

# WOUNDED?

(Healing the Wounded Heart)



Bill Loveless  
Christ Is Life Ministries

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**Bill Loveless**

**Christ Is Life Ministries**

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**Website: [www.christislifeministries.com](http://www.christislifeministries.com)**

**Email: [bill@christislifeministries.com](mailto:bill@christislifeministries.com)**

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **Defining Woundedness**

### **Introduction**

I have written a number of booklets and curriculum on a number of subjects but none more personal than this one. Coming from a place of deep woundedness as a result of my father's physical, emotional and verbal abuse, I wrote this booklet to not only share truth and personal application about healing, but to bear witness as to how this amazing God who lives in us is healing me.

Woundedness creates a fragmented heart. For some, woundedness shatters a heart totally. There will remain pieces of our hearts that will never be reconnected until healing takes place. God's eternal desire is to heal these wounded, fragmented pieces of your heart and make you whole. Why? Wholeness is freedom.

Wholeness sets you free from the pain and misery of your woundedness and frees you to love and minister life and healing to others. This is why your healing is the highest priority with God because He knows what you will become as you are being healed. He knows the freedom you will experience.

You may be at a place where you are feeling hopeless that God can heal you. Do not give up hope. I have personally experienced healing in my own life and I have witnessed the Holy Spirit heal many others that I have had the privilege of ministering to. I have been in some very dark places with my woundedness. But through the truths I will be sharing, you, too, can experience the same deep healing of your woundedness that the Holy Spirit has accomplished in me.

For whatever reason you have chosen to read this book, I pray the Holy Spirit will not only give you hope for healing but will

give you the willingness to begin the healing journey. Why? Because He promises to heal.

***“He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.”***

*Psalm 147:3*

### **How I Define Woundedness**

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

***FALSE BELIEFS and WOUNDED FEELINGS you have about yourself, God, or others caused by negative or wounding messages you received, from others who wounded you, or from past or current wounding or traumatic events in your life.***

When it comes to woundedness, our tendency is to focus on the memories and associated pain of the wounding events themselves. While these events and subsequent pain are very real, the deeper issue which has an even greater long-term negative impact is the **false beliefs** that result from our woundedness. I will explain this in greater depth as we go through this book.

Before we begin, I want to remind you that not one of us escapes being wounded because:

***We live in FALLEN bodies, in a FALLEN world, surrounded by FALLEN people.***

Let me begin by looking at two forms of woundedness.

## Woundedness Can Be OVERT or COVERT

I separate woundedness into two categories: “overt” and “covert.”

### 1. OVERT Woundedness

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

This is how I define overt woundedness:

**OVERT WOUNDEDNESS:**  
**CONSCIOUS remembrance and experience of wounding messages or events that have wounded you.**

If you are reading this and can remember wounding messages or events in your past then you are most likely experiencing some form of overt woundedness.

### 2. COVERT Woundedness

The other form of woundedness is “covert” woundedness. I define covert woundedness this way:

**Woundedness that results from SUBMERGED or BURIED messages and/or wounding events.**

Covert woundedness means that you are unable to consciously connect your false beliefs or wounded feelings (unloved, rejected, insecure, unworthy, etc.) to specific wounding events or repeated verbal and non-verbal messages. This is because these things have been buried deep in your heart away from your conscious awareness.

Both overt and covert woundedness are like an iceberg. The visible part of the iceberg I would describe as “overt” woundedness while the submerged part of the iceberg is “covert” woundedness. And like an iceberg, covert woundedness is frequently larger than overt woundedness.

I have talked to a number of people who don’t believe they are wounded. This is because they have deeply buried these messages and events. Since they can’t recall any messages or wounding events in their lives, they conclude that they are not wounded. However, just because you can’t recall wounding events doesn’t mean they did not happen. I believe that all of us have parts of our submerged heart that have yet to be touched and healed by the Holy Spirit.

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

I compare covert woundedness to the situation with my neighbor who felt physical pain for several months but did not go to the doctor to get it checked out. By the time he did go, he was diagnosed with Stage 4 lymphoma and was beyond treatment. Similarly, the internal pain of unhealed covert woundedness gets worse with deepening toxic effects in us and through us if it is not dealt with.

In the next chapter we will look at where unhealed woundedness leads.

## Questions To Think About

1. What impacted you the most in this chapter? Why?

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2. In what ways do you think covert woundedness might be more dangerous than overt woundedness?

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3. Write down any ongoing feelings or beliefs that you are experiencing such as self-condemnation, rejection, shame, guilt, insecurity, being unloved, inadequate, or unworthiness. Is it possible considering the feelings or beliefs you listed, you may be experiencing covert woundedness?

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4. Would you be willing to ask the Holy Spirit if you are experiencing any covert woundedness? If He does, please write it down.

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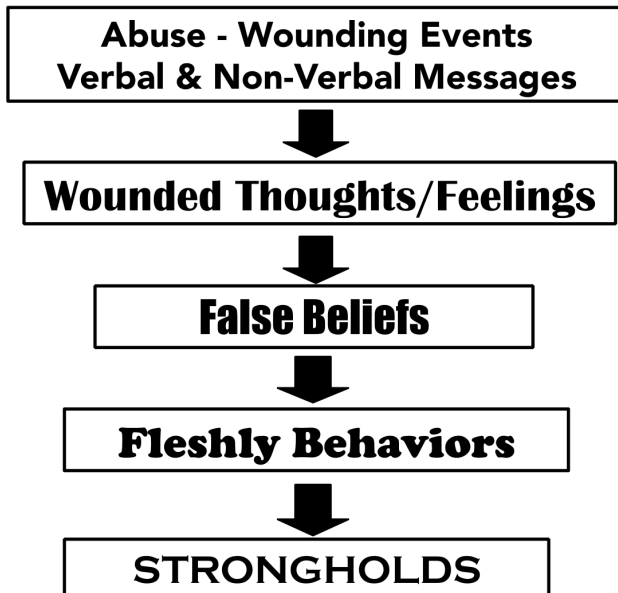
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## CHAPTER TWO

### **Where Does Unhealed Woundedness Lead?**

I think it is important to understand where unhealed woundedness leads in order to help you better understand why it is so crucial for the Lord to heal it. This diagram summarizes where our unhealed woundedness leads us:



We see from this illustration that abuse, wounding events, and verbal/non-verbal messages lead to wounded thoughts and feelings which will eventually lead to false beliefs. From these false beliefs flow fleshly behaviors.

If these fleshly behaviors continue to be reinforced, they can become strongholds. Let's look at each one of these more closely.

## **1. Abuse-Wounding Events-Verbal-Non-Verbal Messages**

Overt woundedness primarily comes in three forms: abuse, wounding events and verbal and non-verbal messages. Let's take a closer look at these three areas.

### **a. ABUSE**

You may have experienced overt woundedness from one or more of the following types of abuse:

**Sexual Abuse**

**Physical Abuse**

**Spiritual Abuse**

**Mother Abuse**

**Emotional Abuse**

**Verbal Abuse**

**Father Abuse**

**Stepparent Abuse**

If you have experienced one or more forms of abuse, how does it make you feel? Write down the words below that most describe how you feel about yourself as a result of your abuse.

