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Overcoming Painful Memories

- Joy -

Painful experiences have greatly saddened the lives of most of us. Time doesn't bring complete healing. However, the Father sent Jesus to heal the broken-hearted and set free those who have been emotionally bruised. We can find "joy" as God heals us of our hurts and sets us free from past emotional traumas.

Hosea's Experience

In the book of Hosea, the LORD instructed the prophet, Hosea, to go to the area of the country where there were many prostitutes and to choose a woman to be his wife. *"And the LORD said to Hosea, Go take unto thee a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms: for the land hath committed great whoredoms, departing from the LORD"* (Hosea 1:2). This is rather a strange story and like many other people, I have some rather unpleasant feelings about it. However, Hosea was living out a prophecy before the nation of Israel. In obedience to the LORD, Hosea found a young lady by the name of Gomer. Her name literally meant "completion". She was beautiful. She was perfect. She was the "living end". Her mother's name was Diblaim. Diblaim meant "a double layer fruitcake". Now, she was not crazy, but real juicy! We might say today that she was a "real cheese-cake". Gomer's mother was probably the most desired of the prostitutes. Therefore,

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when Hosea found Gomer, he must have thought that God had brought Heaven down to earth just for him.

There are several truths that we should understand as we read the story from Scripture. First, God would violate His Word if He had instructed Hosea to marry prostitute (Leviticus 21:7). Second, Gomer was from an Israelite family. Third, Gomer was from a family of prostitutes, but not a prostitute at the time of her marriage. Fourth, she was probably only a twelve year old girl. It was the custom there to marry at a very early age. Finally, we may also assume that she was a virgin. It was only after she got married that the generational curse took effect and she began to have affairs.

Shortly after Hosea married Gomer, she became pregnant and Hosea became a new proud father of a son. God instructed Hosea to name his son, Jezreel, which meant "God would scatter". Hosea and his family were living out the prophecy of the LORD. The name, Hosea, meant "salvation". God was to bring salvation to His people, Israel. God (Hosea) had picked out the perfect nation of Israel (Gomer) and had entered into the marriage covenant with her. Israel was beginning to have children, but God was to scatter the seed of Israel.

Gomer became pregnant a second time and she gave birth to a daughter. However, this time, Hosea was not the father. The generational curse had taken effect in Gomer's life and she had begun to have affairs. The result was a baby girl. Can you imagine the disappointment, the hurt, the heartbreak, and the devastation that Hosea felt? Heaven had become hell. His wife had betrayed his trust. His wife had broken their marriage covenant. The marriage vows had gone up in smoke. He felt used, betrayed, deserted, and alone. As his hurt turned into anger, God spoke to him to name the illegitimate daughter Loruhamah. How terrible! Loruhamah meant "not having mercy" or "no-mercy". Could you imagine being in the first grade class room and the teacher calls our your name. "**No-mercy**, will you spell the word, 'cat'?" You can just visualize the snickers and the giggles of the other children. Of course, the fact would be known, "You are not your dad's child." "Your mother has been having affairs." Here again, we need to see that Gomer and his family was living out prophecy. Israel, the wife of God, has played the whore and was bearing children out of whoredom.

It may have been that Gomer felt sorry for what she had done and even asked forgiveness of her husband. She may have even promised to be faithful unto him. However, it was not long (as soon as the child was weaned) before Gomer again left her house and had other affairs. The result was the birth of a second child out of prostitution. This must have been more than what Hosea thought that he could handle. Here he was, a prophet, a man of God, and in the spotlight of his nation. His reputation was on the line. He was preaching righteousness, but his wife was playing the role of a prostitute. I cry

inside as I dare allow myself to feel vicariously his pain and embarrassment. Even more than his wife just having affairs, now there was a second child that becomes a constant reminder of his wife's unfaithfulness. Inside his head, he screams, "This child is not my child!"

Furthermore, God instructs Hosea to name the baby boy, Loammi, which means "not my people". Again, you can imagine having your dad call you for supper when you are playing with the other little boys. "**Not-my-people**, come get your supper." The other little boys would know what that meant and say other fitting words behind your back, but just loud enough for you to hear them. Oh, what rejection the boy must have felt! The emotional bruises to his identity must have gone deep.

So far and to some degree, we have looked at the emotional wounds of Hosea and the two children which Gomer had through her affairs. However, Gomer, herself, must have experienced major hurts. She was married to the perfectly, obedient man of God. He had been faithful; however, because of the iniquity of whoredom within her, she allowed herself to be allured into affairs outside of her marriage. She must have known how much she had hurt her husband. She must have felt like a total failure. She had shamed her family. She had destroyed her marriage and was bringing children into the world who would have all kinds of emotional wounds. She was a mess. She, no doubt, had made her husband's heart cold and hard toward her. Yet, she sought after even more men to fill her lust and greed.

The situation seemed hopeless! Hosea could not put the pieces of his marriage back together. Gomer was hopelessly caught in sexual addiction outside of her marriage. Hosea's son and Gomer's son and daughter were caught in being victims of the whole terrible mess. Therefore, God said that He would intervene. He said that He would put a hedge about Gomer. *"Therefore, behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths"* (Hosea 2:6). First, the hedge would keep her from fulfilling her desires with other men. Second, Gomer would seek to *"follow after her lovers, but she would not overtake them; and she would seek them, but shall not find them: then shall she say, 'I will go and return to my first husband, for then was it better with me than now'"* (Hosea 2:7). Sometimes, people have to become really broken before they are ready to receive healing.

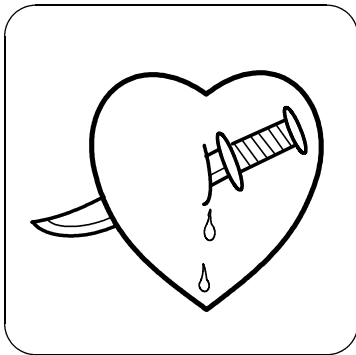
Gomer had come to depend upon the money and gifts that she got through prostitution. Therefore, when God put the hedge around her, her source of income ceased and she went into slavery. *"Then said the LORD unto me, Go yet, love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the LORD toward the children of Israel, who look to other gods, and love flagons of wine"* (Hosea 3:1). Hosea was, at the

appointed time, to go a second time and search for his wife who had left him. He was to love her with God's love although she had committed adultery.

When Hosea found her, she was the lowest form of a slave. Her owner did not even consider her to be of much value. Hosea purchased her for about one half the price of a normal female slave, plus a ration of the coarse grain (barley). Hosea renewed his marriage vows to her, speaking life into their marriage. By faith, in love, he told Gomer that she would continue be his wife, that she would not again commit adultery, and that he would be faithful unto her. He also changed the names of her children from **No-mercy** to **Having-mercy**, and from **Not-a-people** to **My-people** (see I Peter 2:9-10). Gomer and her children were received, loved, and healed. The family's sorrow was turned to **joy**.

In like fashion, God wants to receive us, love us, and heal us of our emotional hurts and bruises. *"Come, let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two day will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up and we shall live in his sight"* (Hosea 6:1-2). I will define emotional hurts, give steps to healing, and encourage the reader to minister inner healing in the following pages.

Defining A Wounded Heart



A wounded heart occurs when someone or something brings **hurts** to our emotions. *"The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down deep into the innermost parts of the belly"* (Proverbs 26:22). There is an old expression that says, "Sticks and stones may break your bones, but words will not hurt you." **Don't believe it!** Words may be like daggers that cut deep within the heart of the individual. More people are hurt with words than ever thought of being hurt by sticks and stones. We may receive hurts from **words, actions, and attitudes** that others may express toward us that offend us, embarrass us, or belittle us. We may also receive hurts from the results of our own sinful behavior. Solomon stated, *"He loveth transgression that loveth strife: and he that exalteth his gate seeketh destruction"* (Proverbs 17:19). When we enter into a way of sin, we open ourselves to being hurt emotionally. David knew what it was like to receive emotional hurts as a result of his sinful acts. *"And David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the LORD, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly"* (II Samuel 24:10). David readily cried unto the Lord in his pain. *"Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins"* (Psalms 25:18). We also may experience emotional hurts as a result of some calamity when we are

overcome by the experience. Job is a good example of this. He said, *"For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me. I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came"* (Job 3:25-26). He became so emotionally devastated by the loss of his possessions, family, and his health that he cursed the day that he was born. Another source of hurts is through generational curses. Generational curses are sin tendencies of the parents that are passed along to the children (Exodus 34:6-7). The children of alcoholic parents often receive mental, emotional, and physical abuse from their parents. Furthermore, as those children become adults that often take on the same abusive characteristics of their parents. As they, in turn, find that they also are abusive to their own children, they, themselves, suffer emotional hurts.

