

Healing from Past Hurts

Although this material has been added to and adapted over many years of personal experience and application, I am deeply indebted to Johnny Wagler for his outline of the transforming process and his training in this vitally important aspect of the ministry.

***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,
o set at liberty them that are bruised,***

Luke 4:18 (KJV)

This Scripture, as well as outlining the ministry of our Lord, gives us a good definition of what the healing of past hurts really is. The idea that one would be hurt from their experiences in this life should not be shocking to anyone, especially one who has lived apart from the grace of God for any appreciable time of their lives. Even Christians brought up in the best of atmospheres experience painful hurts in their lives that are in need of healing. And so the need for a Bible study on the topic of healing from past hurts:

***to heal the broken hearted,
set the prisoners free,
and to set at liberty them that are bruised.***

Man's Biggest Problem

The greatest problem that exists deep in the heart of every man is his separation from God as a result of sin. (Defined here as both the inward attitudes, sinful nature, as well as our actions of sin.)

*Surely I was _____, sinful from
the time my mother conceived me. Psalms 51:5*

Long before we are acting out the selfish, grasping or angry, fearful patterns that drive us, we are in fact flawed. This brokenness, this proneness, is the origin and seat of our greatest problem. We are in fact sinners and in and of ourselves, incapable of living up to the righteous standards of God's laws and commands.

Jesus helped us look deeper into this crevasse by interpreting the law in its fuller meaning:

*This study was written by Eric Stovesand
Pastor, Church on the Mountain
384 South Landing Drive
HCR 79 Box 71
Crowley Lake, CA 93546
eric@churchonthemountain.org
760-935-4272*

"You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.'

But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Matthew 5:27-28

"You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.'

But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment.

Matthew 5:21-22

This “deeper meaning” places a scrutiny on our inner man: our motives, intentions and our thoughts. When these things are evaluated in the greater light of Scripture we are left agreeing that all have sinned, that all have fallen short of the glory of God.

...for all have _____ and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 3:23

With this understanding as the foundational frame of reference, we can now look at the concept of healing from our past hurts. The sacrifice of the Lord is sufficient for both our outward actions and our inner motives for Jesus wounds were sufficient for a complete cleansing and healing.

But He was _____ for our transgressions, he was _____ for our iniquities; the _____ for our peace was upon Him, and by His _____ we are healed.

Isaiah 53:5 (NKJ)

The origins of these hurts can be three fold. Each tracing the greater problem to our fundamental understanding of sin. From this perspective the answer to our problem is the same: find forgiveness from God, then grow in our relationship with Him, allowing His Spirit to empower us to live and forgive as He has forgiven us.

The Origins of Hurtful and Damaging Experiences

1. Damage that comes as a result of our own sin and the wrong choices we make.

The result of sin in our lives is guilt, resulting in a broken relationship with God. When we sin there are consequences to our behavior, often painful consequences. Some immediate, some not, but always bearing the same fruit: pain,

Write down the names of three trusted friends that you will share this journey of healing with:

-
-
-

This eight step process is designed as a model for our continued healing. Pray through it with others as the Lord continues His healing work in you. It is also great outline to use as you help others come to wholeness in Christ.

Memory Verse

"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, to set at liberty those who are oppressed;

Luke 4:18 (NKJ)

brokenness, bondage and separation in our relationship with God and with one another (death).

...but each one is tempted when, _____
_____, he is dragged away and enticed.
Then, after desire has _____, it _____
_____ to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, _____
_____ to death.

James 1:14-15

2. Wounds inflicted by others.

This occurs when significant others in our lives have sinned against us or have otherwise wounded us, whether intentionally or unintentionally. We are unjustly, wrongfully, hurt, abused, and neglected in ways and for reasons that we have no control over and for which we should have no blame or guilt. We are sinned against.

These experiences may lock us into a prison of hurt, bitterness or anger.

3. Damage that comes as a result of being born into a sinful world.

Things happen to us that are not of our own choices and are outside of anyone's control.

1. Incidents of history (war, famine etc.)
2. Accidents
3. Disease
4. Poverty

These experiences may lock us into a prison of helplessness, fear, inferiority, or depression and can be the cause of deep hurt and pain.

Although we may not be able to keep from being sinned against, our deepest problems are most often a result of our own sinful patterns of reactions to these painful circumstances. Deep healing really begins as we start to recognize these patterns and take responsibility for them. Since many of the sinful patterns of our behavior find their origin in the hurtful world in which we are born and our consequent reaction to the pain, getting in touch with the pains and losses of our past can be an important part of the healing process. So often our reactions begin at a subconscious level. By tracing these patterns of reaction and the resultant behavior to their beginnings we can often see deeper into issues involved. This allows us to take conscious responsibility for any sinful reactions and then repentance can be made. This sinful and wounded core must be brought into the light of His presence for deep and lasting healing to be experienced.