Discouraged	Hopeless	Dejected	Unloved
Helpless	Worthless	Rejected	Miserable
Inadequate	Burdened	Frustrated	Condemned
Critical	Unhappy	Angry	Inadequate
Exploited	Vindictive	Confused	Depressed
Paralyzed	Troubled	Perplexed	Unworthy
Fearful	Empty	Anxious	Overwhelmed
Resentful	Lonely	Guilty	Powerless
Defeated	Insignificant	Judged	Ashamed
Insecure	Incapable	Vulnerable	Misunderstood

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We will refer back to this list several times later in this booklet.

### **b. TRAUMATIC EVENTS**

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

**Divorce**

**Premature death of a parent, sibling, or child.**

**Abandonment**

**Chronic or disabling illnesses**

**Traumatic physical injury**

I have ministered to a number of wounded Christians who, when they were younger, felt abandoned by the divorce or premature death of one or both of their parents. These feelings of abandonment left many of them deeply scarred.

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

If trauma is severe enough, it may result in post-traumatic stress disorder or PTSD. Psychiatrists have concluded that this condition is not limited to soldiers involved in battle. PTSD can result from many forms of trauma and can occur at any stage in life.

If you have experienced traumatic events, write down the words from page 9 that most describe how you feel about yourself as a result of those traumatic events.

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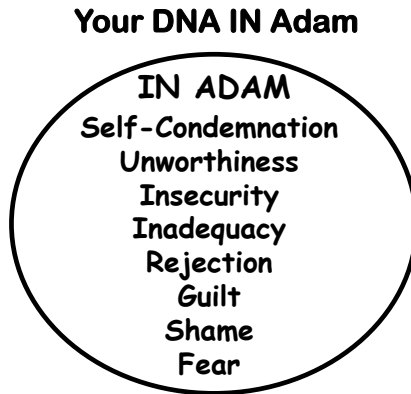
**c. VERBAL Negative and Positive Messages**

Woundedness can occur not only from abuse and traumatic events, but from verbal messages, as well.

At physical birth, we were all born "in Adam" as we see in Romans 5:12:

***"Therefore, just as through **one man [Adam]** sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned."***

Being born “in Adam,” means that we inherited Adam’s fallen DNA. Let me illustrate this with the following diagram:



Examples of Adam’s DNA include shame, guilt, inadequacy, insecurity, unworthiness, fear, rejection, and self-condemnation. From the time you were born until you were saved, you had no choice but to interpret life through the filter of your Adamic DNA. Early on, life came to you primarily through verbal messages. These verbal messages came, as a rule, in two categories: **negative** or **positive** messages.

**1. NEGATIVE Messages: “You are a failure.” “You will never measure up.” “I don’t love you.”**

When a negative message such as “you are a failure” is interpreted through your Adamic DNA, the result over time may be beliefs or feelings of unworthiness, insecurity or self-condemnation.

I can personally speak to the impact of negative messages because those are predominantly the kind of messages I received growing up. The result of these negative messages filtered through my Adamic DNA were beliefs and feelings of inadequacy, insecurity, rejection and unworthiness. These repeated negative messages led to a deep-seated woundedness.

Negative messages don't always involve explicit negative words, but can also be effectively conveyed by such things as tone of voice, sarcasm, and teasing. Unspoken negative messages can also be conveyed by such things as body language.

Write down your negative messages and then from the list on page 9 write down the words that most describe how you feel about yourself as a result of your repeated negative messages.

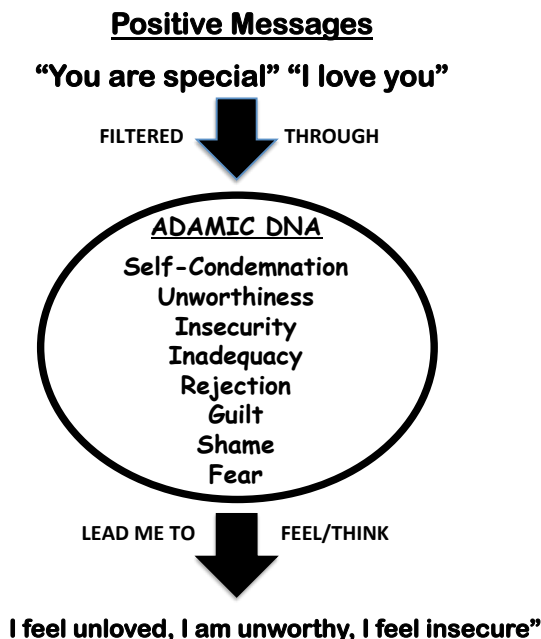
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**2. POSITIVE Messages: “I am proud of you.” “You can do it.” “There is nothing you can’t accomplish.” “You are special.”**

On the other hand, the positive messages are the kind of messages that we would all like to hear growing up. While that is true, even positive messages filtered through our Adamic DNA it too, can create woundedness. Let me explain by looking at the diagram below:





In the diagram, even positive messages from parents, siblings or friends, when filtered through your Adamic DNA, can become distorted. Let me give you an example to illustrate.

I met with a pastor a number of years ago who was addicted to pornography. He told me that he was the first-born son in an Asian family. As such, his father was always affirming him by saying that he was special and there was nothing he couldn't do if he set his mind to it. The problem was even though his father constantly spoke positive messages to him, this pastor interpreted them through his Adamic DNA of inadequacy and insecurity. So, the father's message became distorted in his mind as, "I can and must do better. If I don't, I am a failure."

As a result of this repeated distorted message, after every sermon he preached (no matter how well he prepared or presented the message), this pastor heard in his mind: "I failed because the message could have been better." Because of this reoccurring message, he would escape to pornography to cope with his feelings of being a failure. It was this recurring message that fueled his feelings and beliefs of inadequacy, insecurity, and feeling like a failure.

#### d. NON-VERBAL Messages

In addition to verbal messages that cause woundedness, non-verbal messages may also create woundedness. Many of those I have discipled have shared they had parents who neglected them or rejected them in non-verbal ways. These non-verbal messages interpreted through their Adamic DNA left them feeling ashamed, rejected, or unloved.

My dad never said "I don't love you." He just never said that he did love me. Those unspoken words left me feeling and believing that I was unloved and unlovable.

If you were wounded by non-verbal messages, write those down and write down from Page 9 how those messages made you feel.

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I hope this section was helpful in identifying any overt woundedness you may be experiencing. Let's look at the second form of woundedness.

In the previous chapter, we saw examples of abuse, wounding events, and verbal and non-verbal messages all of which lead to wounding thoughts and feelings.

#### e. MISINTERPRETING Events In Your Life

Another area of covert woundedness can stem from misinterpretation of events in your life. As a child you had no ability to interpret events such as your parents' fighting or divorcing. You may have come to conclusions like these:

- It's my fault my parents got a divorce.
- I must have done something to make my parents fight.
- I am the reason my parents are unhappy

Let me share a personal story to further explain.

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

My mother asked if everyone was in the car and my three siblings said, "Yes." She never looked back to get a head count.

So as I was coming out of the gift shop, I saw our car disappearing down the hill. I started to panic and ran after the car as fast as my eight year old legs would allow. At some point in my pursuit, the car stopped when my mother realized that my siblings were playing a trick on her (and me).

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

Along with those thoughts, I had feelings of fear, insecurity and abandonment. Every time that event would come to my mind, I would replay my thoughts and feelings over again. The fact that my family repeated and laughed about this story over the years only reinforced my pain and negative self-image. Those thoughts and feelings compounded over time and developed into deep seated beliefs that I was a fearful, insecure, and unworthy person. Even though that was not the truth, I believed it was because I misinterpreted this innocent event and it left me deeply wounded.