We also then see that drug abuse produces even more emotional hurts. *"Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again"* (Proverbs 23:29-35). We often look at the crazy actions of someone on drugs and laugh. However, we need to see the emotional hurts that result from that drug abuse.

Some of the greatest hurts come out of involvement with the occult or Satanism. God said, *"And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people"* (Leviticus 20:6). When God sets Himself against someone, we can be sure that the person will experience emotional hurts. We may note some extreme practices as the prophets of Baal called upon Baal to save them. *"And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them"* (I Kings 18:28). Today, a common way for Satanists to hold their membership is through intimidation. For example, a new recruit may have to witness an animal or human sacrifice and be told that they are in some way responsible for the sacrifice. The individual feels trapped. Who can he tell if he is responsible for such an awful act?

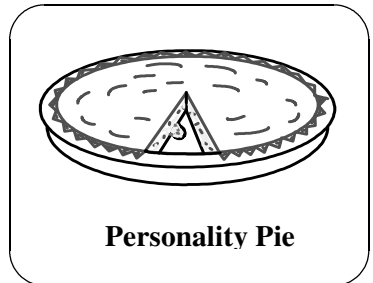
Degree Of Hurts

Some hurts are like superficial scratches to our emotions. The pain is not severe and does not last long. We may brush them off as though they didn't exist. These may come in the form of a critical word or a sharp glance directed at us. Other hurts are more

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severe. They are like a deep cut to our heart. They are very painful and may last a lifetime. They are as open wounds that often become contaminated and get infected. There are other wounds that are blows to our identity. The Scripture calls these *bruises*. Bruises are deep wounds that may cripple our walk and fellowship with others and with God.

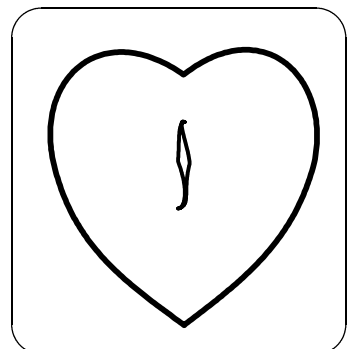
Other wounds are so severe that we can not believe that it could even happen to us. We may come to believe that the event had to happen to someone else (in whole or in part). Our personalities are like a layered pie. When others bring extreme hurts into our lives, it is as though they have taken a knife and cut the pie into slices. One piece may become disassociated from the remaining portion or the other pieces of the pie. When this occurs, we develop what some psychologists call a multiple personality disorder. There is a segmentation of the personality, in whole or in part. We should understand that we have different segments of memory. We may have intellectual knowledge, a visual image, certain feelings, or physical sensations associated with an event. When the pie is sliced through by severe emotional wounds, the pieces of the personality may at time blend together. Some of the filling from one piece may run together with the other pieces. We may experience great emotional depression without intellectual "knowledge" of the past event. In contrast, we may experience visual images (memory) of an event, but be emotionally "numb" to the experience. We may have part or total amnesia of an event, if the memory causes extreme emotional pain.



Discerning Of Hurts

The Holy Spirit, working in the Christian counselor, provides him with discernment of the individuals hurts. The counselor should pray for this discernment. This discernment may occur when the counselor first meets the individual. The discernment may occur without any outward natural signs of the individual being hurt. The discernment comes on a spiritual plane and by the work of the Holy Spirit.

Another method of discernment comes through visual observation. The counselor may observe the individual's posture. If the individual sits with their arms and legs crossed, this is a good indication he is "closed" emotionally. He has hurts and has built up his defenses. If the individual keeps his eyes and head down, he is probably experiencing emotional pain and shame. The eyes are like windows to the soul. The individual does not want anyone to see what is inside. If



someone has difficulty looking at you with his eyes, he is probably harboring emotional hurts.

The child who keeps to himself and is unusually quiet may be hurting and needing healing. In counseling a family, the counselor may observe that a younger child may be unusually clingy to his mom or dad. This is a good indication of hurts. However, teenagers and young adults may mask the signs of being hurt with signs of rebellion. A critical attitude toward parents or a sibling may be a cover for deep emotional wounds.

The way one dresses is often an indication of emotional pain. The person who is a big slouch is often the one who is in pain. The young lady that wears heavy makeup or the young man who wears "way-out" garb is probably trying to mask some hurts. Also the person who over-dresses and wears a suit and tie when only casual wear is appropriate, is probably masking emotional hurts. Again, we can look for the extremes. The person who wears all black or the person who wears extremely bright, flashy clothes may be in similar emotional pain. They just express themselves differently.

Addictions are often a cover-up for emotional wounds. People simply often just try to drown out the pain with something that is stimulating to them. The addictions may be alcohol (usually considered a depressant), entertainment, rock music (Christian or otherwise), thrills, sexual stimulation, food, work, or even ministry. Others try to deaden the pain with tranquilizers or sedatives.

Anger and violence are also good indicators of hidden emotional hurts. We use the expression that the individual is carrying a "chip" on his shoulder. Hurting people often strike out in self defense and revenge. The young man whose mother neglected and abused him, may exhibit fits of anger toward his bride. The young woman whose stepfather abused her may have the cross-hairs of revenge on every male authority figure in her life.

Depression is often a sign of emotional wounds. The depression may be chronic (ongoing) in nature, or it may occur in cycles. The cycles may occur daily, weekly, monthly, or yearly. The wife may become depressed daily just before her husband comes home from work because she is carrying emotional wounds inflicted upon her by her husband. The depression may occur around July 4th each year because July 4th was the day on which a family member was killed in an automobile accident.

Chronic physical ailments may be another clue to emotional hurts. Emotional hurts lower the body's immune system to fight off various ailments such as the common cold. Emotional hurts also may have an effect upon our blood pressure, digestive tract, and respiratory system. One may trace the cause for many headaches and stomach ailments back to emotional hurts. Hurts also play havoc with our blood sugar levels. I personally

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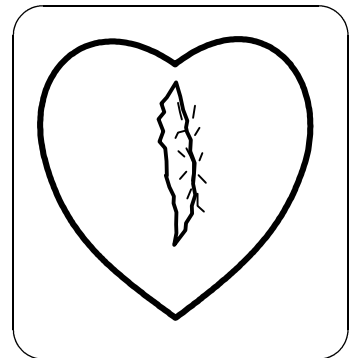
have experienced difficulties with low blood sugar. In part, at least, the trigger was emotional hurts. Phantom or imaginary illness may at times be related to emotional wounds.

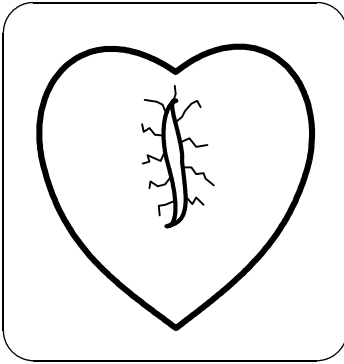
Just as physical pain may keep us awake at night, emotional pain also may keep us from getting the proper amount of sleep. Therefore, a lack of sleep may indicate emotional wounds. Along the same thought, if there is enough emotional pain, it may keep us from concentrating on the normal things about which we should think. Emotional hurts may be at the root of the problem of many of those diagnosed as having an Attention Deficit Disorder.

What Happens To The Heart?

The aggressive, revengeful person may sense a release of pain as he inflicts painful blows upon his offender. However, the problem is only multiplied. The wound will not heal perfectly without God's supernatural intervention. The wound becomes complicated because, once the individual has struck his offender, he must also deal with personal guilt. Furthermore, the offender may retaliate with even more wounds.

The passive person who thinks that time will heal the hurts is also wrong. Time never brings perfect healing. Time only brings scar tissue. I used to dread the first couple of weeks when I got out of school for the summer break. It meant that I would immediately go to work on the farm, working with my hands. I would drive a farm tractor (without the convenience of power steering), build fences, or whatever was necessary. The first week, my hands would become raw, sometimes with blisters. The second week was not quite as bad as calluses began to form on my hands. By the third week, my hands would have enough calluses that I would be insensitive to the rough work. This is a good picture of what happens through emotional wounds. Time allows calluses to form over the hurts. We may become insensitive to the pain and the feelings of others. We become hard hearted. Then if we try to enter back into relationship with another person and the person is at all sensitive, the other person will sense our hardness of heart. Like someone feeling my rough hands, the person would feel the hardness and callousness. Most likely the individual would react or back away causing more rejection and more hurt to us. The cycle begins again, followed by more hardness and more coarseness. I have seen couples that have repeatedly gone through this cycle until their hearts were hard as flint rocks. When they tried to enter again into relationship, the sparks would fly!



