the battle was won, my heart was surrendered, and I went to see Joe in obedience to the Lord with resolution that I did not want him to be separated from God’s love.

"It was a short visit. I was only there for about an hour. When I walked into his room, my arms shot up above me, and I embraced him in a hug (much to my surprise)! We chatted about everyday things. I told him about my children, our marriage, and the life that I was living. When I left, I told him that I loved him and that I would pray for his healing and wholeness. As I walked out, my emotions were all over the place. There was peace, tears, ambivalence, and relief that I had gotten through our time together.
"Three weeks later I got the call from my sister that this time he truly was dying. He wasn’t expected to make it more than 3 days. She was flying in from Colorado. I knew that I would go sit with him until she got there. I did not want him to die alone. This drive to Austin was much different. The first time I went out of obedience to the Lord. This second time I went out of love for Joe. I pleaded with the Lord to bring Joe to Himself. 'Please let him come to know Jesus before he dies,' I cried out in hope and anticipation.

"Upon entering his hospital room, I was filled with an unexplainable peace. I felt that the Lord was asking me to sit there and wait. So, I took Joe’s hand in my hand. And I waited and waited, until he woke up and began to speak. He admitted what he had done to me all of those years. He spoke the truth – something that I never thought that I would ever hear. He asked for my forgiveness. And then he told me the most stunning part. He said that when I went to see him three weeks earlier, he knew that God would forgive him. It was my going in obedience to love that opened his heart to the heart of God.

"He had a son, my brother, who died at the age of 8. He knew what it was like to lose an only son. He said that God’s only Son was enough - enough for his own forgiveness and healing and wholeness. God’s Son Jesus was enough to forgive him and bring him into peace with His Father. I believe that Joe had been in the very presence of the love of God those last three weeks. Jesus and His blood, His life, His love, and His resurrected power is enough. Jesus is enough for Joe. Jesus is enough for me, Jesus is enough for us all.

"The next day my sister arrived, and I helped her out in any way possible. In a few days it came time for me to go. By now Joe was going in and out of consciousness, so I walked up to his bed, kissed him on the forehead with his eyes closed, and I quietly said, "It is time for me to go now, Joe, but I will be back. I will celebrate our reconciliation at your service and will celebrate what our good God has done! And some day, I will see you in heaven, and we will know each other as we truly are.”

“As I finished speaking, Joe woke up, completely present, sat up in bed, took my hand in his, looked me clearly in the eyes and said, "May God bless you, may He bless your family, and may you always be one with your children." Power fell in the room with a palatable force. Joe had not been sitting in a men’s bible study learning that he was to bless his children on his death bed. I believe that either that was the very voice of God speaking through Joe, or that he was speaking to me a blessing from heaven itself. The man who had cursed me since I was 5 years old, blessed me in his passing.

"This extraordinary gift of what transpired those last three weeks is what finally opened up the gates of my heart to receive more healing from the Lord’s hand. Through counseling, prayer, the love of family and friends, weeping and more prayer, counsel, and the Word, I can honestly say that the abuse that I experienced has no hold on me. It neither defines me nor imprisons me.

"The compassion of the Lord took my broken heart and made it whole. The Holy Spirit is the wisest, most Wonderful Counselor. I believe and know and have experienced that I am His beloved in whom He is well pleased. The Lord delights in me. He has never left me nor forsaken me. God is my good, good Papa. Jesus is my Life. He is my healing. He is my redemption, restoration, and hope.

This is a testimony of God’s great and glorious love - of His forgiveness and pursuit of His people for their good and for the glory of His name. Amen!"
Lesson Six

Final Key Truths

Engaging God To Heal Your Woundedness

Additional Truths Concerning Woundedness

1. Jesus, The MAN-God, Can Sympathize With Your Woundedness

“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin.” Hebrews 4:15

When you think of Jesus while He was on the earth, you may only see the GOD-man. However, it is much more important concerning your woundedness that you see Jesus as the MAN-God. What do I mean? Jesus says in Philippians 2:6, 7:

“Though He (Jesus) was God, He did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, He gave up His divine privileges, He took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being....”

In other words, Jesus, while on the earth, was fully human. This meant that He made a choice not to function in His deity. Rather, He lived in a human body like you, with thoughts, emotions, and a will. It is hard for us to imagine but Jesus, as a fully human man, was tempted in everything you and I are. (Hebrews 4:15 above) Being human also meant that He felt deeply wounded through His suffering and rejection. We see this in Mark 8:31 and many other passages.

“And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.” Mark 8:31

Think for a moment about all the woundedness the Lord endured in three short years. He was scorned, ridiculed, rejected, judged, and abused. People hated Him, reviled Him, were bitter against Him, and threatened Him. People let Him down, they walked away from Him, they misunderstood Him, and after all this, they crucified Him.