## **2. WOUNDED Thoughts/Feelings**

Typically, wounding thoughts and feelings go hand in hand. Generally, what we think or perceive about something or someone determines our emotional response. In other words, feelings typically follow thoughts.

With regard to emotions, it is important to remember that from the beginning God created us with emotions as part of our makeup. These emotions are part of our "human-ness." Emotions are a gift from God. Emotions serve many functions in our lives such as helping us love and relate to others, alerting us to danger, motivating us to act, interpreting our past and revealing how our past impacts the present.

When our thoughts and feelings are in line with God’s truth, we are functioning in them as God intended (e.g., joy, love, acceptance, forgiveness.) However, when our thoughts and feelings are tied to or flow from our woundedness, they become wounding thoughts and feelings that do not line up with God’s truth (e.g., unforgiveness, bitterness, anger, unworthiness).

As part of our humanity, we all have fleshly thoughts and feelings. However, when you have recurring fleshly thoughts and feelings that rise out of your woundedness, the eventual result will be false beliefs, ungodly behavior and misery.

A key truth to understand that our feelings flow from our thoughts. Therefore, when you think about your woundedness or some wounding event, write down some of your feelings.

Discouraged	Hopeless	Dejected	Unloved
Helpless	Worthless	Rejected	Miserable
Inadequate	Burdened	Frustrated	Condemned
Critical	Unhappy	Angry	Inadequate
Exploited	Vindictive	Confused	Depressed
Paralyzed	Troubled	Perplexed	Unworthy
Fearful	Empty	Anxious	Overwhelmed
Resentful	Lonely	Guilty	Powerless
Defeated	Insignificant	Judged	Ashamed
Insecure	Incapable	Vulnerable	Misunderstood

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**3. FALSE Beliefs**

What is the result of ongoing wounding thoughts and feelings?

***Reinforced wounding thoughts and feelings will  
EVENTUALLY lead to FALSE BELIEFS.  
A FALSE belief is ANY belief that does NOT  
line up with God's TRUTH.***

If you continue to take ownership of the wounding thoughts and feelings associated with your woundedness, this will result in false beliefs. These false beliefs usually fall into three categories: false beliefs about yourself, about God, and about others. Let me give you some examples:

**a. False Belief About OURSELVES**

Reinforced wounding feelings about ourselves can eventually take us from a “feeling” to a “belief.” For example, if “I feel rejected” is continually reinforced over time, I can eventually come to believe “I am rejected.”

**Exercise:** Referring back to what wounded feelings you wrote down on the previous page, write down any of those wounded feelings that have moved from “I feel” to “I believe.”

I feel \_\_\_\_\_. I believe I am \_\_\_\_\_.  
I feel \_\_\_\_\_. I believe I am \_\_\_\_\_.  
I feel \_\_\_\_\_. I believe I am \_\_\_\_\_.  
I feel \_\_\_\_\_. I believe I am \_\_\_\_\_.

As a result of my woundedness, my recurring feelings led me to believe I was rejected, unlovable, angry and resentful.

**b. False Beliefs About GOD**

Reinforced wounded feelings towards God can eventually take us to having false beliefs about God. Below are some examples:



“I am **feeling** angry towards God because He allowed my abuse to take place. As a result, I don’t **believe** He really loves me or that He really is in control.”

“If God really loved me, He would not have allowed this abuse to happen to me.”

“A good God would have prevented my parents from getting a divorce.”

As a result of my woundedness (especially coming from my dad), I saw God as unloving, angry, distant, uncaring, judgmental and condemning.

How might having false beliefs about God prevent you from going to Him for healing?

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### c. False Beliefs About OTHERS

Reinforced wounded feelings can eventually translate into false beliefs about others. Here is an example.

“This person can’t possibly love me because my **feelings** of unworthiness from my mother’s abuse have led me to **believe** that I am unworthy of anyone’s love.”

When you have adopted a false belief as being true, you are believing a lie that is opposed to God’s truth. When you are living out of wounded feelings and invested in believing lies that are opposed to God’s truth, then you are stuck in captivity.

A large part of healing is learning to believe God’s truth and to question your own wounded thoughts and feelings as being poor barometers of truth. It’s a healthy step to begin to question the truth of your own thoughts and feelings. Especially when they flow out of your woundedness.

At this point I want to remind you of what I shared in the first chapter.

***The key truth about wounding events is that it is NOT the wounded thoughts or feelings that keep us in bondage.***

***Rather, it is the FALSE BELIEFS that come as a result of the wounding events that keep us in bondage to our woundedness.***

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

#### **4. FLESHLY Behaviors**

Let me begin by defining fleshly behaviors:

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

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

***“Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these....”***

How does this apply to our woundedness? Our false beliefs about ourselves, God, and others that are born out of our woundedness produce fleshly behaviors.

Let me share more of my story to illustrate this truth. Some of my false beliefs about myself as a result of my woundedness caused by my dad were that I was rejected/rejectable, inadequate, and unworthy. The overflow of these false beliefs triggered fleshly behaviors and attitudes, including controlling, anger and bitterness towards my father because of his abuse. These attitudes spilled over into my marriage with the result that my wife caught the brunt of my fleshly behaviors.

As a business owner, my false beliefs resulted in my being constantly frustrated with and critical towards my employees because I thought they did not perform well enough to make me feel worthy and adequate. I hurt all of my employees in many ways due to my fleshly behaviors. Many of them quit as a result. Here is a key truth we need to understand when it comes to our fleshly behaviors.

***Fleshly behaviors that flow from your woundedness are not only TOXIC to you but to EVERYONE around you.***

Examples of some fleshly behaviors and attitudes that can flow from our woundedness are:

Rejecting	Controlling
Demanding	Frustrated
Manipulative	Unforgiving
Self-Protective	Judgmental
Uncaring	Insensitive
Resentful	People-pleasing
Jealous	Self-righteous
Selfish	Overbearing
Critical	Angry
Guilt	Shaming
Envious	Deceitful
Bitter	Blaming
Passive	Condemning

Write down any of these behaviors that might apply to you. In addition, ask the Lord to reveal any of your fleshly behaviors that are not on this list.

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## 5. STRONGHOLDS

If the fleshly behaviors flowing from your woundedness continue without being resolved, they will eventually become strongholds. Let me define a stronghold:

***Any REINFORCED fleshly behavior or attitude that has such a grip on you that, apart from the POWER of Christ, you CANNOT be set free from it.***

Every one of my fleshly behaviors became reinforced with the result that over time they became strongholds. They had such a grip on my life that I never ever thought I would be set free from them.

Let me end this chapter with a story that illustrates how we start with wounded thoughts/feelings and progress until they become strongholds. There was a pastor of a church I knew several years ago. As I heard more of his story, I found out when he was seven, he was abandoned by his father and mother. This abandonment created wounded feelings of fear, insecurity and rejection. These feelings led to the following false beliefs: “You can’t truly trust anyone,” “Protect yourself so you won’t get hurt again,” and “Be in control at all times.”