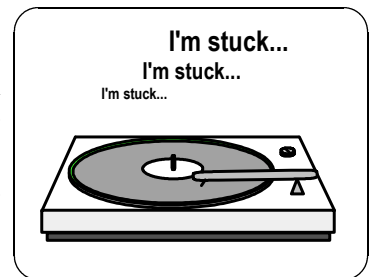


Another person may also be outwardly passive in his response to hurts. He may simply stuff them deep down into his subconscious mind. He may think that they are out of sight and out of mind, never to arise again. However, the pain will eventually surface in one form or another. It may arise at a weak moment in an emotional explosion such as anger or depression. It may also arise in the form of a physical illness. Some people begin to focus inwardly on the hurts that they have received. The hurts are like a sore that becomes a festering sore. Then someone may come along

and say a sharp word that is like a pin prick. All the stored up corruption comes gushing out! Who wants to be around when that happens? There follows more rejection and more hurt.

Stuck In A Groove

Before the time of audio cassette and CD players, people had the old fashion turntables. The LP record would have spiraling grooves and a needle on the arm of the player would pick up the sound as the record turned. The needle on the turntable may get stuck in a groove of a record and the same words are played over and over. The same thing sometimes happens in our minds. The same hurtful experience is played over and over in our minds. It is difficult to think of anything other than that where the needle is stuck in the groove. With every revolution, the thought (the groove) is cut a little deeper, and it becomes increasingly difficult to get out of the groove. Two results may be that we may become extremely irritated and even get depressed.



First, sometimes there seems to be a flaw in the new record. When we play out our lives, we may get to a certain point where the groove seems to be cut too deep for us. For example, some event that we experience is so traumatic and such a deep cutting experience that we play over and over in our minds. In this case, there is a need to see God working through the experience.

Second, by analogy, we may hold the needle in the groove to be sure that we have heard all the music or words. Then the needle gets stuck there. For example, having a fear of failure in mind, we may therefore rehearse an idea, problem, or event over and over to be sure we can find the proper solution. The greater the fear, the more we may rehearse the scenario. As we continue to rehearse possible events over and over in our

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minds, we find it harder and harder to think of anything else. In this case, there is a need to give God the problem, trusting Him to give us the proper answer.

Third, by analogy, one may press down on the playing arm or put too much weight on it to increase the audio output level to possible cover up the background noise. However, the extra weight on the needle causes it to cut the record and causes the needle to get stuck in the groove. For example, we may already have deep wounds in our emotions that we may try to cover up by focusing our attention on another interest. One may go bowling with the guys to get away from the hurts inflicted upon him by his wife. He then focuses all his time and attention on bowling. He spends time finding just the right shoes and ball for bowling. He spends hours practicing his game. He takes out a subscription to a bowling magazine and reads it intensely to get points on how to improve his game. One can easily get stuck with the new game, project, or cause. In this case, one must receive healing for the early wounds, then one must redirect his attention to other responsibilities.

Fourth, by analogy, on an occasion we may use too sharp a needle that will make a deep cut in the record not allowing it to follow the course of the track. For example, we may have been hurt by a close friend. Then we develop a critical attitude toward the other person or ourselves. This response cuts a deep groove in our thinking. It then becomes extremely difficult to get out of the critical thought process. Our attitudes may become more and more critical. It becomes harder and harder to think positive thoughts about the person who has hurt us. In this case, there is a strong need of forgiving others before complete healing can take place.

Fifth, by analogy, sometimes we get some dirt on the record that blocks the needle from following the precut track causing it to get stuck in one particular groove. For example, sometimes we may sin without seeking and getting forgiveness. The guilt that follows, blocks our freedom to follow the course of life. In this situation, there is a need to acknowledge all sin, repent of that sin, ask forgiveness of others and of God, make restitution if needed, and reinforce action with God's Word. **However, in all five cases, the healing of hurts is essential.**

My Story

I grew up in a Christian home as a son of a minister. My parents took me to church as child. I gave my life to Jesus when I was nine years old. I surrendered my life to pastoral ministry when I was eighteen years old. I majored in Bible in college and Theology in Seminary. However, no one ever taught me about the healing of hurts.

I had been working with a department store for almost five years, when I got a new, young manager over my department. He was somewhat younger than I was, and I guess that was threatening to him. I became his target for criticism. No matter how well I did the work, it was not good enough for him. Almost every day, I would go to work and he would chew me out about something. That got very old, real fast.

I did everything that I knew to do to please my manager, but it still wasn't satisfactory. I knew that I was to do my best to please him and tried to do so. I even did extra work to try to please him. I knew that I was to forgive him for his unjustified criticism and that was not a big deal for me. I purposed before God to forgive him on a regular basis. I knew that I was supposed to love him with God's love. I believe that I did so. However, the emotional pain was so severe that it was beginning to affect my physical heart.

I went each week to a friend's house for a Bible study. One week, just before Christmas, I went to the Bible study. On this particular evening, my friend read a Scripture, made a very brief statement about it, which I don't remember, and prayed. He read, "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord*" (Luke 4:18-19). When this happened, I thought, "How strange?" Why didn't he read something in Luke about the birth of Jesus? Why didn't he make more comments about the passage? After the prayer, because it was at Christmas, we had punch, some cookies, and fellowship.

Later that evening, when I got home and had crawled into bed, it hit me, "I had to go back to work tomorrow and suffer more criticism." The emotional pain was like a stab to the heart. I began to wrestle with the whole matter. I had been with the company for five years and was about to get a promotion and a five-year pin. I did not want to quit the job, but how could I continue to face the pain? I had done all that I knew that God required of me. I had tried to serve my boss as unto the Lord. I had forgiven him. I had tried to show him God's love. I just couldn't stand the thought of facing additional hurts. I rolled and tumbled in my bed over the matter.

In desperation, I cried out, "God help!" Immediately, the Holy Spirit brought the thought of the Scripture to mind, "Jesus came to heal the broken hearted." I had read the Scripture many times before, but for the first time, it applied to me. I was the one who was broken hearted. Now, I am the type of person who likes to ask all the questions, "Why? How? When? Where?" So I immediately got up out of my bed and went into my study at my house to find some answers. It was probably about 2:00 a.m. and the house was quiet. I opened my Bible to find out more about the healing of hurts.

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First, I discovered that God does care about those who are brokenhearted. *"The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. **The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart**; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all"* [Bold emphasis is mine] (Psalm 34:17-19). This was good news for me because I had been taught that God only cared about "spiritual" things. Next, I discovered that David had the experience of having a broken heart, but that God had healed his hurts. *"He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds"* (Psalm 147:3). That was great for David, but how about God's healing for me?

Then I came to Isaiah 53 and began to read. It is an Old Testament prophecy concerning the coming of Jesus. *"Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him"* (Isaiah 53:1-2). The first thing that I saw was that Jesus was just a plain Jewish young man. He was not beautiful like many of the paintings that we may see of him. He would go unnoticed in a crowd. He wasn't Mr. Macho. He would not be a pinup in the women's dorm.

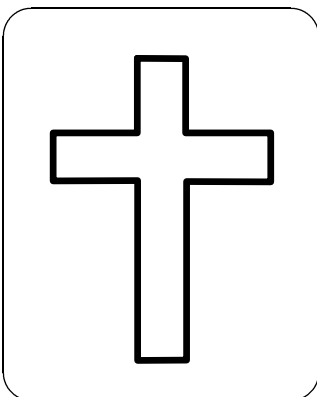
"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not" (Isaiah 53:3). This verse really stood out to me, because it caused me to consider how Jesus had suffered the hurts of rejection. His birth and childhood had much stigma attached. He was born during the reign of an extremely wicked ruler and his own birth was the indirect cause of deaths of many baby boys (Matthew 2:1-18). He was probably teased about being an illegitimate child (John 8:41). Mary, his mother, had become pregnant with Jesus by the Holy Spirit some time before Joseph and Mary officially got married. He must have also been teased about being a "goodie, goodie" kid because he did everything right. I got teased about being a "goodie, goodie" kid, although I was not all that good. How much more would have Jesus been teased by the other children when they wanted to do something wrong and he would not follow their desires.