Trust me when I say that Jesus feels your pain. He can empathize and sympathize with your woundedness. Let’s look at Hebrews 4:15 in the American Standard Version:

“For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.” Hebrews 4:15

His humanity did not like being wounded any better than yours does, but because He experienced great pain and woundedness, He can (and will) very deeply and personally empathize with your pain. That is why we can call on Him to not only empathize but to be the source of our comfort and grace.
**Question:** Does this help you knowing that Jesus suffered like the rest of mankind suffers and can empathize with your pain?

**Engaging God:** If you struggle with that fact that you feel all alone in your pain, ask Christ to comfort you because He knows very well the pain that you are going through. Here is an example of what that might look like.

**Step of faith:** “Lord, I have been severely wounded and I am thankful that You can identify with my pain. I am trusting you to be my peace and comfort during my healing process.”

**2. “SPIRITUAL” Forgetting of The Wounding Events**

“Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead.” Philippians 3:13

You have probably heard the expression when it comes to forgiveness to “forgive and forget.” The truth is that you can forgive, but you will never forget because the memories of those events are permanently seared into your memory.

In light of this, what does Paul mean by this statement: “forgetting what lies behind?” Remember that it is no longer the wounding events that are keeping you in bondage. It is the false beliefs and resultant feelings that are imprisoning you. Therefore, as your mind is being renewed to the truth God replaces your false beliefs with the truth and heals your damaged emotions associated with your false beliefs. At that point, those painful, wounding memories will no longer have a grip on you and they can no longer take you back to the prisons in your soul.

As a result, you are “forgetting” or leaving behind those wounding events because they no longer control your thinking or feelings.

Let me give you an analogy to illustrate:

Let’s assume that an electrical plug represents a wounding event, and the electricity flowing through the outlet is your false beliefs and damaged emotions surrounding this event. Every time that you remember an event, it is like sticking your finger in a light socket. When you do, the electricity shocks you. What happens if you turn off the breaker that controls that plug? The event (plug) is still there, but the electricity (false beliefs and damaged emotions) no longer touch you.

I wish it were as simple as flipping the breaker off once, but spiritual forgetting can either be a one-time event or a long-term process. The good news is that once you spiritually forget the event, it may come back to your mind many times, but it will no longer have a grip on your heart.

I know this all to be true because as I write you now, I am thinking of two horrific events perpetrated by my dad towards me that no longer create pain or take me back to the prisons in my soul. In fact, that particular prison cell no longer exists because the Lord has torn the walls down.
SPIRITUAL forgetting can only occur when you are healed to a point where those events NO longer take you back to the pain when you think of them.

Engaging God: Begin to allow the Spirit to renew your mind to the truth concerning your wounding event. Seek Him to persuade you that He will eventually remove the “electricity” so that you will no longer feel the pain associated with your wounding event(s).

3. Healing And The THICKENING of Your Spiritual Armor

“Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.” Ephesians 6:13

I liken the healing process to thickening your spiritual armor. As we discussed in the last lesson, your spiritual armor is Christ Himself. Your spiritual armor is made up of His peace, rest, forgiveness, etc.

Early on, experientially, your spiritual armor is thin due to unbelief and is not able to withstand the “darts” of Satan or people or even your own self-inflicted darts. However, with each step of faith, your armor gets thicker because God’s truth is taking root and you are walking in a greater belief that you are being healed. As it does, you will discover that you less and less taking ownership of the thoughts and feelings of your false beliefs and damaged emotions associated with your woundedness. Let me give you an example to illustrate.

There was a lady that was sexually abused by her father. She felt and eventually believed that she was rejected and worthless. When she began the pathway to healing, the “darts” of her flesh and Satan penetrated her armor because of the depth of her woundedness and the because her armor was too thin due to her unbelief. However, the longer she walked in faith, the more she did not take ownership of the thoughts and feelings of rejection and being worthless. In other words, her armor thickened to a point where the darts of the enemy and her flesh no longer penetrated her armor. At that point, she was set free from her false beliefs and was healed from her woundedness.

Expect EARLY ON in your healing process that the “darts” of thoughts and feelings from your flesh and Satan will penetrate your spiritual armor but OVER TIME your armor will be thick enough to withstand those darts.

The key is to keep walking by faith until your armor thickens enough to where you no longer believe and feel your false beliefs and wounded emotions.

4. Woundedness Keeps Us Locked Into EMOTIONALLY Immaturity

The following truth is key concerning woundedness and emotional maturity:
There is a direct correlation between spiritual maturity and emotional maturity. You can’t have one without the other. Continuing to live from your woundedness not only retards your spiritual growth but it restricts your emotional maturity as well. The problem is that if we don't experience healing, then we never grow up, and we continue to revert to childish things (i.e., fleshly behaviors) such as anger, controlling, manipulation, selfishness, etc. which are the outflow of our woundedness.

Let me give you an example to illustrate.

I know of a man who was emotionally and verbally abused by his dad as a boy. This abuse left her feeling unloved and rejected. Because his needs of love and acceptance were not met, these unmet needs blocked him from growing emotionally. Even though he is now an adult, he has the emotional maturity of a teenager.

Unhealed woundedness leaves us stuck emotionally. Let’s look at the following verse in light of this.