Flowing out of these false beliefs were fleshly behaviors that caused him to be controlling, manipulative and spiritually abusive. (I define a spiritual abuser as a spiritual leader who abuses the word of God to control, manipulate, condescend to and/or demean another believer.) This pastor was

hypersensitive and defensive if anyone tried to correct him; but if anyone challenged his spiritual authority, he became belligerent, self-protective and spiritually abusive. Over time, these fleshly behaviors became deeply entrenched strongholds that eventually led to his quitting the ministry. Unfortunately, he deeply wounded several people along the way.

**Questions To Think About**

1. Write down any messages you heard growing up and any of the wounded feelings you feel as a result. (Refer to page 16)

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2. Was it helpful to understand the progression starting with messages moving to strongholds? Why?

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3. In what ways do you think your fleshly behaviors be negatively impacting those around you?

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4. From what you wrote down on page 16, in what ways do you think your false beliefs are negatively impacting you, your relationship with God and with others?

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## CHAPTER THREE

### **How Do We Try To Deal With Our Unhealed Woundedness Apart From God?**

#### **How Do We Cope With Our Woundedness?**

Because of the internal misery and pain that our unhealed woundedness creates, we have two choices: we seek the Holy Spirit for healing or we try to cope with our woundedness. I define “coping” this way:

***MAN-MADE attempts to deal with the pain of our woundedness apart from or independent of God***

Coping comes in many forms. I would like to share with you a few of the coping mechanisms that I see most often.

#### **1. DENIAL**

Denial usually comes in two forms in relationship to woundedness:

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

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

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

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

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

## **2. COMPARTMENTALIZE Our Woundedness**

One of the key ways that we try to deal with our woundedness independent of God is what I call “compartmentalization.” Let me give you an example to illustrate.

Let’s compare your heart to a home. Like a home, our heart has rooms but these rooms we build to lock away or compartmentalize wounding events or the results of those wounding events.

If we were to put labels on these rooms, some would read: sexual abuse, trauma, abandonment, father abuse, mother abuse, or divorce. As we experience more woundedness, we add more rooms. These rooms come in different sizes: some larger and some smaller depending on the impact of the wounding event(s) on our lives and the grip those events have on our heart.

Because of the pain created by these rooms, we put locks on their doors to try to lock away the pain. We falsely believe if we lock away these wounding memories, feelings, and events, they won’t impact us and we can walk away and live life as if these events never took place.

**The Truth:** We can’t lock up these wounding events and walk away or live as if they never happened. The truth is that these locked rooms become prison cells that keep us imprisoned to our woundedness.

## **3. SELF-PROTECTION/INSULATION**

Another method of coping with your pain is through self-

protection or insulation. Much like insulation in a house protects the house from extreme temperatures from the outside, you believe that you can protect or insulate yourself from further pain associated with those past wounding events.

Let me give you an illustration. There was a man who was rejected by his mother from the day he was born until the day that she died (I mean this literally because she made rejecting remarks about him on the day she died). He shared with me the many ways that she rejected him and the woundedness that resulted. This man knew and lived Christ as life, but early on in his life he tried to insulate himself from his mother's ongoing rejection.

A series of rejecting events came about later in his life from other people. Since he was living in a self-protection mode, he thought he had sufficiently insulated himself from this rejection. These rejecting events exposed his failure to protect himself because he took ownership of their rejection and lashed out in anger towards them and rejected them back.

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

#### **4. STUFF YOUR EMOTIONS**

Another way we try to cope is to stuff our emotions associated with these areas of woundedness. Stuffing your emotions is like trying to lock away all the pain of your past woundedness in a bank vault and pretending it will no longer negatively impact your life. But then you discover that instead of being locked in a bank vault, your emotional pain is actually stored in a "soulical" colander where it oozes out to negatively impact you, your relationship with others, and your relationship with God.

**The Truth:** The truth is that damaged emotions that are stuffed or buried are in reality a hidden land mine that can explode



damaging yourself and those around you every time those emotions are triggered or stepped on by others. One indication of this is when your emotional response is in excess of what a normal reaction would be to whatever event triggered it.

## 5. ESCAPE or ANESTHETIZE

If we can't insulate, bury or compartmentalize the pain, we look for ways to escape or anesthetize it. Here are some examples of things we become emotionally addicted to or use to excess in an attempt to escape or anesthetize the pain:

Workaholism	Shopaholic	Television
Pornography	Medication	Hobbies
Sex Addiction	Overeating	Movies
Computing	Anorexia/Bulimia	Drug Abuse
Texting	Alcoholism	Cell phone
Social media	Video games	Exercise

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

**[Note:** I am not saying all the things on the list are necessarily bad. However, when they are being used as a way of escape from pain, then they become an unhealthy alternative to seeking God for your healing.]

## 6. IGNORING YOUR EMOTIONS.

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

You have heard the expression concerning the “elephant in the room.” Imagine yourself being in a room full of elephants that represent the feelings you have that are attached to your

woundedness. You think that if you simply turn your back on them or walk around them that they will go away.

**The Truth:** There is no real ignoring or going around your wounded feelings. They are like the wolves at the door of your heart always waiting for the chance to attack.

## **7. SPIRITUALIZING AWAY YOUR WOUNDEDNESS: “This is just my cross to bear.”**

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

There was a lady who had two children who died as adults creating great woundedness for her. However, instead of seeking divine healing for her woundedness, she felt that this was her cross to bear, and she would keep the woundedness active by telling everyone her story. (I don’t share this in any way to minimize the grief that she must have felt.)

Though she was given the opportunity to seek the Spirit for healing, her self-pity fed by her woundedness continued to grow. I could see it being reinforced each time that I heard her tell her tragic story. The result was her self-pity had become such a deep-seated stronghold that people did not want to be around her.

I am not refuting that we can’t have thorns or experience suffering like Paul, but when we use these spiritual or biblical phrases to justify perpetuating our woundedness, then we are, in reality, saying, “God can’t heal me” or “I don’t want to be healed.”

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

## **8. PLAYING THE VICTIM**

Another way of dealing with the pain independent of God is “playing the victim.” By this I mean that we use our wounds to draw attention, sympathy, and validation to ourselves from others. Playing the victim leads to self-pity and people pleasing as a way of manipulating people.

**The Truth:** As we allow the Spirit to renew our minds to the truth and set us free, we no longer have to remain victims of our woundedness.

## **Where Does Coping With Your Woundedness Lead?**

Since coping leads to negative consequences, I would like to share what some of these consequences are. As you read through these, please ask the Lord to reveal if any of the consequences apply to you.

### **1. It HINDERS the flow of Christ’s life.**

Let me use an example of a human artery to explain. Your arteries have all the blood they need to sustain life. However, over the years, plaque can develop in the artery restricting the flow of blood.

I liken this to our spiritual arteries in that we contain all of the life of Christ we need (e.g., His peace, love, joy forgiveness, etc.). However, unhealed woundedness grows and builds “spiritual plaque” on our spiritual artery (wounding events, false beliefs, fleshly behaviors) that hinders the flow of Christ’s life in us and through us. Look at the diagram on the following page.

## Spiritual Arteries and Woundedness



### 2. It will keep you locked into EMOTIONAL IMMATURITY

*"When I was a child, I spoke and thought and reasoned as a child. But when I **grew up [spiritually]**, I put away childish things **[grew up emotionally]**." 1 Corinthians 13:11*

Woundedness retards or restricts your emotional maturity. What Paul is referring to in this verse is spiritual growth and emotional maturity. He is saying there is a direct correlation between spiritual maturity and emotional maturity. You can't have one without the other. Continuing to live from your woundedness not only retards your spiritual growth but it restricts your emotional maturity as well. If we don't experience healing, we never grow up, and will continue to live in spiritual immaturity. (i.e., we will continue to speak, think, and reason as children.)