When Jesus was twelve years old, Mary and Joseph took a trip to Jerusalem to observe the Passover. When they left Jerusalem, they assumed that Jesus was with some other of the family members in the caravan. After several days, they realized that Jesus was not with them. They had to return to Jerusalem to find him. When they did find him, he was talking to the doctors of religious law in the Temple. They got on his case. "Why have you caused us to worry?" Jesus responded with, "Don't you know that I must be about my **Father's** business?" The Scripture specifically states that they did not comprehend what he was talking about (Luke 2:46-50). Therefore, Jesus experienced what it is like to be a misunderstood child.

His family was poor. His stepfather was a common physical laborer. We would consider him to be "blue collar" worker (Matthew 13:55). The Roman government oppressed his nation most of his life. The country in which he was born was no larger than the state of Texas. Most people considered Nazareth, the town in which Jesus grew up, a bad town (John 1:46). Jesus was compelled to work in his stepfather's trade most of his life (Matthew 13:55). His stepfather must have died when Jesus was young; therefore, he had the responsibility, being the oldest boy, to care for the family (John 19:26-27). Jesus was not especially good looking; therefore, most people were not attracted to him (Isaiah 53:2).

When Jesus began his public ministry, the people of his home town did not believe in him. He said that he could do no miracles there, except heal a few sick people because of their unbelief (Mark 6:5). Once when he was teaching, his friends publicly accused him of being out of his mind (Mark 3:21). On one occasion, Jesus was teaching in the Synagogue and his family became so embarrassed about his teaching that they came to take him home (Mark 3:31-32). Could you imagine teaching a Sunday School class and your family members come into the class and pull you out because of their embarrassment? The religious leaders of the day (Scribes and Pharisees) accused Jesus of doing miracles by the power of Beelzebub (Matthew 12:24). They considered Beelzebub to be the chief of unclean spirits. They were actually saying that Jesus was demon possessed by the chief of unclean spirits.

The religious leaders hated Jesus because they refused to believe in him. When Jesus said that God was Father, thus making himself equal with God, the religious leaders began to plot to kill Jesus (John 5:18). They falsely accused him, having false witnesses to testify against him. They blindfolded him and beat him with rods saying, "If you be a prophet, tell us who hit you." His friends all deserted him. Peter, one of the three closest friends, cursed and said that he did not even know Jesus (Mark 14:71). The soldiers put a crown of thorns on his head, a robe on his back, and made fun of him, calling him the



king of the Jews. Jesus got some bad judges. One had him beaten until he was almost dead and sentenced him to be executed for crimes that he did not commit. The soldiers stripped him naked and hung him on the cross for everyone to see. This was emotional, physical, and sexual abuse. They hung him between two thieves for further humiliation. Even one of the thieves mocked him. The people came by wagging their lips at him saying, "If you be the Son of God, come down from the cross" (Matthew 27:40). He never wrote a book, never married, never physically fathered any children, and his life was cut short by a horrible, painful, death.

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Yes, Jesus received every kind of rejection imaginable. However, the worse was yet to come. When Jesus was taken to the cross, God made him a sin substitute for all mankind (Isaiah 53:6). God the Father, being the holy God, could not look upon sin. Therefore, God the Father, had to turn his back on His Son when our sin was laid upon him. While Jesus was hanging on the cross, he cried out, *"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"* (Matthew 27:46). It was not enough that man rejected the Son of God, God, his Father in Heaven, also rejected him because our sins were placed upon him. What more rejection could he receive?

If we stopped here, we would see Jesus as a failure. He would not be worthy of our consideration. However, look closely at the next verse in Isaiah 53. *"Surely he hath borne **our griefs**, and carried **our sorrows**: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted"* (Isaiah 53:4). Jesus was not only a sin substitute as we find in the next verse, he was a hurt substitute for us. **He bore your and my griefs and carried your and my sorrows!** Now look at the next verse. *"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed"* (Isaiah 53:5).

Isaiah 53:10-12

"Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou **shalt make his soul** an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall **see of the travail of his soul**, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he **hath poured out his soul** unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

Please note the **bold print** that was used for emphasis. As the soul is made of three parts (the mind, the will, and the emotions), Jesus suffered in each of these areas that he might provide healing for us.

This verse told me that night as I struggled with my hurts, that Jesus had become a hurt substitute for me, suffering every kind of rejection and hurt including the rejection of his heavenly Father, and that through the cross event I could receive healing. Jesus overcame every hurt through his death and resurrection. He can now offer the healing of hurts to anyone who will believe in Him (Luke 4:18).

I said, "O.K., God, I see it. I see that Jesus was my hurt substitute. I see that he can offer to me the healing of hurts. I also see that if he came 2,000 years ago to bring healing, he brings healing today." *"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever"* (Hebrews 13:8). I prayed, "Therefore, God, I am holding you to your Word. I am asking that by your Holy Spirit and based upon what Jesus has suffered, that you bring healing for the hurts that I have received from my boss." I was determined to receive what God had said in His Word.

Within about twenty minutes, God did it. He healed me of the hurts that I had received from my boss. It is difficult to put such a miracle into words, because the pain was gone. I went back to bed and went to sleep.

The next morning, I still had to get up, go to work, and face my boss again. Well, that day happened to be his day off. However, he returned the next day. Nothing had changed, in that I was still his target. He came strutting out on the sales floor where I was working. He again came up to me and started to chew me out about some work that I had done. However, this time, things were different, much to the surprise of both of us and especially to him. There is a barnyard adage that says, "The wounded chicken is the one that gets picked on." If you have a hen house and an old hen gets wounded, the other hens will attack her, pick at her wound, and may even kill her. As cruel as this sounds, it is a matter of life. I have seen it happen. Nevertheless, although this seems crazy, it is also true with people. The wounded person becomes a target for aggressive, domineering people. Aggressive, domineering people seem to have radar searching out those who are wounded. I had been wounded, but God healed me! Without my even realizing it, God was taking away the fear of being intimidated and hurt. I suddenly found myself assertive with my boss. I respectfully and directly told him that I had done exactly what he had instructed me to do, but I would be glad to redo anything that he wanted me to redo. He was a bit startled, snapped an O.K., spun on his heel, and walked away.

This may seem like the end of the story, but it is more like the beginning. You see, I immediately came to realize that my boss was not the only one who had brought hurts into my life. Although, I have had a life largely free from rejection and abuse compared to many people, I still had many hurts. I had received hurts from family, friends, churches, and had even put myself into hurtful situations. Therefore, I decided to ask God, by the Holy Spirit, to reveal every hurt in my life that I might pray and receive healing through Jesus. I did not know that this was scriptural at the time, but later found out that there was a Scripture that spoke directly to this issue (Psalm 139:23-24). Almost every day for about one and one half months I prayed. God did not reveal all the hurts at once, but He did reveal them one by one. I purposed to walk through the steps of receiving healing with each experience that I remembered. I had to purpose to be willing for

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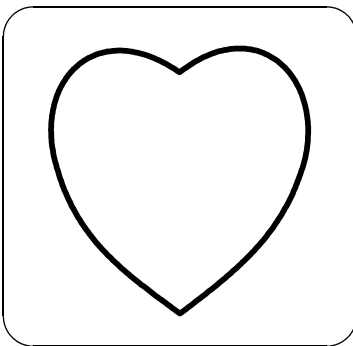
the Holy Spirit to bring each memory to the surface of my consciousness and feel the pain. God was faithful to His Word, and I received the healing.

Something else happened during that period of time. God began to teach me that I did not need to fear getting hurt. I happened to walk by the television set one evening and noticed an advertisement of some show about a couple of guys sword fighting. One man got a big gash on the side of his face. I watched as he turned his face to the side and put his hand over the wound. When he turned back around, the gash was gone and his face was whole again. I thought, "This guy has it made. If he gets wounded, he can just put his hand over the wound and be healed." At that moment the Holy Spirit spoke to me. He said, "Isn't that the same way with you? Since you have discovered the source of healing, if you get wounded again, you can pray and receive healing again." AMEN. This took away the fear of being wounded again.

It is somewhat difficult to put into simple words what happened at the end of the month and one half that I prayed. I used to do quite a bit of rabbit hunting with a 22 raffle when I was in high school. I would sometimes walk across some dry pasture land and come across a pair of jeans that someone had discarded. The old jeans would be stiff with dirt being half buried in the dirt. Now, if you could imagine taking that pair of old jeans and laundering them so that they were whole, clean, soft, and pliable again, that was what God did with my heart. I felt whole, and I felt clean.