Whatever the origin, our own sinful nature or our sinful reaction to hurtful circumstances that are out of our control, either of these experiences can result in broken hearts, bondage and bruises. **It is for this reason that Jesus has come!**

When we come to Christ, confess our sins and repent we are forgiven and cleansed. This is the promise from 1 John 1:9:

*If we _____, he is _____
and _____ and will forgive us our sins and purify us from
all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9*

There is no greater healing than having our sins forgiven. This is the beginning of our new life in Christ. However, many areas of our soul, (mind, will and emotions) may still be wounded from the effects of sin (ours and sins against us). Inviting the Holy Spirit to touch those pains, healing us of their present effects on us is what the healing of past hurts is all about.

Repentance and experiencing the forgiveness of our sins is a huge part of the healing of past hurts process. Even deliverance from evil spirits (most often the result of repeated patterns of sinful behavior) occurs as a result of repentance and would be ill advised unless the inroads of such a spirit are uncovered and repented of, closing the door of entry.

Continual walking in the light and presence of God, and being honest and open about our life with God and others will put us on the pathway of his healing presence.

*But if we _____, as He is in
the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood
of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.
1 John 1:7*

Healing is a process.

Although healing can be dramatic and immediate at times, much of it can be best understood as a process. Proverbs 4:18 says that our pathway should be getting brighter and brighter as we follow the Lord.

*The path of the righteous is like the first gleam of
dawn, shining _____ till the full light of day.
Proverbs 4:18*

As we receive more light on our path we may need to respond to the Lord for more healing. God's healing presence is abundant at each step of the way. Someone once said that life is like an onion. You peel it one layer at a time and sometimes you cry. Healing can be like that too. These eight progressive steps can be immensely helpful as we learn to cooperate with the Spirit of God in our ongoing healing process.

Get with a trusted friend and pray with him or her. Our authority is multiplied when we unite to engage the enemy.

*You will chase your enemies; they will die beneath your
swords.
Five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you,
ten thousand! You will defeat all of your enemies.
Leviticus 26:7-8(TLB)*

This is aggressive spiritual warfare. Be bold and speak in the power of His name. Your enemy is evil and has been defeated by the cross of Christ. Pursue him until he is defeated in every area of your life.

*I pursued my enemies and overtook them; I did not
turn back till they were destroyed.
I crushed them so that they could not rise; they fell
beneath my feet.
Psalms 18:37-38*

8. Receive His blessing.

Now lastly, for true healing to continue we must accept it through faith. God's desires us to continue to mature, trusting Him more and more as we grow in our relationship with Him. Stand on the truths you know He has established in you. Don't let the enemy of your soul rob you of the victories you have gained in Christ. He is a liar and will continue to bring lies to try and trip you up. Stand firm in the grace you have received in Christ. Receive the flow of His life to you. Let His life and healing flow to your deepest need.

Often He will reveal Himself and the flow of His life through relationships with His people.

*Instead, we will lovingly follow the truth at all times
-- speaking truly, dealing truly, living truly-- and so become
more and more in every way like Christ who is the Head of
his body, the Church. **Under his direction, the whole body is
fitted together perfectly, and each part in its own special
way helps the other parts, so that the whole body is healthy
and growing and full of love.***

Ephesians 4:15-16 (TLB)

Stay open to His ways and His people. Pray something like this:

“Thank you Lord that you are now healing me. Thank you for setting me free. I receive it now in faith. Father, show me the relationships today and this week that you want to be channels of your life and blessing to me. Halleluia!”

7. "Stop it!! In Jesus name!!"

This step deals with the spiritual power of evil that is so often behind the things we are warring against. Here we use our spiritual authority to directly address that evil. Scripture is clear in this matter. We do not wrestle against flesh and blood.....

The Living Bible gives us this perspective:

For we are not fighting against people made of flesh and blood, but against persons without bodies-- the evil rulers of the unseen world, those mighty satanic beings and great evil princes of darkness who rule this world; and against huge numbers of wicked spirits in the spirit world.

Ephesians 6:12 (TLB)

Pray something like this:

I stop you Satan from working in my life! I don't war against my spouse, or my parents, or the situation. I do warfare against you, Satan, and the evil powers that are behind this situation. So I acknowledge the power of the blood of Jesus against the spirit of depression, and hate, and self-pity (or whatever you are up against) that comes against me, and I command you to be gone in the Name of Jesus...!!

What areas are you specifically warring against? Address the evil operating behind the scene.

Spend some time praying about this. You have authority over all the power of the evil one.

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

Matthew 28:18-19

I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you.