Some examples of emotional immaturity through unhealed woundedness are being self-absorbed ("It's all about me."), overreaction to someone's comments or continuing to blame or not forgive your offender/abuser.

Let me give you an example to illustrate. I know of a man who was emotionally and verbally abused by his dad as a boy. This abuse left him feeling unloved and rejected. His unmet

needs for love and acceptance blocked him from growing up spiritually which in turn, retarded his emotional growth. Even though he is now an adult, he has the emotional maturity of a teenager.

### **3. Your strongholds resulting from your woundedness will be REINFORCED.**

In addition to the default feelings, every time you replay the wounding events you will be reinforcing the strongholds created by your woundedness. In other words, we keep adding layers to the “onion” of our false beliefs which reinforce our strongholds.

### **4. We open ourselves to FURTHER woundedness.**

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

### **5. We make COVENANTS or VOWS to ourselves as a result of woundedness.**

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

- I will never trust anyone again.
- I will never be weak or vulnerable again.
- I will never let anyone get too close.
- I will never love again.

Let me share a story about my dad to illustrate. I will never forget my dad telling me the story about when he was a boy and his dad was a farmer. Even though my dad was only 11 years

old, his dad told him it was time for him to learn how to plow (it was a mule and plow; they didn't own a tractor).

However, my dad was too small to make the plow work so his dad severely beat him. After the beating, I believe my dad made a covenant with himself. That covenant was: "I will never fail again. I will succeed at all costs." The consequence of that vow not only negatively impacted his life but mine and my siblings' lives as well because that is the message we heard growing up.

**Note:** These self-made covenants can be unspoken as well as spoken and can be buried from our conscious awareness.

## **6. RESIGNATION - "This is as good as it gets."**

Let's assume that you received counseling or read books about healing, but no healing took place. You may have sought God for a while, but He didn't produce the healing that you expected in the time you wanted.

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

## **7. Unhealed woundedness can produce feelings of HOPELESSNESS.**

A continuing attitude of resignation can eventually lead to experiencing hopelessness that you will ever be healed. Hopelessness is like a dark abyss where you are so consumed by the darkness that you believe your healing is beyond even God's ability to heal. Or you give up seeking God for healing because you believe lies such as you are not worthy of being healed.

## **8. PSYCHOLOGICAL and PHYSIOLOGICAL disorders can eventually develop.**

I have worked with a number of people over the years who have developed psychological disorders as a result of not allowing God to heal their woundedness. Conditions such as depression, obsessive-compulsive disorders, panic attacks, eating disorders, etc. resulted.

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

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

## 9. The HARDENING of Our Hearts Towards People and God

*"For the **hearts of these people are hardened**, and their ears cannot hear, and they have closed their eyes— so their eyes cannot see, and their ears cannot hear, and their hearts cannot understand, and **they cannot turn to me and let me heal them.**" Matthew 13:15*

I define the hardening of the heart as:

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

I compare hardening of the heart to compounding interest on a certificate of deposit (when they actually made real interest). We know that the interest on a CD compounds the longer we keep the CD.

It is the same with your heart. As time goes by and you don't allow God into your heart to heal it, then you compound or add to the existing pain with more pain. Over time this "compounding" or hardening of the heart causes you to move further and further away from seeking God as the solution. Eventually you can turn away from God completely and will become deadened to God and His power to heal. Let me share a story to illustrate:

There was a man that I was discipling who shared with me that his fiancé was run over by a drunk driver the day of their rehearsal dinner. This event happened 15 years prior to our meeting. However, he told (and felt) the story like it had just happened. He said with deep anger: "God killed the only person in the world who ever really loved me." He resisted God over the next 15 years with the result that his heart became deeply hardened towards God.

Another analogy is that hardening of the heart is like an onion. The core of the onion is your woundedness. The layers of the onion are result of your going through life with unhealed woundedness. As you carry your woundedness forward in life, every time you are wounded again you add another layer of spiritual "hardness" to your heart. This results in self-inflicted misery to you and everyone around you with the ultimate result of your having an increasingly hardened heart towards God.

## **Summary**

The point of this lesson is to show you how important it is to seek God for healing. I say this, because I did not seek Him for 48 years and by then my heart was very hard. I hope this chapter has given you a desire not to wait a moment longer before seeking the Holy Spirit to start healing your heart.



## **Questions To Think About**

1. What key truth(s) impacted you the most in this chapter? Why?

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2. Do any of the coping mechanisms discussed apply to you? If so, please write them down.

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3. Please write down any of the eight results of coping listed in the previous section that apply to you.

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4. Have you made any covenants with yourself as a result of your woundedness? Please write those down. If none come to mind, would you be willing to ask the Lord to reveal whether you have made any covenants or vows that you aren't aware of?

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5. What are some biblical truths or reasons why Christians should never get to a place of resignation or hopelessness?

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## CHAPTER FOUR

### **Satan's Strategies To Keep Us From Being Healed**

*"Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour." 1 Peter 5:8*

I hope you understand that Satan knows very well God's word. He knows how the Christian life works, all about your woundedness, and the truth about God's healing process. That being the case, Satan will do everything within his power to keep you from knowing, believing, and living from God's truth in order to keep you imprisoned in your woundedness. This is part of his three-fold strategy with Christians as we see in the first part of John 10:10:

*"The thief comes only to **steal and kill and destroy...**"*

Satan will stop at nothing to keep you in bondage to your woundedness and the false beliefs and fleshly behaviors that are tied to it. He is strategizing non-stop to keep you locked away in your prison of woundedness so you will continue to live from the pain, misery, and hopelessness that results. Let's look at seven strategies Satan uses to better understand how he keeps us in bondage to our woundedness.

#### **STRATEGY #1 - Satan will INSERT THOUGHTS to keep you in bondage to your woundedness.**

*"Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, 'God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You.' But He turned and said to Peter, '**Get behind Me, Satan!** You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's.'" Matthew 16:22-23*

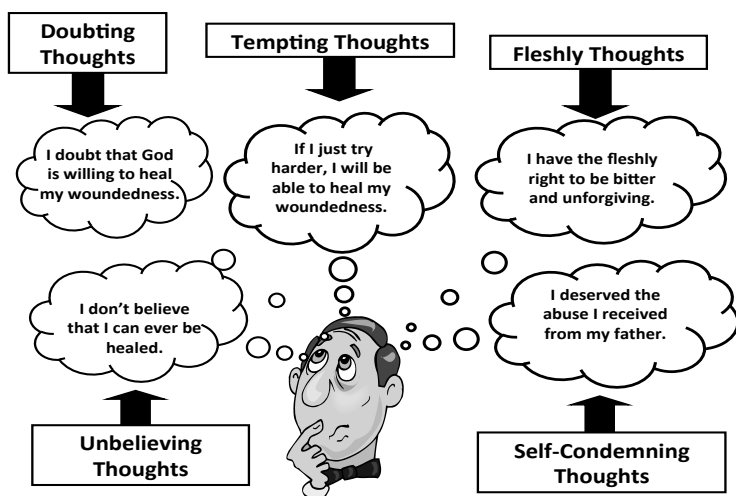
How do we know that Satan can insert thoughts into our minds? The best example of this is Matthew 16:22-23, above. Jesus addressed Satan instead of Peter because He knew Satan was the source of inserting those thoughts into Peter's mind. Accordingly, I believe Satan's #1 strategy with believers is to insert thoughts into their minds. These thoughts usually fall into the following categories:

- UNBELIEVING thoughts.
- DOUBTING thoughts.
- TEMPTING thoughts.
- FLESHLY thoughts.
- CONDEMNING thoughts.