“When I was a child, I spoke and thought and reasoned as a child. But when I grew up (spiritually), I put away childish things.” 1 Corinthians 13:11 (Parenthesis mine)

What Paul is referring to is spiritual growth as opposed to just getting older physically. The point is that we are to grow up spiritually. If we don't, we will continue to speak, think, and reason as children. Unhealed woundedness will prevent the “growing up” process. Let’s now look at some of the symptoms of emotional immaturity:

1. **Being SELF-ABSORBED.**

   Just like a child is all about themselves, woundedness keeps us in bondage to ourselves as we continue to focus on our pain, our struggle, or our heartache. We become self-absorbed and cannot focus on anyone but ourselves.

   **Transformation:** Healing will move us away from focus on ourselves and will allow us to focus on others. The result will be spiritual and emotional maturity.

2. **OVERREACTION to someone’s comments.**

   Someone may make an innocent comment towards you or it may be the tone of how the comment was made that makes you feel like you are being attacked or rejected. Because these comments or the tone of the comments touched the nerve of some unhealed woundedness, you overreact.

   For example, let’s say a good friend says that you have not been in touch with them recently. Even though it was a comment of concern, it touches your unhealed nerve of rejection and you respond with frustration or you get on the defensive.
**Transformation:** As you are being healed, you will find yourself interpreting those remarks through a grid of truth and not taking them personally with the result that you will no longer overreact.

**3. Continuing to BLAME or NOT forgive your offender/abuser.**

“and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” John 8:32

As long as you continue to blame or to not forgive your offender, the longer you will be stuck emotionally. Blame and unforgiveness hold yourself hostage and don't allow you to be set free.

**Transformation:** The key is that truth = freedom = spiritual and emotional maturity. As you learn and walk in God’s truth, then you will begin to experience freedom from blame and unforgiveness. This allows you to take your eyes off yourself and fix your eyes more and more on His truth and/or your true identity. The result will be that you will grow up emotionally.

**4. Continuing to see yourself as the VICTIM Or The HOSTAGE To Your Woundedness**

I hear these comments often. “Can’t you see what this person did to me?” “Don’t you understand how abusive they were to me?” “If you could understand the extent of my woundedness you would see that I am justified in my anger.” These are all comments of “victims.” (I am not minimizing the fact that you may have been victimized.) However, Christ as The Way, is the way to move you from the bondage of being a victim to experiencing the freedom and maturity that the freedom of the truth offers you.

You see, if you continue to see yourself as the victim, this will stunt your emotional growth. Why? Because the focus will be on yourself and how you were victimized rather than on the life-transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

**Transformation:** The truth says that you no longer have to see yourself as the victim because of the freedom you have in Christ. As you are being transformed, the Spirit will set you free from being a victim because you are no longer believing the false beliefs that came out of your woundedness.

**5. We Believe The Lie That If We Allow God To Heal Us That It Will TOO Painful**

“I can’t allow the Lord in this room because it will be too painful.” I hear this response more than any other. However, if you were never really able to keep your pain locked up in the first place, the truth is that you have been carrying that pain around with you ever since the wounding events.

I call this “familiar” pain. For some of us, we have been carrying around the “familiar” pain so long that we don't even recognize it any longer as pain. Therefore, when God comes knocking on the door to heal us, we become fearful of the potential “unknown” pain that may come about through the healing process.

The lie, either perpetuated by your own mind or inserted by Satan, is that the healing process will be too painful. Let me ask you a question, “What continues to happen with your pain if you don’t allow the Holy Spirit to heal you?” Remember that unhealed pain is like compounding interest. The pain will only get worse and will have a deeper negative impact on every area of your life.
Let me ask you another question. “When you have a cut that requires stitches, and you are in intense pain, why do you go to a doctor?” You know that the process of stitching will create, for the moment, more pain, but you let the doctor stitch because you know that it is the only way to get healing. This is just like soulical healing. Yes, there may be some pain (though not always) in the process of healing, but the end result will be healing.

**Engaging God:** If this is the place where you are with God and His healing process, ask Him to give you the willingness to let Him in to heal your pain.

**Additional Truths Concerning Engaging God For Healing**

Even though we have discussed in previous lessons, some of the steps of faith the engage God for healing, I would like to explore more steps of faith that I hope will help you in your journey to healing. Please do not read these points as steps or as a formula for healing. God deals with each of us individually. The following thoughts are based on my understanding of what it looks like in seeking the Spirit, my personal experience, and my experience in personallly discipling others.

Therefore, I would like you to not simply read through these truths. Rather, I would like for you to seek the Spirit to tell you which of these truths apply to you. He says that He is THE Way (John 14:6). When it comes to your healing the Spirit has a specific pathway to healing for you. Therefore, as you go through these truths, let Him be the one who leads you and guides you on His pathway for your healing.