Something else also happened. I began to look around me at the same people I had always known, but this time, I saw them as hurting people. Before, God healed me, I had a hard heart, but did not even know it. I had been insensitive to the hurts of others. I cried inside and even sometimes on the outside, as I sensed the pain that other people

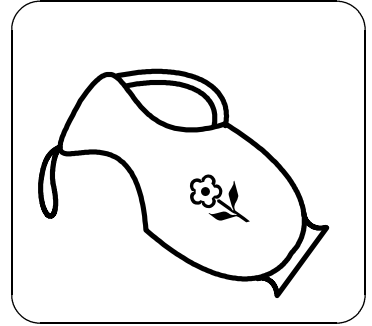
were experiencing. God said, *"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh"* (Ezekiel 36:25-26). God did exactly as He said He would. He cleansed me, He gave me a new heart, and gave me a heart that was sensitive and pliable. This passage reminds me of the skin of a new born child. It is soft and pliable.



There is more. One week after God initially healed me of the hurts concerning my boss, He took the boss completely out of the company. It was as though God had brought my boss there that I might experience emotional hurts, that I might discover the Healer of the hurts, receive that healing, and begin a ministry in that area. Once the boss had

fulfilled God's purpose, He removed the boss. We should understand that God does not waste our experiences. He doesn't take out His magic eraser and erase our memory, but He works it for our good and for His glory.

God brought another miracle into my life. He started sending hurting people to me that I might share the healing of hurts. On one occasion, the Associate Pastor, Mr. Darrel Eaton, asked me to go on a mission trip with him down to Puerto Escondido, Mexico. Our church had a trade and Bible school there. Darrel had asked me to consider going with him on other trips that he had taken, but I was not particularly interested in going. Actually, I had heard many "hair-raising" tales about such trips, and I was not interested in risking my possessions or life in going into a country where I did not know the people or speak their language. However, on this occasion, it was as though God was speaking to me to go to Mexico. Therefore, I got some money together and we planned our trip.



We drove from San Angelo, Texas, to San Antonio. At San Antonio, we took a plane to Mexico City and from there we flew to Acapulco. As soon as we left Acapulco, Darrel and I both came under spiritual attack and become sick. For about thirty minutes, we prayed until we got some relief. At Acapulco, we caught a midnight bus going to Puerto Escondido. We got the last two seats on a second class bus, which meant we sat in the back against the curvature of the bus. It was uncomfortable, hot, and very rough. We rode all night down narrow winding roads to Puerto Escondido. I thought, "God must have a purpose in this, otherwise I would not be here." Even when I was awakened by a Mexican Policeman flashing his flashlight in my fact about 2:00 a.m. in the morning looking for drugs, I knew that God would take care of the situation. We arrived at Puerto Escondido about sunrise.

We spent a good week at the trade and Bible school. Although I almost drowned one day while snorkeling in the ocean, we had a productive week that ended in some great ministry with the young men at the compound. I knew that God had a purpose in my going on this trip, but I still did not know what it was.

We left Puerto Escondido by plane and went back to Mexico City. We traveled by subway across town to the home of a couple we knew, Richard and Miriam. It so happened that it was on a Wednesday evening that we arrived there. We visited with the couple for an hour or so and then Richard said that he had to go and teach in a home Bible study that he led. He invited Darrel and me to go with him. He drove us to what seemed to be a very rough section of the city. It looked like an industrial district. The home where the Bible study was held was behind what appeared to a door in a factory

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wall. We went in to find two small rooms filled with chairs. One room was used as a bedroom, but the bed had to be lifted up on its side to make more room for chairs. The two rooms were joined by a single door. About thirty people showed up for the Bible study, filling both rooms with people. The person who spoke stood in the door between the two rooms so that he could see the people on either side. Darrel preached from the Bible. However, I could understand almost nothing, because I did not understand Spanish.

It so happened that I sat across the doorway facing into the other room. There was a beautiful young Spanish lady, dressed in solid white, who was seated directly across from me. I observed that she was almost unresponsive to the Bible teaching. She seemed to be filled with hurts. At the close of the Bible teaching, I asked Darrel if he had noticed the young lady who seemed to be so hurt. He said that he had noticed her. I ask him if he thought that it would be appropriate to mention the situation to Richard. He said that I could mention it to Richard if I wanted to do so. In a minute or so, I was able to mention the situation to Richard. He immediately asked if I would like to minister to the young lady. I said, "Sure, but I don't speak Spanish." He said that it would be no problem because he would translate for us. However, he pointed out that there were some women praying with the young lady at the moment. Richard said that the ladies were attempting to lead the young lady to give her life to Jesus.

We waited for several minutes. The ladies broke up the prayer group and Richard returned to tell me that the young lady had not received the Lord. Richard asked me if I was still interested in ministering to her. I responded, "Yes." As we began to talk with the young lady, I told her that God had just showed me how much she was hurting. I shared my experience of receiving the healing of hurts in my life with her. I also told her that God wanted to heal the hurts that she had experienced. Then I asked her, "Who has hurt you the most?" She said that many people had hurt her. I told her that, that may be true, but asked again who had really hurt her the most.

At that moment, she began to cry and said that her parents had hurt her. I did not ask her how, but explained that God wanted to heal her of those hurts. However, for God to heal her broken heart, she must first give her heart to God through faith in Jesus. Then I asked her if she would be willing to do that. She responded, "Yes." I then led her in a prayer to give her heart to Jesus. Next, I led her in a prayer to receive the healing of hurts. Her countenance changed and she became bright in the face. God brought to her salvation and emotional healing. This was the reason God had me to go on this mission trip, if for no other reason. It was to bring the good news of salvation and emotional healing to a young lady in Mexico City. I may never see her again on this earth, but one day I will see her again in Heaven. Amen.

Steps Of Preparation

It is important to lead the person with whom you are counseling through some steps of preparation for healing. The **first** step of preparation is to help the counselee to understand that hurts just don't go away with time. Imagine standing about waist deep in the water in the ocean. Then imagine someone throwing you a beach ball. If you are strong enough, you might hold it under for a period of time. Then imagine someone else throwing you another beach ball. Again, if you are strong enough you might hold the two under the water for a while. Then imagine someone else throwing you another beach ball. Eventually one or more of the balls are going to come to the surface. If you get tired and weak, you may allow a ball come to the surface. If you are hit by a big wave, you may lose all the balls. It is the same way with emotional hurts. We may hold one down for a while, but when we get several and become weak, or we are hit by a big wave, something is going to surface. It may come up in the form of depression, anger, or physical ailment, but it will come up. Time only brings scar tissue, at best.

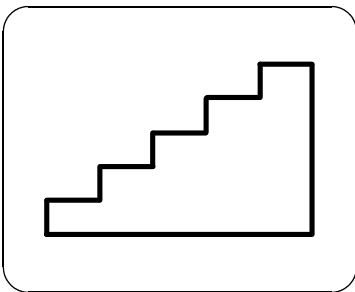
The **second** step is to lead the person to understand that God has already provided for our healing through the suffering of Jesus. We don't have to wait until we get to Heaven. We can receive healing today, because Jesus has experienced the pain for us, in our place.

† God's Provision †

1. God cares about your broken heart (Psalm 34:18, 51:17).
2. God healed David's heart and He will also heal yours (Psalm 147:3, Hebrews 13:8).
3. Jesus was sent to heal the brokenhearted (Luke 4:18).
4. Jesus, Himself, suffered the hurts as a substitute for us (Isaiah 53:1-12, John 1:11, Luke 23:35-37, Matthew 27:46).
5. Through the suffering of Jesus, God has provided the healing for your hurts (Isaiah 53:5).
6. It is God's desire to heal your hurts (I Peter 5:7, III John 2).
7. God must have control of your whole heart before He can heal it (Jeremiah 29:13, Revelation 3:20).

The **third** step is to lead the person to give his own heart to Jesus, letting Him become their Lord (Romans 10:9, Philippians 2:9-10). God will not violate our will. He will not touch the heart that He has no control over. The **fourth** step is to lead the person

to get a clear conscience by making a list of his own offenses toward others, confessing his offenses to the other persons when appropriate, and asking the other people to forgive him (Matthew 5:23-24, I Peter 3:16). This is important because it helps the individual to see clearly the offenses of others. The **fifth** step is to lead the person to forgive (release) the person who has offended and hurt him (Matthew 6:12, 14-15). The **sixth** step is to lead the person to place the judgment of his offender into God's hand and then to ask God to forgive the other person of his offense toward him (Luke 23:34, Acts 7:60). The **seventh** step is to lead the person to yield all his rights to God (possessions, respect, family, expectations) (Matthew 19:21, I Peter 5:5-6, Luke 18:30, Mark 8:34-37, Psalm 119:165).