Here is a key truth concerning the thoughts Satan inserts into our minds:

***The thoughts Satan inserts into our minds  
ALWAYS come in FIRST person in our own voices.***

Here is an illustration of some of the types of thoughts Satan inserts into our minds.



Satan will never insert a “third” person thought like “You are a failure.” It will always come in first person, “I am a failure.” He mimics your own voice so you will believe and take ownership of his thoughts.

**STRATEGY #2 - Satan helped you MISINTERPRET the messages you were hearing as a young person**

I believe Satan started the minute you were born to influence you to misinterpret the messages you heard from your parents, siblings, friends, etc. He knows that as a small child you didn’t have the ability to correctly interpret the messages you were hearing. So, he distorted those messages through your Adamic DNA (i.e., insecurity, rejection, fear, anxiety, etc. (Refer back to the diagram of our DNA in Adam on page 11.)

**STRATEGY #3- Keep REPLAYING past wounding events in your mind to REINFORCE or THICKEN the walls of your prison cell of woundedness.**

You may have heard the expression “forgive and forget.” But the truth is that, for the most part, you will not forget your wounding events. Why? These memories are permanently stored in your brain. They are like photos on your cell phone or computer that are always there and readily available.

Satan’s strategy is to keep bringing up those memories and the feelings surrounding them like a non-stop running slide show. He knows that if you keep taking ownership of the thoughts and feelings surrounding your wounding events, you will never be healed.

**Question:** Do you find yourself replaying the wounding events over and over again? Is it possible the source of those recurring memories could be Satan?

**STRATEGY #4 - If you start down the path of spiritual healing, Satan will pull out ALL the stops to RESIST you and DRAG you back to the prison.**

You have likely already discovered that when you started your new journey of living from Christ, you felt resistance from Satan. As long as you were functioning in the “default” position of living from yourself as the source, he had no reason to oppose you.

But when you start learning, believing, and choosing to walk in the truth that Christ is your Source and the Holy Spirit can heal you, Satan must resist you since his greatest fear is you will learn the truth, engage God to renew your mind to the truth, and eventually be healed. Satan primarily resists you by using the next strategy.

**STRATEGY #5 - Satan will TEMPT you to keep using your ESCAPE MECHANISMS to try to stop or anesthetize the pain.**

When you feel the effects of your woundedness, the enemy is right there tempting you to go to your escape mechanisms to anesthetize or escape the pain. He knows that if you continue to go back to your escape mechanisms, they will turn into addictions and/or strongholds.

For example, assume that your escape mechanism is overeating. A wounding event or feeling comes to mind and Satan tempts you to overeat to anesthetize the pain caused by that event or feeling. Since escape mechanisms only temporarily distract you from your pain, Satan will continue to tempt you to use your ways of escaping over and over again.

**STRATEGY #6 - Satan will tempt you to stay BUSY to distract you from dealing with the pain of your woundedness.**

This is a subtle but very effective tool Satan has used on me for the past several years. If Satan can keep us focused on staying busy, we will be tempted to use that busy-ness to distract ourselves from our own pain and to keep us from seeking the Lord to heal the woundedness.

**STRATEGY #7 - Satan will try to keep you in bondage to any UNFORGIVENESS by triggering your FLESHLY RIGHTS.**

This strategy is crucial because Satan knows very well unforgiveness greatly hinders the flow of Christ's life in us. He knows unforgiveness is like a poison that creates internal bondage and external fleshly behaviors such as anger, bitterness, etc.

One of the ways the enemy tries to keep us in bondage to unforgiveness is to tempt us to live from our fleshly right not to forgive. He will do this by bringing the event to mind, reminding you of all the pain the person inflicted on you, and repeatedly stirring up your right to be angry, bitter, unforgiving, etc.

**Satan's Ultimate Objective: To Persuade You That The Healing Of Your Woundedness Is HOPELESS**

As Satan employs these seven strategies, his ultimate objective is to convince you to give up the hope of ever be healed. This is one of the reasons many people, including Christians, commit suicide. They become so hopeless that they believe their healing will never take place and so see no need to continue living. But even if you are not tempted to take your life, living in hopelessness can be a living hell. Hopelessness and despair are two sides of the same coin.

## Let's Remember Two Key Truths

Now that we have looked at some of Satan's strategies, let's remember two key truths:

### 1. Satan Has Been DEFEATED

***Satan was DEFEATED at the cross.***

*"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; **He shall crush you on the head**, and you shall bruise him on the heel." Genesis 3:15*

In Genesis 3:15 above, when God was speaking to Satan after the fall of Adam and Eve, He said, "He shall crush you on the head." "He" in this verse refers to Jesus and the crushing of Satan's head refers to the ultimate defeat of Satan that would take place at the crucifixion of Christ. One of the glorious results of Christ's death on the cross and His resurrection was the defeat of Satan and his demonic forces once and for all.

### 2. You Have the HOLY SPIRIT'S Power Over Satan in You

Since we are fighting an unseen and more powerful enemy, we can't possibly win the fight against Satan and his demonic forces in our own strength. That is why we see in the following verse that we need the Spirit's power to defeat Satan and his strategies.

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

Of even greater significance than our needing the Spirit's ongoing power, is this truth about Jesus in Hebrews 2:14, that He rendered powerless Satan and his power of death:

*“Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death **He [Jesus] might render powerless him [Satan]** who had the power of death, that is, the devil.”*

*Hebrews 2:14*

What does this verse mean for you and me? It means as we walk by faith, we are walking in God’s power over Satan. Another way of saying this is Satan is a “toothless” lion when we depend upon, rest upon, and draw upon God’s power. We see this truth confirmed in 1 John 4:4:

*“You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because **greater is He who is in you than he [Satan] who is in the world.**”*

Since you, as a Christian, contain all of the Holy Spirit’s power, you can walk in dependence on that power to defeat every one of Satan’s strategies to keep you in bondage to your woundedness.



**Questions To Think About**

1. What key truth(s) impacted you the most in this chapter?  
Why?

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2. Which of the seven strategies do you believe Satan uses the most in your life? How are those strategies negatively impacting your life?

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3. In what ways will it negatively impact your woundedness, if you continue taking ownership of lying, condemning, unbelieving and sinful thoughts Satan inserts into your mind?

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4. When it comes to your woundedness why is it important to believe Satan has been defeated and you contain God's power over Satan?

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## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **The Foundation For Spiritual Healing**

#### **Introduction**

Before we get into God's process for healing our woundedness, I feel it is important to lay the foundation for that process with two key truths:

- Who the Source is for healing
- Your true identity in Christ

#### **Three False Beliefs About Spiritual Healing**

There are primarily three categories of Christians that I have worked with over the years concerning their false beliefs about the healing of woundedness: (1) those who believe that a counselor, pastor, a book on healing, etc. can be the source of healing; (2) those who believe that they can read the Bible or a book on healing and then they, acting as their own source—by using their own IQ, self-discipline, and willpower—can heal themselves; and (3) those who believe that God will help them be their own source for healing.