1. OPEN the door of your heart and invite God IN to begin the healing process.

   ‘Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.” Revelation 3:20

   “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me. Because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And recovery of sight to the blind.” Luke 4:18

Some folks have told me that God is not able or willing to heal them of their woundedness. That simply is not true. The Lord knocks and will keep knocking on the door of your heart. The question is: “Are you willing to open the door of your heart and let Him in to heal?” If you are willing, go to the door and let Him in. If you are not willing, ask Him to give you the willingness to let Him in because there can be no healing unless you allow the Spirit in to work in your heart. Jesus is asking you the same question he posed to the man at the pool of Bethesd:

   “…Do you wish to get well?” John 5:6b

   **The Lord IS willing to heal.**

   **Are you WILLING to let Him?**

**Step of faith if you are willing:** “I am inviting You in Lord, to begin the healing process.”
**Step of faith if you are not willing:** “Lord, I am resisting You to heal me. I am asking You to move me from unwillingness to willingness to let You in to heal.”

**Engaging God:** Open the door of your heart to the Holy Spirit and let Him begin the healing process.

2. **Seek or ask God to SEARCH your heart to expose any BURIED woundedness or to address some SPECIFIC wounding event or false belief.**

"Examine me, O LORD, and try me; Test my mind and my heart.” Psalm 26:2

“Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way.” Psalm 139:23, 24

Asking God to search your heart is one of the greatest forms of humility and transparency. When you ask God to search your heart, you are giving God permission to:

a. **Show you that you need someone greater than yourself to reveal what is in your heart.**

b. **Expose or reveal some area of woundedness that you think that you have “hidden away.”**

c. **Reveal to you the ways that you have tried to cope with, deny, escape from, self-protect, or insulate yourself from your pain.**

d. **Reveal to you some of the areas in your life where your woundedness is creating “death” (i.e. anger, bitterness, unforgiveness) in you and around you.**

**Step of faith:** “Lord, I my have buried my woundedness. I am asking you to reveal those “buried” areas and begin healing them.”

**Step of faith:** I am asking You to reveal the ways that I am trying to cope with my pain, and the “death” that it is causing me and to everyone around me.”

**Engaging God:** Ask the Lord to search your heart, and if you are unwilling to do so, ask Him to give you the willingness to let Him do that..

3. **Concerning your wounding events, and EXPRESS to God how you HONESTLY feel about those events.**

“How long, O LORD? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, Having sorrow in my heart all the day? How long will my enemy be exalted over me?” Psalm 13:1, 2

When you read through the Psalms, you see David over and over crying out to God about how he feels about his pain and about God. It is okay to be honest with God. Sometimes we are hesitant to share with God how we honestly feel because we fear His discipline or punishment. You don't have to fear verbalizing your feelings because He already knows how you feel. He has known how you feel for an eternity.
You can get angry with God, shake your fist at Him, and even ask the “why” questions. He fully understands because He knows our human-ness. I think it is important to do some “holy” venting. I believe that this venting is a necessary part of your healing process.

**Step of faith:** “God, I am feeling so angry and hurt by the woundedness by my ____________ I repent of those feelings and I am coming to You for healing.”

**Step of faith:** “Lord, I have to be honest with You. I am angry at You for letting this happen to me. I repent of my anger and I am coming to You for healing.”

**Engaging God:** If, right now, you are experiencing your woundedness, take a moment and simply tell God how you feel about your pain, your doubt, your unbelief, etc. Don't hold back. Let Him know what you think and how you feel. You may have to repent of those feelings but it is crucial to express them.

4. **ENTRUST your pain to God.**

“and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously.” 1 Peter 2:23

Entrust in context of healing means:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Giving over to God the PAIN associated with your woundedness.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

You see, if we hold on to the pain or try to compartmentalize, deny, anesthetize, escape, etc. the pain, then it will continue to prevent us from God’s healing hand. Therefore, every time that you feel the pain, give it over to God in that moment. Sometimes the pain will come in waves, and you will have to keep entrusting the pain until it subsides. Let’s look some steps of faith concerning entrustment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I entrusting that pain to You.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am experiencing pain as a result of my woundedness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Engaging God: Every time the pain comes to the surface begin entrusting that pain over to God.

5. Draw on Christ to BE your COMFORT, PERSEVERANCE, PEACE, HOPE, AND CONFIDENCE as you go through the healing process.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.” 2 Corinthians 1:3-4

During the healing process you may need to draw on Christ in the moment to be your:

- **COMFORT** when you are experiencing pain from your woundedness.
- **PERSEVERANCE** when you want to give up on God’s ability or willingness to heal.
- **PATIENCE** when God is not meeting your timetable for healing.
- **HOPE** when you are feeling hopeless about ever being healed.
- **CHRIST-CONFIDENCE** when you have lost your self-confidence in God’s ability or willingness to heal.

There may be other needs that you have from Christ as your Source. When the need for patience, hope, perseverance, etc. arises, seek Christ to meet that need. Here is an illustration showing some steps of faith when you get discouraged.

---

**Step of faith:** “Lord, I am in pain, and I am trusting You to be my comfort.”
**Step of faith:** “Lord, healing is taking longer than I thought. I am beginning to lose hope. I am trusting You to be my hope.”