Steps To Receive Healing

The first step is to ACKNOWLEDGE the need for healing. For us to receive the healing of emotional wounds, we must first acknowledge that we are hurting (Matthew 9:10-13, Rev. 3:17). Many of us have lied to ourselves as well as to others. We have said, "I'm really O.K." or "It really doesn't matter that much." Therefore, we need to start by making a list of our hurts. We are not to do this by trying to do an archaeological dig into our emotional history. We are to ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the source of the emotional disturbances.

Sometimes, the wound is so painful that we develop a case of amnesia. We may not be able to recall voluntarily the event or that time in our life. In such a case, we may need the aid of a compassionate counselor to guide us gently in facing our hurts.

The second step is to LOCATE the cause of the pain. In the physical realm, we may have a pain in our legs, but the cause may be a pinched nerve in the spine. To operate on the legs would be the wrong procedure. A youth may have severe problems getting along with his peers at school, when the real source of the pain is from an abusive stepparent at home. A wife may feel enormous pain every time her husband disciplines one of the children. However, the pain she feels may originate from her own emotional wounds as a child.

We may unconsciously associate one hurt with another. Again, time itself, does not heal hurts. Only God does! Therefore, with each new conflict, we pick up additional baggage. It is therefore important that we locate and separate each painful experience. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. *"Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my ~~thoughts~~ disquieting thoughts: And see if there be any ~~wicked way~~ way of pain in me, and lead me in the way everlasting"* [corrected translation] (Psalm 139:23-24).

It is often best to start with the greatest hurt first. When we do this, it makes it a lot easier to deal with the smaller hurts later. The greater hurts sometimes mask the lesser ones. There is one disadvantage and that is sometimes people will just ignore the little hurts after they have received healing for the greater ones.

The third step is to **CLEANSE** the wound. If you received a deep wound in your hand and you left the wound open, it would eventually get contaminated and infected. The same is true in the emotional area. Emotional hurts are an open wound for unforgiveness, anger, bitterness, depression, and anxiety to enter. The Word implies that we may "give place to the devil" when we are angry longer than one day (Ephesians 4:26-31). Therefore, these critters may be more than just harmful emotions, they may also be evil spirits. *"And his lord was wrath, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him"* (Matthew 18:34).

For cleansing to occur, (1) we must forgive those who have offended us, (2) ask God to forgive and cleanse us (I John 1:9) for our unforgiveness, (3) yield that area unto the Lord, (4) request that God restore our soul (Psalm 23:3) in the area yielded to the enemy, and (5) use the name of Jesus to drive out the enemy.

The fourth step is to **RECEIVE HEALING** of the hurt. God gives us two distinct pictures of healing in Scripture. One picture is that of God calling off the enemy. *"And **the LORD will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee; but will lay them upon all them that hate thee"*** (Deuteronomy 7:15). The picture that God gave me is of someone walking up to the house of a friend and being met by a couple of growling, mean dogs. A moment later, your friend, the dogs' master comes out of the house onto the front porch, whistles, and calls off the dogs. God calls off the dogs! This picture relates to the cleansing of the wound.

The other Scriptural picture is one of mending the net. *"And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: **for I am the LORD that healeth thee"*** (Exodus 15:26). After the physician cleanses the victim's wound, he sews it up so that it will not become contaminated again. Forgiveness opens the door to freedom, but forgiveness is not healing. Without our receiving healing, the wound again becomes contaminated. However, when God mends the wound, He also **heals** the wound.

At this point, I often encourage people to allow themselves the experience of feeling the pain. Some people have been stuffing pain down deep inside so long that they have

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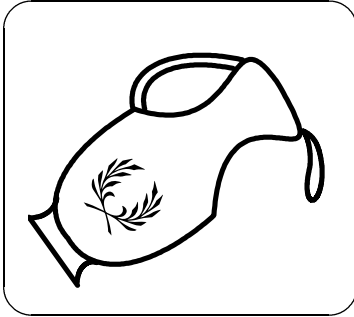
become numb to having any feeling toward anything or anyone. When they let go, there may be a geyser of emotions including hurt, anger, and bitterness. If they don't allow themselves to feel the pain, they may not receive the healing that they need. They should also picture Jesus suffering their hurt in their mind and overcoming it through His own death and resurrection.

We may receive healing by understanding that Jesus suffered all kinds of emotional hurts (Isaiah 53:3) and that he became a hurt substitute (Isaiah 53:4) for us. *"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted"* (Isaiah 53:3-4). However, we must come to believe that Jesus was sent to heal the brokenhearted. *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised"* (Luke 4:18). Finally, we must ask in faith for that healing. *"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him"* (Hebrews 11:6). When God heals the wound, we may recall the experience without being flooded by the pain.

The fifth step is to **STRENGTHEN** the weak area. Again, in the physical, the area around the wound may remain weak even after the healing occurs. This is also true of emotional wounds. The enemy will try to get us to focus our thoughts on the event that brought the hurt. If this occurs, we may mentally pick at the area until we have opened a new wound. We need to be watchful to cast down those thoughts. *"(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ"* (II Corinthians 10:4-5).

Therefore, it is critical that we strengthen that area by applying the Word of God. (1) We need to see that God had a purpose in allowing us to be wounded. Joseph saw the big picture when he spoke to his brothers. *"But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive"* (Genesis 50:20). (2) We need to see that God can work all things together for our good. *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose"* (Romans 8:28). (3) We need to come to rejoice in the Lord over the experience. *"Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice"* (Philippians 4:4). (4) We need to develop and share our testimony with others. *"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death"* (Revelation 12:11).

Your Ministry Of Healing



First, as God heals your hurts, He will also give you a tender heart that will be sensitive to the hurts of others. *"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh"* (Ezekiel 36:26). God had also given you a ministry of healing. *"And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation"* (II Corinthians 5:18). He wants you to tell others about your healing experience. When one man wanted to follow Jesus, Jesus said, *"Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee"* (Mark 5:19).

Second, you should remember that God can change that which was meant for evil into good (Genesis 50:20). God can turn the curse into a blessing. *"Nevertheless the LORD thy God would not hearken unto Balaam; but the LORD thy God turned the curse into a blessing unto thee, because the LORD thy God loved thee"* (Deuteronomy 23:5). You should also remember that God gives us the grace to walk through every situation. *"But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you"* (I Peter 5:10).

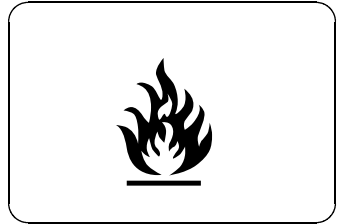
Third, you should ASK God to give and fill you with His Holy Spirit, His love, and His grace that you may share the healing that you have received with others that they also may be healed (Luke 11:1-13). *"That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen"* (Ephesians 3:17-21). This should be our prayer for each other. We can come boldly before the throne of God's grace to find the grace to help us when we need it (Hebrews 4:16). John records, *"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water"* (John 7:37-38). We are not just to receive for ourselves, we are to be a channel of healing for others.

Fourth, share what you have read in this book with a friend. Jesus said, *"Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give"* (Matthew 10:8). The truth that you have received concerning the healing of hurts may be worth a million dollars to your friends. Give them the gift of emotional healing.

Fifth, you should claim Luke 4:18-19 for yourself. *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord"* (Luke 4:18-19). We are to follow and do the works of Jesus (John 14:12).

The Holy Spirit In Healing

We can look at the life of Jesus for our example. He depended upon the Holy Spirit for the ministry of healing. Luke records in the book of Acts, *"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him"* (Acts 10:38). Jesus also read from the book of Isaiah and applied the anointing of the Holy Spirit to Himself. *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised"* (Luke 4:18). We also can apply the passage to our own lives. We are to minister healing to others. We are to minister healing through the anointing of the Holy Spirit.



We need to come to the realization that it is only through the power of the Holy Spirit that we can minister healing, whether it be physical, mental, spiritual or emotional. The Word of God says, *"Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts"* (Zechariah 4:6).