The question is: Will any of the above beliefs produce true healing? The truth is that none of these beliefs will produce the healing that God promises. Why not? Let me answer that question with the following two key truths.

#### **TRUTH #1 - The Source For Healing Our Woundedness**

##### **Christ As “THE” Life**

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

*“...I AM the way, the truth, and **THE LIFE**...”*

*John 14:6*

***“...I AM the resurrection and THE LIFE.”***

*John 11:25*

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

### **What Paul Says About Jesus Being THE Life**

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

***“...Christ who is YOUR life....”***

What is Paul saying in this verse? He is saying that the life of Christ is more than eternal life that He gave you at salvation. He is saying that Christ is **your** life today, at this very moment. At this point you might be scratching your head and asking, “What is Paul talking about? What does it mean that Christ is my life?”

### **What Does It Mean That Christ Is Your Life?**

God sums up the answer to that question in 1 Corinthians 1:30a (RSV):

***“He is the SOURCE of your life in Christ Jesus, ...”***

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

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

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

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

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

You may be wondering what it means practically that God is your Source. Let me give you two examples.

### **Christ Is Your Source To Meet Your NEEDS.**

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

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

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

Unconditional love	Victory	Worth
Acceptance	Faith	Freedom
Fearlessness	Patience	Strength
Discernment	Peace	Security
Forgiveness	Power	Wisdom
Understanding	Rest	Humility
Christ-confidence	Boldness	Adequacy
Righteousness	Courage	Selflessness
Christ-control	Hope	Compassion

## God is Your Source for HEALING.

We see this in Psalm 147:3:

*“He **heals** the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.”*

*Psalm 147:3*

*“The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters.*

***He restores my soul....”** Psalm 23:1-3a*

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

***God and ONLY God will be the Source to HEAL you of your past and present woundedness.***

It is not to say that God can't work through counselors, friends, books, or even studies like this for healing. However, they are not the source for healing. Rather, they are the tools or conduits the Lord may use to be a part of your healing process. The only Source for spiritual healing is God. The key to this truth is that God is not going to help you (or anyone else) be the source. Rather, He, and He alone is the Source for healing. I liken this to asking the surgeon to help you do the surgery on yourself.

## God WILL Heal You

*“Commit your way to the LORD, trust also in Him, and **He will do it.**” Psalm 37:5*

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

Think about the two phrases in the verses above: “He **will** do it,” and “He **will** bring it to completion.” I hope that when you see the word “will” associated with God that you conclude that

it is a 100% certainty that God can and will heal you.

In Psalm 37:5, the word “it” means everything He promises which includes healing. “Bringing it to completion” means that the Lord will bring you complete healing. I pray that from this moment on that you will see these verses as not just a possibility but rather, as a **certainty** that God will heal you. Do you believe it?

Think about it. Right now, with Christ in you, you have the power that raised Jesus from the dead. According to Ephesians 1:19, 20:

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

Without God’s power there will be no healing. Your willpower, strength, ability, and capability will never produce the healing that God promises. This is why when you live from God as your Source, you are living from His power to heal the deepest woundedness you may be experiencing.

[**Note:** If you would like to know more about Christ being your Source, I have written a curriculum called *Living Life From A New Source*. You can download it for free from the Curriculum tab on our website at: [www.christislifeministries.com](http://www.christislifeministries.com). There are also videos for this curriculum on our website under the Media tab.]

## **TRUTH #2 – You Have A New Identity In Christ**

### **What Is Your Identity?**

Let’s start by defining what I mean by identity.

***Your IDENTITY is defined as how you FEEL  
or what you BELIEVE about yourself.***

The question is, “Does what you believe about yourself line up with God’s truth?” Remember from Chapter Two we said that a false belief is any belief that does not line up with God’s truth. We said that we can have false beliefs about God, others and ourselves. I want to look at our false beliefs about ourselves in light of our identity. Let’s begin by looking at your old identity.

### **Your OLD Identity Before You Were Saved**

From the moment you were born until the moment you were saved, you had what I call an “old identity.”

***Your OLD identity was made up of everything you  
believed about yourself BEFORE you were saved.***

For example, if you believed you were inadequate, unworthy, rejected, or self-confident before you were saved, that was who you were in your old identity. However, the moment you were saved God did a supernatural work by giving you a new identity.

### **At Salvation. God Gave You A New Identity**

Look at 2 Corinthians 5:17:

***“Therefore, if any man is **in Christ**, he is a **new creation**; the  
old things [old identity] passed away; behold, new things  
[new identity] have come.”***

The moment you were saved, you became “in Christ,” which means God removed your old identity and gave you a new identity. Stop and ponder this amazing truth: you no longer have

an old identity. Rather, now that you are “in Christ,” you are a new creation which means you have a new identity.

Let’s look at some of the characteristics of your new identity.

### What Is Your True Identity Now That You Are Saved

Look at the following verses that reveal some examples of your true identity in Christ.

Romans 8:35, 38-39	In Christ, you are unconditionally loved.
Ephesians 4:24	In Christ, you are holy and righteous
Romans 15:7	In Christ, you are accepted/acceptable.
Colossians 3:13	In Christ, you are a forgiving person.
Psalms 139:14	In Christ, you are worthy.
2 Corinthians 3:5	In Christ, you are adequate.
Psalms 56:4	In Christ, you are fearless.
Colossians 2:10	In Christ, you are complete in Him.
Galatians 5:1	In Christ, you are free.
Psalms 139:5	In Christ, you are secure.
1 Corinthians 15:57	In Christ, you are victorious.
Romans 8:37	In Christ, you are a conqueror.

God accomplished this amazing supernatural exchange of your old identity for a new one so that you no longer have to live from your false beliefs about yourself.

Let me explain by looking back at an example of a personal false belief I shared in Chapter Two. Here is the false belief:

“I felt so rejected from the wounding events from my dad that I **believed** I was **rejected/rejectable**.”

The false belief is that I was a rejected/rejectable person. How do we know this is a false belief? Because according to Romans 15:7, in my true identity in Christ I am totally accepted and acceptable. What this meant for me is that since I am



accepted in Christ I no longer had to believe and accept the false belief that I am rejected.

This is good news but there is a potential problem.

***We don't believe God's truth about our true identity because our false beliefs about ourselves can be so DEEPLY entrenched that we CHOOSE to believe the false belief over God's truth.***

I can personally vouch for this because as I mentioned, I had a deeply held belief that I was rejected and rejectable. When I first learned I had a new identity in Christ and that I was accepted in my true identity, I couldn't believe it because the false belief was so entrenched in my belief system. However, as I began to seek the Holy Spirit to renew my mind to this truth, over time, the Spirit supernaturally transformed me to be able to believe the truth.

[**Note:** If you would like to know more about your true identity in Christ, I have written a curriculum called *Do You Know Your True Identity?* You can download it for free from the Curriculum tab on our website at: [www.christislifeministries.com](http://www.christislifeministries.com). There are also videos for this curriculum on our website under the Media tab.]

## **Summary**

Now that you know these key foundational truths for healing, we will be spending the next two chapters learning how you can engage God to experience healing.