**Engaging God:** Seek Christ to meet the need that you are experiencing in the midst of the pain of your woundedness.

6. **Seek God to speak TRUTH into your heart if you are resisting God in opening the door because of your FEAR of more pain.**

“Come to me all you who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28

“Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.” John 14:27

You may hear the Lord knocking, but you don't answer the door because you fear the pain that may come with healing. If this is true of you today, seek God to remind you that you have been carrying your “familiar” pain way too long, and if you continue carrying it, it will only get heavier and more unbearable. Seek Him to exchange your fear for His peace and confidence.

**Step of faith:** “Lord, I fear the pain that may come with healing and freedom. I am asking You to persuade me that I have nothing to fear. Persuade me as well that You will sustain me if there is any pain. Remind me that on the other side of any pain that I may experience will be divine healing.”

**Engaging God:** Seek the Lord to give you the willingness to open the doors to your rooms of woundedness. If you are fearful of doing so, ask Christ to be your courage.

7. **Ask God to give you a “spiritual” AWARENESS of the battle going on in your mind concerning your wounding thoughts.**

“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Ephesians 6:12

We sometimes have to ask the Lord to show us or make us aware that we are in an intense battle of the mind when it comes to our woundedness. We have the divine trinity on one hand fighting the “unholy” trinity of the flesh, the power of sin, and Satan/demons on the other.

We learned that every thought that we don't take captive only compounds or worsens the effects of our woundedness. Therefore, we must first be aware of the battle before we can engage God to fight the battle. Without being aware of the battle, we will inevitably lose the battle, and our woundedness will only get worse.

**Step of Faith:** “Lord, continue to remind me and make me aware that there is an intense battle in my mind concerning my wounding thoughts.”

**Engaging God:** Ask the Lord to reveal to you whether the thoughts that you are experiencing are from Him or from the flesh or Satan.
8. When a thought is coming into your mind that is associated with your woundedness, put it on PAUSE and APPLY God’s truth to it.

“Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith. Examine yourselves....” 2 Corinthians 13:5

“We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.” 2 Corinthians 10:5

Taking thoughts captive means to allow the Spirit to put the thoughts that are coming into your mind on “pause” in order to examine the thought to see if it is a truthful thought or if it is a lying, condemning, fleshly, or tempting thought. I want to make the same application to wounding thoughts because with wounding thoughts come false beliefs and damaged emotions.

The key thing to remember is that you have been taking ownership of your “wounding” thoughts for a long enough time that you no longer even question them. Because you have been consistently taking ownership of them, you may no longer recognize that they are wounding thoughts.

Therefore, before taking ownership of a wounding thought, put that thought on pause and ask the Spirit to speak truth to those thoughts. If it is not readily apparent that the thought is not a thought tied to your woundedness, then ask the Spirit to reveal to you the truth about that thought. Here is an illustration of this principle.

Let me give you another example. Let’s assume that you were wounded by the divorce of your parents. You had damaged emotions of rejection, insecurity, and abandonment. Every time that your parent’s divorce came to mind, you would feel these emotions. When that thought is
coming into your mind, put it on pause.

Then think about the truth associated with that thought. One truth is that you are totally accepted and totally secure in your new identity in Christ. A second truth is that even though you felt abandoned by your parents, Hebrews 13:5 tells us that your heavenly Father will “never leave you or forsake you.”

You may have to do this many times before those thoughts no longer have a negative impact on you. I would even recommend that you speak the truth out loud. I have found this a very effective way of addressing wounding thoughts. Therefore a step of faith might look like the following:

**Step of faith:** “Lord, I have put this thought of rejection on pause, and I am asking You to reveal to me if this is a wounding thought. Keep reminding me every time that I think this thought that the truth is that I am totally accepted in my true identity in You.”

**9. ENTRUST to Him any thoughts that trigger your woundedness.**

“*Cast your burden upon the L ORD, and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken.*”  Psalm 55:22

In addition to pausing and examining every thought, every time that some event or thought triggers the painful memories of your past, entrust those thoughts immediately to Christ. Do not dwell on them for a moment because if you do, you will take ownership of them, and they will continue to have a grip on your heart.

**Step of faith:** “Lord, the Spirit has revealed the truth about that wounding thought, therefore, I am entrusting it (giving it over) to You.”

**Engaging God:** Begin entrusting to God every thought that comes to mind that triggers your woundedness. As you do, you will begin to realize that those thoughts will come to mind less often as a result of God’s healing.

**13. THANK God that He is at work to heal your woundedness.**

“*in everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.*” 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Two of the greatest words of faith are “thank you.” In this case, you are giving thanks to the Lord for the fact that He is healing you even though there is no experiential evidence of it. It is easier to thank God once we are experiencing healing, but He wants you to begin thanking Him from the beginning of the healing process.

**Step of Faith:** “Lord, I want to thank You for healing my woundedness even though I am not feeling or experiencing your healing.”

**Engaging God:** Develop a holy habit of thanking God throughout the process of renewing your mind to the truth and setting you free.