One of the first areas in which we are to minister healing is in the spiritual. The person who is not a Christian must understand that he has sinned. Furthermore, the Christian who is into pornography must understand that entertaining pornography is sin before he can be set free. The Holy Spirit brings conviction of sin. Jesus said the Holy Spirit is to convict the world of sin. *"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment"* (John 16:7-8). Once I counseled with someone who had been to church only two times in the thirty-three years of his life. I discerned

that he was not a Believer. The first course of action was to explain to him that he had sinned and needed to accept the forgiveness of God through the cross of Jesus. The Holy Spirit convicted him, and he gave his life to Jesus. The Old Testament prophet Micah said that it was by the Holy Spirit that he was able to confront the people with their sin. *"But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the LORD, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin"* (Micah 3:8).

People who have not received Jesus as their Lord are spiritually dead. They need to be made alive before they can receive the healing from God. It is the Holy Spirit that makes them alive. Jesus said, *"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life"* (John 6:63). Once they are made alive by the Spirit, they can hear God's voice and receive healing.

Lies are big hindrances in receiving healing. The enemy often deceives people into believing lies. Those lies become the stronghold for the enemy. That stronghold must be cast down before one can receive the healing. It is the Holy Spirit that by the Word guides one into the truth. *"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come"* (John 16:13). When one confronts each lie with the truth, then the stronghold comes tumbling down.

Most people who need healing, lack in some degree a knowledge of Christian assurance. The Holy Spirit is an instrument of God to bring assurance. *"Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit"* (I John 4:13). The knowledge that we dwell in Jesus brings assurance. Knowing that we are the children of God also brings assurance. The Holy Spirit brings to us that assurance that we are children of God. *"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God"* (Romans 8:16). Knowing that the Spirit of God dwells in us also brings assurance. Jesus says that the Spirit of truth is to live within the Believer. *"Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you"* (John 14:17).

Many people struggle with fear because of a lack of understanding of God's purpose for their lives. They seem to have lost their sense of direction. However, the Holy Spirit gives direction. We call Him **the Comforter**. The word "comforter" means to walk along beside of another. We do not have to fear being alone and not knowing what to do. The Holy Spirit walks along beside us, giving us direction. *"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you"* (John 14:26). The Holy Spirit is also to teach us along the way as we go through this life. *"Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy*

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Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (I Corinthians 2:13). In reality, the Holy Spirit becomes the divine teacher to the Believer. John writes, "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him" (I John 2:7).

All spiritual truth is centered in the person of Jesus the Christ. He is the only answer to all the problems of life. The Holy Spirit is the one who tells us about Jesus. He is the One who gives us a revelation of Jesus. *"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me" (John 15:26).*

Furthermore, we do not often have the blessings of God because we do not know what blessings we have available to us. We need the Holy Spirit to show us our inheritance. Jesus said concerning the Holy Spirit, *"He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you" (John 16:14).*

Quite often, people feel intimidated by the world and the powers of the enemy. The Holy Spirit gives us **boldness** to face the problems of life. The Spirit gave Gideon boldness to face the enemy. *"But the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet; and Abiezer was gathered after him" (Judges 6:34).*

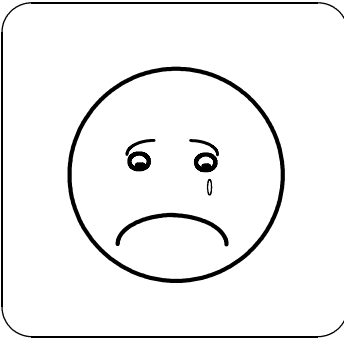
Sometimes people are hurt and fearful because they feel as if they are walking in darkness, and there is no one to lead them. One work of the Holy Spirit is to lead the Christian. *"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Romans 8:14).* This will give them confidence to keep on walking.

We often hear it said that God helps those who help themselves. This is a wholly unbiblical concept. God helps those who come to Him for help. The Holy Spirit enables Christians to minister. *"Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (II Corinthians 3:6).* The Holy Spirit does not just minister a set of laws. He ministers the *spirit* of the Law. He ministers in power. *"And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them" (Ezekiel 36:27).* He enables the Believer to live by the spirit of the Law.

Furthermore, God also enables the Believer through the gifts of the Spirit to minister. *"But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal" (I Corinthians 12:7).* *"But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will" (I Corinthians 12:11).* Last, the Holy Spirit will even tell us what to say when we need for Him to do so. *"For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say" (Luke 12:12).*

Overcoming Shame

God wants to set us free from shame and embarrassment by the blood of Jesus. **First**, lets begin by looking at some characteristics of shame. We can see from Scripture some characteristics of shame. Ezra was too embarrassed to look up to God because of



sin. *"And at the evening sacrifice I arose up from my heaviness; and having rent my garment and my mantle, I fell upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto the LORD my God, And said, O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens"* (Ezra 9:5-6). Some other characteristics of shame and embarrassment are looking at the ground, avoiding eye contact, avoiding crowds (most common fear today), mumbling or stuttering when they talk, being quiet and hard to get to know,

finding it hard to meet new people, and often having chronic depression.

One of the causes of shame and embarrassment is false guilt that is heaped upon us by others. Other people may say to us, "Naughty, naughty" or "Bad boy . . . or . . . Bad girl" or "Shame on you . . ." Some people try to use guilt to control other people. David suffered this from his brother. *"And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle."* (I Samuel 17:28). Job's three friends, each falsely accused Job. Job's response was, ". . . Miserable comforters are ye all" (Job 16:2). Later he declared, *"How long will ye vex my soul, and break me in pieces with words"* (Job 19:2).

Second, sometimes we find ourselves in embarrassing situations. (1) We are careless and have a car wreck or mess up a project. (2) We lose our job, can't immediately find another one, and have to borrow money. (3) We fail to meet our goal or make a "F" on our report card. We may prefer not to see our parents that day. (4) A young girl is molested by a stepfather. She is too embarrassed to tell anyone, even her mother. She knows what happened to her was wrong, but she feels unclean and embarrassed herself. Sometimes it is a young boy approached by a sodomite man. Who can he tell? (5) David embarrassed Saul by cutting off a piece of Saul's garment while Saul was using the bathroom in a cave. *"And Saul lifted up his voice, and wept"* (I Samuel 24:16).

Sometimes shame comes as a direct result of sin. We find a graphic story of this in Genesis. 3:6-13. Adam and Eve must have been clothed with the **glory** of God, but sin put out the light. Their eyes were opened and they saw themselves as being naked. They

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sewed fig leaves to try to cover their shame. They were afraid. They hid themselves. Their focus of attention was upon their shame and not the sin that caused the shame. When God confronted them with the truth they looked for someone else to blame. The man blamed the woman, and the woman blamed the serpent.

Third, God has made provision for healing our shame through the new covenant. *"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD'S hand double for all her sins"* (Isaiah 40:1-2). Please note that God was to give to them the double, but this was not double punishment. There is a story that when someone got so deep in debt that he had no way out, that he would list all his debts on a piece of parchment. He nailed the list to the door posts of his house hoping that a rich man would come by and read the list and be willing to pay their debts in exchange for his servitude. If a rich man came by and read the list of debts and decided to pay them, he would take out the nail, fold the parchment in double, and drive the nail back through both halves. One could no longer see the list of debts. This is what Jesus did to our debt of sins, nailing them to the cross. *"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross"* (Colossians 2:14). God also gives us a promise to replace our shame and confusion with everlasting joy. *"For your shame ye shall have double; and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them"* (Isaiah 61:7).

Fourth, Jesus became the **OBJECT** of our shame. *"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted"* (Isaiah 53:4). **"SHAME"** was put on Jesus. *"I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting"* (Isaiah 50:6). He suffered the shame of our sins. *"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit"* (I Peter 3:18). Jesus became the **"rock of offense"** However, we can believe and not be ashamed. *"As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offense: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed"* (Romans 9:33). **Jesus suffered shame that our shame might be taken away and that His glory might be restored to us.** Jesus was sent to heal our hurts (Luke 4:18) and take away our shame. *"But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall"* (Malachi 4:2). God brings to us the removal of shame and restoration through the outpouring of the HOLY SPIRIT. *"And I will **restore** to you . . . and my people shall **never be ashamed**. And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed. And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and*

your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions" (Joel 2:25-28).