Luke 10:19

Now write down your prayer against evil influences in your life.

-
-
-
-
-
-
-

Eight Steps to Healing and Transformation

1. Where does it hurt?

Be open and honest about the pain and damage in our lives. Ask God to reveal any area where you have been wounded. Sometimes the patterns of our behavior such as isolation or never allowing others to get 'too close' may reveal a deeper hurt if we are honest and daring enough to look. (Watch for the patterns that are revealed in your closest relationships.) Ask how the hurts you have identified may be related to deeper pains of your past. (For most of us the deepest areas of hurt come from our family of origin.)

_____, _____, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.

See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Psalms 139:23-24

Close trusted friends are invaluable in this process. Talking with a mature Christian that is experienced in healing prayers can be very helpful as well.

What are some areas of pain you have experienced in this life? What seems to be on the surface right now? Where do you hurt right now?

Write them down and share them with a trusted friend or mature believer for further prayer.

-
-
-
-
-
-
-

2. Take appropriate responsibility.

As a result of the hurt from your past, how have you reacted? What patterns of behavior might have their origins in some painful circumstances of your past? It is wise not to minimize the effect of divorce, abuse, abandonment or other major events of your life. Here we must begin to take responsibility for our sinful reactions. In many cases these patterns are well worn and established habits. We may be blind to this ingrained behavior or dismiss it as 'just the way I am'. We must learn to recognize these sinful responses, turn from them, repent, and put on the appropriate reaction in Christ's strength.

Against _____, _____, _____, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge.

Psalms 51:4

Can you see any patters of behavior emerging from your past (areas such as fear, anger, depression, overeating, other compulsive or uncontrollable impulses)? **Write down any areas that you are in touch with and share them with a trusted friend.** Pray and ask God to forgive you for acting out in your own strength. Often these actions began early in life even before we may have seen options or known how to make conscious choices. Still this is the arena where we can take responsibility and repent. These patterns prove that we are sinners deep in our core and in desperate need of a savior.

-
-
-
-
-
-
-

And now step 3. You've got Him!! And He is all you need!!

3. Receive His love, acceptance and forgiveness.

He is all you need and He is yours! The good news of God's forgiveness is now applied to our lives. Accept His abundant provision of love, acceptance and forgiveness. Once we begin to realize the depth of our sinful heart, God's healing forgiveness is truly the greatest news imaginable!

Jesus tells a parable about forgiveness that underlines this principle in Matthew 18:23-35. A king called his employees in to check the books and found that one of his trusted servants had embezzled 18 million dollars (today's equivalent). When he found out he responded by ordering that the man and his family be sold for what could be gained. The servant desperately fell at the masters feet and begged him not to do it. "I will repay you, please don't sell my family," he pleaded. The king had mercy on the man and forgave him the enormous debt. Not long after this the same servant came upon one of his fellow servants who happened to owe him \$20 (today's equivalent). He demanded payment. When his fellow servant could not repay he had him thrown in jail. (He didn't get it!) The king heard about this and was very displeased. He said to the servant:

"You wicked servant, I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?"

Matthew 18:32-33

There is much to learn from this parable but one message that screams from the story is that we have been forgiven \$18,000,000 (a figure too large for our imagination to comprehend). As a result of truly understanding the mercy of his master he should have easily, even joyfully, passed on this goodwill to his

Here we speak out the truth. We agree with what God says. Saturating our minds with the truth of God's word is one of the most powerful things we can do. The Scriptures often refer to the value and virtue of meditating in God's Word.

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. (We say NO!)

But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. (We say YES!)

He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither.

Whatever he does prospers. (We are blessed!)

Psalms 1:1-3

Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

Joshua 1:8

Find the Scriptures that combat the specific lie that you are battling against and that supports the truth. Fill your mind with these promises. Speak faith statements based on these promises. They are powerful weapons and establish His truth in you.

Simple statements like:

I speak out the truth that God promises to protect me so I can risk again in relationships....

I speak out the true judgment that in Jesus, I can do anything He asks of me....

I commit myself to repenting when I fail-- for when I'm weak then I am strong....

In what areas of your life do you need to speak out an affirming YES! and agree with the truth of God's Word?

I agree with the word of God that says, "....."

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

we may “think” that all authority is like that. Therefore there may be a judgment on authority figures in our life that keeps us from getting close or trusting them. To combat that “false idea” (after we have generously forgiven our own father from our own heart) we address it by saying, “I reject the false judgment that all authority figures are angry and I renounce the pattern of my behavior that led me to rebel, trust in myself and withdraw from them.” We say “NO!” to the lie!

What areas of your life have been influenced by false reasoning contrary to the truth that is in Christ? How have you reacted to the pain of life apart from God? Can you identify any of these false belief systems and or patterns of lies that you have lived with?