**Key Truths About The PROCESS Of Healing**

When it comes to any part of God transforming our lives, I have found from the folks that I have ministered to that they don't like the word “process.” Why? When we seek God for healing
or anything else, we want it, and we want it now. Would you agree? We know that God can and has healed instantly, but my experience in walking with folks has been that transformation and healing will, for the most part, be a process.

When it comes to healing, how deep the woundedness is determines how long the process will be for healing. It may be a long-term process if you have been deeply wounded. Therefore, let’s look at some key truths concerning God’s process of healing.

1. **God’s healing process is SUPERNATURAL**

   We see Christ’s many supernatural works in healing the leper, the blind man and the man with a withered hand. It is no different with your healing. As we discussed in an earlier lesson, supernatural means there is no man-made explanation or formula for how God heals us. It is inexplicable and not understandable. That is one of the many differences between us and the Lord. He does not tell us how or what He is doing. He is simply doing the work supernaturally and we experience it.

2. **We want to walk by EXPERIENCE God’s healing rather than to walk by FAITH.**

   As human beings who feel and experience life every moment, it is only natural to think that when we engage God to heal our woundedness that we will experience His work in us from the beginning. For the most part, when you engage God to heal, you may not initially experience healing. Why is that? We see the answer in 2 Corinthians 5:7:

   “for we walk by faith and not by sight (experience).”

   2 Corinthians 5:7

   You see, our objective is healing. However, God has a two-fold objective. One is to teach you how to walk by faith and secondly, is to heal you of your woundedness. As much as we want the main thing to be healing, I often find that teaching you and me how to walk by faith is a greater priority with God. Therefore, we may have to “faith” it for a period of time before we experience healing.

   I wish that I could tell you what the time line will be from faith to experience, but only the Spirit knows that. The good news is that if you “faith it” long enough, then you will eventually experience healing. Below is an illustration of moving from faith to experiential healing:
KEY TRUTH:

Between the time that we start “faithing” it and eventually experiencing healing, 

God is TEACHING us how to walk by FAITH.

3. God, for the most part, will probably NOT meet your timetable for healing.

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” declares the LORD.”

Isaiah 55:8

I don't know about you but my God is too slow when it comes to transformation. He has been consistently too slow because He has never once met my timetable for transformation or healing. It is at times like these that I realize how true Isaiah 55:8 is.

4. Early on in your walk of faith, you will spend more time below the line in your woundedness.

If you have a deep-seated woundedness, even though you are taking steps of faith, you may, early on in your walk of faith, live more below the line because of the depth of your woundedness. However, as you take steps of faith you will find yourself moving in to a greater healing above the line as your mind is being renewed to the truth. In the following diagram, it illustrates that you start taking steps of faith.

You stay above the line initially for a short time because your fleshly behaviors associated with your woundedness overpower your and you fall back below the line. You may stay below
the line awhile but you will take another step of faith and go above the line and stay there longer. Why? Because with each step of faith, the Holy Spirit is renewing your mind to the truth concerning your false beliefs associated with your woundedness and you begin to experience healing through changed thoughts, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors.

4. When your timetable or any other expectation you might have about God’s healing process is not being met, you may be tempted to be PERPLEXED, IMPATIENT, FRUSTRATED, with the result that you DOUBT God.

   The longer that we walk by faith without experiencing any healing, the more it makes us vulnerable to impatience, frustration, and eventually doubt.

   a. Perplexed

   “we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing.” 2 Corinthians 4:8

   Most of man’s perplexity when it comes to God’s work in our lives results from wanting to figure out what God is doing but he/she can’t figure it out. We all have expectations and it is no different when it comes to God and His healing process. When those expectations are not met we tend to be perplexed. We can see from the verse above that Paul got perplexed as well but he did not despair. He just kept walking by faith in the midst of his perplexity. However, if we stay in a state of perplexity it can produce impatience, frustration and eventually doubt.

   **Step of faith when you are perplexed:** “Lord, I am perplexed about what You are doing to heal me. I can’t figure out what Your doing. I am entrusting my perplexity to you and I am going to take another step of faith, trusting that You know exactly what you are doing to heal me.”
b. Impatience

We are not patient by nature. Therefore, when we sense that God is moving too slow (which will probably be the case), then we get impatient. In my impatience, I would say such things as: “Lord, can’t you move a little faster in the process?” or “I am losing my patience with how long this is taking.” When you sense impatience creeping in, then immediately seek Christ to be your patience. A step of faith might look like this:

Step of faith when you get impatient: “Lord, I am getting impatient with Your healing process. I am trusting You to replace my impatience with Your patience.”

The key is to not let impatience grow because the longer that you “wallow” in impatience, the more difficult it will be to seek Christ to be your patience.

b. Frustration

If the impatience is not dealt with, it can lead to frustration. Frustration, like perplexity, is the result of blocked goals or God not meeting our expectations about our healing. As you sense that beginning to happen, you might take a step of faith like this:

Step of faith when you get frustrated: “Lord, I know that I am getting frustrated that it is taking longer than I expected to experience healing. I am trusting You to replace my frustration with Your peace and perseverance.”

c. Doubt

If you don’t engage God to deal with your impatience and frustration, it most likely will lead to doubting God.