Fifth, to overcome shame, we are to **lift up** our heads, souls, hearts, hands, ourselves, eyes, prayers, our fellowman, and our voices:

1. We are to lift our heads: *"And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28). "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in" (Psalms 24:7). "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah" (Psalms 24:9-10).*

2. We are to lift up our souls: *"Unto thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul. O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies triumph over me. Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed: let them be ashamed which transgress without cause" (Psalms 25:1-3).*

3. We are to lift up our hearts: *"Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens" (Lamentations 3:41).*

4. We are to lift up our hands: *"Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees" (Hebrews 12:12).*

5. We are to lift up ourselves and stand: *"Then the Levites, Jeshua, and Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabniah, Sherebiah, Hodijah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah, said, Stand up and bless the LORD your God for ever and ever: and blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise" (Nehemiah 9:5). "Behold, bless ye the LORD, all ye servants of the LORD, which by night stand in the house of the LORD. Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD" (Psalms 134:1-2). "But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth" (Luke 6:8).*

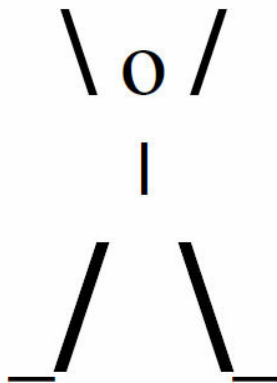
6. We are to lift up our eyes: *"Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (John 4:35).*

7. We are to lift up our prayers: *"It may be the LORD thy God will hear the words of Rabshakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God, and will reprove the words which the LORD thy God hath heard: wherefore lift up thy prayer for the remnant that is left" (Isaiah 37:4).*

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8. We are to lift up our fellowman: *"For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up"* (Ecclesiastes 4:10).

9. We are to lift up our voice and praise: *"They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the LORD, they shall cry aloud from the sea"* (Isaiah 24:14).



Appendix

> *Guidelines For Inner Healing Prayer* <

1. Ask God for His grace to minister inner healing. (Phil. 2:13)
2. Explain to the individual or individuals the ministry of inner healing. (Luke 4:18)
3. Give a personal testimony of inner healing.
4. Give several examples of the healing experiences of others.
5. Thank God for salvation through Jesus Christ (Psalm 103:1-3).
6. Thank God for those who have received Jesus as their Lord.
7. Thank God for overcoming all the works of Satan (I John 3:8).
8. Receive the authority that God has delegated (Ephesians 1:22).
9. Bind, in the name of Jesus, all the powers of Satan concerning those to whom you are ministering (Matthew 12:29).
10. Ask the Holy Spirit for specific discernment of evil powers involved (I Corinthians 12:10).
11. Bind those specific evil powers in the name of Jesus. (Call them by name and declare that they are bound.) An example would be: "In the name of Jesus, I bind the spirit of *rebellion*." (Matthew 16:19).
12. Under the direction of the Holy Spirit determine where doors have been opened (I Corinthians 12:8).
 - a. Generational curses are open doors.
 - b. Word curses spoken by those in authority are open doors.
 - c. Situations that call for fear are open doors.
 - d. Habitual sins are open doors.
 - e. Occult involvement is an open door.
 - f. Idolatry in any form is an open door.
 - g. Unforgiveness is an open door.
 - h. Anger is an open door.
 - i. Bitterness is an open door.
 - j. Jealousy is an open door.

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13. Lead the person in confession, repentance, and forgiveness as needed. (I Timothy 1:5).
14. Break both generational curses and word curses (Galatians 3:13).
15. Cast out all evil spirits as directed by the Holy Spirit (Mark 16:17).
16. Discover where wounds occurred.
 - a. Spiritual discernment is needed (John 16:13).
 - b. Ask questions of those to whom you are ministering.
 - c. Listen for hurts to be brought up by the Holy Spirit.
 - d. Look for traumatic experiences.
 - (1). Childhood abuse brings hurts.
 - (2). Sin involvement brings wounds.
 - (3). Death of someone close brings hurts.
 - (4). Disappointments bring hurts.
 - (5). Divorce brings hurts.
 - e. Cover the life span of those to whom you ministering.
 - (1). Look at the pre-birth period.
 - (2). Look at the preschool years.
 - (3). Look at the years in school.
 - (4). Look at the college years.
 - (5). Look at the adulthood years.
 - g. One should cover relationships.
 - (1). Relationships with parents should be covered.
 - (2). Relationships with stepparents must be covered.
 - (3). Relationships with siblings need to be covered.
 - (4). Relationships with close friends should be viewed.
 - (5). Relationships with church families should be viewed.
 - (6). Relationships with fellow workers should be covered.
 - (7). Relationships in marriage/s should be covered.
17. Pray for the cleansing of the wound (I John 1:9)

- a. All bitterness should be removed.
 - b. All grief should be removed.
18. Pray that God will take away the old hard heart (Ezekiel 36:26)
19. Pray that God will give the person a new heart.
20. Pray that God will fill the new heart with His love (Ephesians 3:17-19)

Hurts are like a hot potato. Someone may hand one to you, but you don't have to continue to hold on to it. *"Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them"* (Psalm 119:165).

God As The Healer In Psalm 23

I. The LORD is my Shepherd. (**Jehovah-rohi**)

- A. He is Jehovah (The **I AM**).
- B. He is my Shepherd.
- C. He provides a sense of belonging.

II. The LORD is my Provider. (**Jehovah-jireh**)

- A. He fulfills my wants.
- B. He prepares a table before me.
- C. My cup runs over.

III. The LORD is my Peace. (**Jehovah-shalom**)

- A. He causes me to lie down in green pastures.
- B. He leads me beside still waters.
- C. He comforts me with His rod and staff.

IV. The LORD is my Healer ("He restores my soul"). (**Jehovah-rapha**)

- A. He heals my mind.
- B. He heals my will.
- C. He heals my emotions.

V. The LORD is my Righteousness. (**Jehovah-tsidkenu**)

- A. He leads me into paths of righteousness.
- B. He has made me His representative.
- C. He provides freedom from guilt.

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VI. The LORD is my Protector. (**Jehovah-nissi**)

- A. He keeps me from fear.
- B. He anoints my head with oil.
- C. He provides a sense of worth.

VII. The LORD is always with me. (**Jehovah-shammah**)

- A. He is with me.
- B. He allows me to dwell in His house.
- C. He gives me a sense of continuing relationship.

VIII. The LORD is my Sanctifier. (**Jehovah-m'kaddesh**)

- A. He provides His goodness for me.
- B. He provides His mercy for me.
- C. He is continually faithful.

Additional Scriptures that may be referenced: Exodus 3:14, John 10:11, Philippians 4:19, Matthew 6:33, John 7:37-38, Isaiah 26:3, John 14:27, Romans 12:2, Philippians 2:13, Luke

PERSONAL HEALING RECORD

"Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my disquieting thoughts. And see if there be any way of pain in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." (Literal translation) (Psalm 139:23-24).

"**disquieting thoughts**" = anxieties, fears, worries, guilt, or inner conflicts.

"**way of pain**" = emotional hurts, bruises, sorrow, grief, or disappointments.

APPLICATION: Ask the Holy Spirit to bring to your memory each hurt that you have received during your life. **WARNING!** Don't do the digging yourself, but allow the Holy Spirit do His work. Invite the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, to walk through the memory with you. Then allow the Holy Spirit guide you to freedom and healing.

SOME CRITICAL STEPS TO TAKE:

1. Admit that the pain is real.
2. Purpose before God and by His grace to forgive the offender.
3. Place their judgment in God's hands and ask Him to forgive them.
4. Ask the Lord to forgive you of any unforgiveness, bitterness, hate, revenge, or jealousy that you have.
5. Ask the Lord to take back any ground that you have yielded to the enemy. (We don't want to leave any strongholds.)
6. Take authority over any evil spirits in the Name of Jesus, bind them, and command them to leave.
7. Ask the Father to heal you in the Name of Jesus by His Spirit.
8. Ask the Father to take away any hardness of heart and give you a new heart that is tender and sensitive to the feelings of others.
9. Ask the Father to fill your new heart with His LOVE so that when you view the memory again that you will see it through Gods' love.

MEMORY: ___/___/___

Event: _____

Name of offender _____ What did you feel? _____

What steps have you taken to clear the memory? (1-9) _____

MEMORY: ___/___/___

Event: _____

Name of offender _____ What did you feel? _____

What steps have you taken to clear the memory? (1-9) _____

4:18, John 10:27, II Corinthians 5:20, Romans 8:31-39, Matthew 28:20, Ephesians 2:6, Philippians 1:6, Ephesians 2:10, Hebrews 4:16.

Psalm 23

“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want” (Psalms 23:1).

“He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters” (Psalms 23:2).

“He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake” (Psalms 23:3).

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me” (Psalms 23:4).

“Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over” (Psalms 23:5).

“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever” (Psalms 23:6).