Spend some time praying about this and write down your thoughts and observations.

-
-
-
-
-
-

Share them with a trusted friend and pray. Say something like this:

I renounce the lie of _____

Because of that lie I have believed and acted wrongly. I repent and break the power of this pattern of _____

I say “NO!” to this lie and every way it has influenced me and I submit to the truth of God’s Word, and the power of Christ’s death and resurrection as a new creature in Christ.

The next step is the second way we affirm truth.

6. Just say YES!!

This is the second way we can affirm truth and it is incredibly powerful. Here we say “YES!” to the truth in Christ and His Word. We put on the new creation reality found in the word of God and renew our minds to right thinking. We replace the lies with the truth.

*Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.
Romans 12:2*

fellows. To the king’s surprise and dismay he did not. The real key to this step is recognizing our need for God’s forgiveness and accepting his gracious loving offer.

Do you feel that you have truly experienced the deep abiding wonderful forgiveness of Jesus in the depths of your life? Why not take a moment and thank Him for that gift. It is the power of the cross for you. The love of God, poured out for you. Your sins placed on the only sacrifice sufficient in heaven’s courtroom to carry them, Jesus the Lamb of God.

Pray something like this: “Lord, I realize that my deepest need is for your love to fill my heart. My father couldn’t meet this need, my husband couldn’t, you are my deepest need and desire and I have You now! Forgive me for the deep and hidden sins of my heart. I receive your sacrifice, your life given for me. I accept your love, acceptance and forgiveness.”

Write out a prayer of thanksgiving for the wonderful forgiveness of God:

Experiencing the love of God in Christ is the beginning and foundation of everything else we will ever do for Him.

*We love because _____
I John 4:19*

Having experienced God’s love, acceptance and forgiveness for our own sinful actions and reactions we are ready for the next step:

4. Forgive those who have sinned against us. Often we run to this step because we know it is a command to forgive before we have experienced or acknowledged the depth of our own sinful reactions. This can make our giving forgiveness superficial, dutiful and sometimes insincere. But once we have seen our own sinful hearts and have experienced His great forgiveness we can then freely give, and give we must. The single greatest hindrance to God’s people reaching real maturity is unforgiveness. Many have never processed their own need for God’s forgiveness and consequently can only meet out meager portions of His grace and forgiveness to others.

What a joy to give the marvelous forgiveness of our Heavenly Father to others. This is a mark of the truly liberated heart.

This principle is repeated in many places in the Scripture. Here are several:

*Blessed are the merciful, for they _____
_____.* *Matthew 5:7*

Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

*"Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. **Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you.** A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."* *Luke 6:36-38*

Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation." *Luke 11:4*

Forgiveness is so central to our walk with the Lord. We must release all those who have hurt us and learn to walk in forgiveness daily.

Who has hurt you in your past? What painful events come to mind that you are still working through? Why not write down the persons name and the events that you need to forgive and share them with a trusted friend for prayer?

-
-
-
-
-

Pray specifically using the persons name and as much detail as you can remember. Verbally forgive them saying something like this:

"I forgive _____ for _____

_____.

I release them from my heart and I ask you, Lord, to forgive them and to bless them. Let them know your love and forgiveness. I give them forgiveness as you have given it to me."

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. *Ephesians 4:32*

The poor servant in our story was unable to freely give to his fellow. Not only was the king incensed but handed out some severe consequences:

In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. *Matthew 18:34*

At this point in His story on forgiveness Jesus is no longer talking in a parable. He makes direct application of the truths:

"This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart." *Matthew 18:35*

To choose not to forgive keeps us in bondage to a cruel and relentless enemy. This sort of torment can be broken as we humbly receive the Lord's forgiveness and then give it away to those who have hurt us.

5. Just say NO!!

Now building on the foundation of forgiveness we affirm truth in two ways. We say "NO!" to every lie that has influenced us. And "Yes!" to the truth of God's word. The first part shows us how to deal with the result of living with sinful patterns and false belief systems. These patterns and thoughts can create structures in our soul that need to be destroyed and removed from us. These are what the Bible calls strongholds.

*The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine **power to demolish strongholds.***

We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

2 Corinthians 10:4-5

The weapons of our warfare mentioned above are powerful and well able to set us free as we grow in our new identity in Christ. These weapons are the Word of God, the power and gifts of the Holy Spirit, the power of the cross of Christ and His blood shed on the cross, and His bodily resurrection from the dead. All of these operate as we recognize the authority He has given us as new creatures in Christ.

We must learn to recognize that which opposes the truth that is in Christ. Again, we are dealing with patterns that have developed by living our lives apart from a love relationship with God. These may be subtle "ideas" of how we have seen the world operate. If we have been wounded by an angry father