If God is not meeting your timetable, then the flesh and/or Satan sees this as an opportunity to tempt us to doubt God. In our flesh we might be tempted to doubt by asking questions such as: “How long will it be, Lord, before I experience healing?” “Are you really healing me?” “I don't see any evidence of it.”

Once doubt creeps in, you are very vulnerable to walking away from God’s healing process. What Satan will do is to first tempt you to doubt God and then will use your doubt to persuade you to no longer seek God for healing.

Doubt will EVENTUALLY move you to a place where you will QUIT engaging God for healing.

A step of faith in seeking the Spirit to deal with your doubts might look like this:

Step of faith when you are doubting: “Lord, I am beginning to doubt Your willingness to heal me. I am asking You to replace my doubts with Your faith. Persuade me that even though I am not experiencing healing that You are healing me.”

5. Experiential healing will come INCREMENTALLY.
What you will find as you move down the path of spiritual healing is that healing will come incrementally. It will come a little at a time. You may notice that a thought or belief is changing concerning the false beliefs surrounding your woundedness. Or, your typical knee-jerk reaction to your woundedness might be less when someone pushes a button that reminds you of your woundedness. Therefore, as you walk the journey into healing, ask the Lord to show you where He is transforming you.

**Step of faith:** “Lord, I am asking You to reveal to me where changes in my thoughts, feelings, beliefs, or behaviors are taking place.”

**6. The JOURNEY is the destination.**

By this I mean that we want to focus on the destination or finish line whereby we can declare ourselves totally healed of our woundedness. If we focus on the destination, as we said previously, we will be tempted to doubt or even walk away from God if He has not gotten us to the finish line on our timetable.

I worked with a man who was a chronic worrier. His worry came out of his past woundedness from his mother. He had been a worrier for several years before he started the faith walk to healing. As we walked together, the overriding questions were: “When am I going to be healed?” “When am I going to be set free?” It was much like when we were kids on a trip, and we would ask mom and dad every five minutes, “Are we there yet?”

However, if we focus on the moment by moment journey, we will see God working in our lives while we are faithing it and while we are experiencing healing. Looking at the journey as the destination means that we don't have to wait until complete healing takes place to thank God for His healing. Whether by faith or experience, we can thank God every moment of the journey.

For me, there still needs to be healing concerning my woundedness, but I am now more focused on the journey than on the destination. Another way of saying it is that I am crossing a finish line every moment that I am abiding because God is incrementally healing me every moment when I do abide in Him.

---

**Therefore, focusing on the JOURNEY INCREASES our faith and Christ-confidence that God is working in our lives.**

---

**What Will You Begin To Experience As God Heals?**

Now that we understand the process, let’s look at some of the things that we can expect as we are being healed.

- **As your mind is being renewed to the truth and replacing your false beliefs with the truth, you will find yourself:**
  1. Taking ownership of the “arrows” or thoughts that trigger your woundedness less and less.
  2. You will increasingly be engaging the Spirit to take those thoughts captive.
  3. More of your thoughts will line up with the truth than with your false beliefs.
• As your woundedness is being healed, your damaged emotions will be healed as well. You will begin “feeling” the truth as well as believing the truth. For example, if you believe that you are unworthy due to your woundedness and your mind is renewed to the truth that you are worthy then your feelings will line up with your beliefs and you will increasingly feel more worthy.

• You will begin to make decisions based on the truth. By that I mean, you will no longer choose to live in denial, or stuff or compartmentalize your woundedness. You will choose to walk in the freedom that comes with believing the truth.

• Over time, as you live more from the truth, you will find yourself living less from your fleshly behaviors and live more from your Christ-like behaviors. For example, if you were critical or judgemental as a result of your woundedness then you will find those attitudes being replaced with a Christ-like attitude of love and giving grace.

• As you are being healed, you will experience a growing attitude of forgiveness toward the offender.

• You will begin to believe the truth of your true identity versus believing your false beliefs.

• Your Christ-confidence will grow as you experience more of the Spirit’s healing. Christ-confidence is crucial to the healing process. Christ-confidence is the result of experiencing healing on some level. As you begin to experience God’s supernatural work then your confidence will grow concerning God’s desire and willingness to heal you.

Before I end this study, I want to share two more testimonies that I believe will increase your faith in God’s ability to heal you and to set you free. The first one is based on Louis Zamperini whose story was told in the movie “Unbroken.” The second is a story about a police officer in central Texas who was healed in spite of terrible abuse.

“Unbroken”- Louie Zamperini

The first story is from the movie titled “Unbroken” that came out in 2014. It was a story about Louis “Louie” Zamperini. It is based on a book by the same title written by Laura Hillenbrand. I recommend the book over the movie because the book tells the “whole” story. Louie was a state track champion in high school. He ran so well that he was able to run in the 1936 Olympics in Berlin. Even though he didn't win, he knew that his chances of winning the 1940 Olympics in Japan were within reach. However, the war interrupted that dream, and he joined the Air Force.

Louie became a bombardier on a B-24 bomber. On May 27, 1943, while on the search of a downed aircraft, mechanical difficulties caused the bomber to crash into the ocean killing eight of the eleven men aboard.
The three survivors including Louie had very little food and no water and survived 47 days by capturing rainwater and eating raw fish and birds. They had to constantly fend off shark attacks and were nearly capsized by a storm. They were strafed multiple times by a Japanese bomber.

On their 47th day at sea, Louie and the pilot were captured by the Japanese. Louie was held in captivity in three different POW camps where he was severely beaten and mistreated until the end of the war in August 1945. His primary tormentor was a prison guard nicknamed “Bird.” He tortured Louis unmercifully until the end of the war.

Needless to say, Louie was not only physically wounded but soulically devastated. When he came home, he was filled with anger, bitterness, and hatred for the Japanese (especially for “Bird”). He would have nightmares every night. In some of those, he had his hand around “Bird’s” throat but could not squeeze hard enough to kill him. He became an alcoholic to numb the pain. He began to verbally, emotionally, and eventually physically abuse his wife.

She was on the verge of divorcing Louie when she attended a Billy Graham revival in Los Angeles and got saved. The change was so dramatic in her that she knew that the only hope for her husband was Christ. She almost literally dragged him to the revival where he trusted Christ as his Savior. From that point on he never had another nightmare.

However, it took God a number of years to heal him from all his pain and to give him an attitude of forgiveness. God did such a work of healing in Louie that he made a special trip to Japan to personally forgive each of his captors. Needless to say they were stunned. The only one not to receive him was “Bird.” However, Louie had a letter delivered to “Bird” telling him that he had forgiven him. Louie lived until 2014 free from his wounded past.

Michael’s Testimony

(At the time of this writing, Michael is a 33 year old police detective with a city which is south of Fort Worth.) Here is Michael’s story in his own words:

“I had a number of violent and abusive people introduced into my life from an early age. One of my first teachers was prosecuted for sexually molesting his class. That same teacher had locked me in the classroom closet throughout the day on a consistent basis. I had a number of stepfathers since birth. One beat me with his fists repeatedly over a long period of time. I was encouraged to drink alcohol at age 10 and began heavily drinking sometime thereafter. I recall at age 6 that I wanted to murder my stepfather in hopes that it would bring the violence to an end, but I didn’t go through with it.

I moved 32 times in 12 years because my stepfathers were deadbeat drug users who were forced out of several places where we lived. Both my mother and second stepfather were open about having several different affairs. In spite of these horrific circumstances, I knew that I wanted something different for my life and was determined to go to college. I got a full academic scholarship to Howard Payne University as well as making the football team. After getting my Associates Degree in Applied Arts, I went on to join the police force.

Even though I was saved as a teenager, I couldn't get past my anger. I called myself a “rage-aholic.” You can only imagine the deep-seated anger that I must have felt. The Lord connected me to a man named Drew Grace about two years ago. Drew has taken a number of groups through the Living Life From A New Source study and the study on our identity in Christ. The Lord set me free from my anger through these Christ-life truths. Even more impactful was that I
realized in a very transforming way my true identity. The statement that I made near the end of my testimony that was simply amazing was, “I can’t even remember the person that I used to be.”

I recently had a baby boy whose name is Cole. Because of the healing in my heart, Cole will get to experience the love (rather than the abuse) of his earthly father who was transformed by His Heavenly Father.”

I don’t know about you, but I believe that these two testimonies plus Juli’s testimony alone should confirm to you that no matter how horrific your woundedness, God is able to heal and restore. He promises healing throughout His word:

“**He will restore the years the locusts have eaten**” Joel 2:25

“**The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me. To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted. To proclaim release to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set free all those who are oppressed.**” Luke 4:18

“**He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.**” Psalm 147:3

And Jesus said to him, “‘If You can?’ **All things are possible to him who believes.**…” Matthew 9:23, 24

I hope that the stories, testimonies, and truths shared in this study have given you a spiritual foundation and an understanding to at least begin to seek God to begin the process of healing. Even more than an understanding, I pray that through this study God has given you hope (confident expectation) that He will heal and restore your life. It may be a journey that is difficult, but I can assure you that it will be eternally worth traveling.

My prayer for you as you engage the Lord to heal you is that you will eventually come to the same place that Paul did when he said:

“**Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, 21 to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.** “

_Ephesians 3:20_
Note About Counseling

You may be at a place where you will need someone to walk with you. It may be a friend, a spiritual mentor, or a licensed counselor. If so, seek them out to walk with you in the healing process. The key to seeking counseling is that they be Christ-centered and Christ-focused. By that I mean, that they will always take you to God’s truth and to God as the Source, not you, to accomplish the healing.

Other Discipleship Materials

If you would like to look at more curriculum and videos offered by Christ Is Life Ministries, please go to our website. The website address is listed below. If you have any comments to make about this study, please feel free to email me at the email address listed below.

Christ Is Life Ministries

Website: www.christislifeministries.com

Email: bill@christislifeministries.com