## **Questions To Think About**

1. What key truth(s) impacted you the most in this chapter? Why?

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2. Have you believed up until now that you had to be the source with God's help to live the Christian life? If so, how does it change your beliefs knowing that God, not you, is the Source both for living the Christian life and for healing?

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3. Please list any of the needs listed on page 44 that you have as a result of your woundedness. In what ways do you think it might make a difference in your healing process if Christ is the One to meet those needs?

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4. Look at the list on page 49 and write down any of the characteristics of your true identity you would most like to experience.

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## CHAPTER SIX

### Engaging God For Healing

#### Engaging God

Now that we understand woundedness and the negative effects it has in our lives, let's look at some practical truths to engage God for healing. Let's me first define what I mean by "engaging God."

***Engaging God means that we come to Him with a WILLING heart, totally DEPENDING on Him as our Source to heal.***

Why must we totally depend on God to heal us? Look at John 15:5 for a moment:

***"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."***

There are two key truths in this verse. First, the physical branches are totally dependent on the vine for life. Similarly, we, as spiritual branches, are totally dependent on Christ for life.

Second, when Jesus says that apart from Him we can do nothing, do you believe that includes the healing of your woundedness? Absolutely! In the context of woundedness, "nothing" means that we—apart from God—cannot accomplish the healing we desire and that God promises. Our part is to totally depend on Him to heal us. Let me share three key truths about what it means to engage God?

## 1. The Way We Engage God Is By FAITH.

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

We know that God is the Source, but we have a part to play in God’s healing process as well.

***Your part is to walk by FAITH by putting your FAITH totally in God to heal you.***

Faith is simply coming to God with an attitude of total dependence on Him and willingness for Him to heal you.

## 2. Engaging God By Faith Means Taking STEPS of Faith

*“For we **walk by faith**, not by sight.”  
2 Corinthians 5:7*

The walk of faith begins with the first step. What does it mean to take a step of faith concerning healing? Here is an example.

**Step of Faith:** “Lord, I am coming to You and trusting You to heal me.”

Faith does not depend on your having the “right” feelings or thoughts. Initially, you may be taking steps of faith despite what you think or how you feel. Faith is a **choice** to believe God and to act on that choice in spite of your doubts and wounded emotions.

## 3. What Happens At The MOMENT You Take A Step of Faith?

*“... so that your **faith** would not rest on the wisdom of men,  
but on **the power of God.**” 1 Corinthians 2:5*

The moment you take a step of faith, God releases the full force of His power in you to heal you. Remember what we talked about in the previous chapter concerning God's power? The power that raised Jesus from the dead resides in you and is released when you choose to take a step of faith. Now let's take a look at some practical application to engage God for healing.

### **Practical Truths Concerning Engaging God For Healing**

As you read through this section, I would encourage you to ask the Holy Spirit to tell you which of these truths applies to you. When it comes to your healing, the Spirit has a specific pathway of healing for you. As you go through these truths, let Him be the One who leads you and guides you on His pathway for your healing.

**Note:** Please do not look at these truths as a checklist or a "to do" list. These are simply truths the Lord has given me to help you on your journey to healing.

1. **OPEN the door of your heart and INVITE God in to begin the healing process.**

*"Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and **opens the door**, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me." Revelation 3:20*

We tend to look at this verse in the context of salvation. However, this verse has just as much to do with your healing as well. What I mean by this is that the Lord knocks and will keep knocking on the door of your heart until you are willing to let Him in for healing. The question is: "Are you willing to open the door and let Him in to heal?"

If you are unwilling, ask Him to give you the willingness to let Him in. Keep in mind that our flesh always resists the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. The only thing that can break down that resistance is the power of God. Therefore, let's look at some steps of faith.

**Step of faith if you are willing:** “I am inviting You in, Lord, to begin the healing process.”

**Step of faith if you are not willing:** “Lord, I am unwilling to let You in to heal me. I am asking You to transform my will and move me from unwillingness to willingness.”

**Engaging God:** Take the initial step of faith by opening the door of your heart to the Holy Spirit and let Him begin the healing process. The Lord is **always** willing to heal when we open the door and trust Him to act.

**2. Ask God to SEARCH your heart to expose any buried woundedness or to address some specific wounding event or false beliefs.**

***“Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way.***

*Psalm 139:23, 24*

***“Examine me, O LORD, and try me;  
Test my mind and my heart.” Psalm 26:2***

Asking God to search your heart is one of the greatest forms of humility and transparency. When you ask God to search your heart, you are giving God permission to:

- a. Expose or reveal some area of woundedness that you think that you have “hidden away.”
- b. Reveal to you the ways that you have tried to cope with, deny, escape from, self-protect, or insulate yourself from your pain.
- c. Reveal to you some of the areas in your life where your woundedness is creating “death” (e.g., anger, bitterness, unforgiveness) in you and those around you.

**Step of faith:** “Lord, I may have buried my woundedness. I am asking you to reveal those ‘buried’ areas and begin healing them.”

**Step of faith:** “Lord, I am asking You to reveal the ways that I am trying to cope with my pain, and the ‘death’ that it is causing me and everyone around me.”

**Engaging God:** Ask the Lord to search your heart, and if you are unwilling to do so, ask Him to give you the willingness to let Him do that.

3. If you feel you can't open the door because you fear there may be more pain, seek Christ to be your COURAGE

*“But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, **“Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid.”** Matthew 14:27*

***“Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.”** John 14:27*

You may hear the Lord knocking, but you don't answer the door because you fear re-experiencing the pain of your woundedness or feeling additional pain that you believe may come with the healing process. If this is true of you, seek God to remind you that you have been carrying your pain way too long, and if you continue carrying it, it will only get heavier and more unbearable. Therefore, seek Christ to be your courage and ask Him to exchange your fear for His courage.

**Step of faith:** “Lord, I fear opening the door because I don't want to feel the pain of my woundedness or feel the pain that may come with healing and freedom. I am asking You to BE my courage and persuade me that I have nothing to fear. Remind me that on the other side of any pain that I may experience during the healing process, there will eventually be divine healing.”

**Engaging God:** Seek the Lord to give you the willingness to open the door so that He can come in and heal.

**4. Express to God how you HONESTLY feel about your pain caused by the wounding events in your life.**

When you read through the Psalms, you see David over and over crying out to God about how he feels about his pain and even God Himself. Here is an example of that in Psalm 13: 1, 2:

***“How long, O LORD? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, Having sorrow in my heart all the day? How long will my enemy be exalted over me?”***

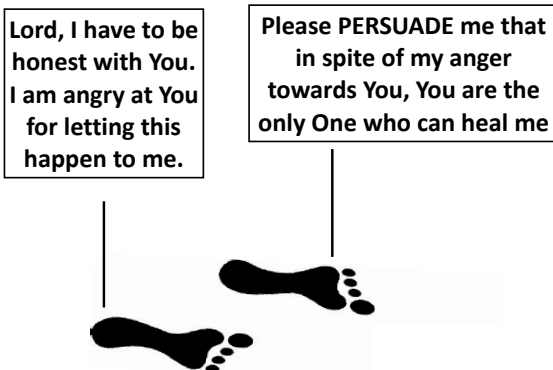
It is okay to be honest with God. Sometimes we are hesitant to share with God how we honestly feel because we fear His discipline or punishment. You never have to fear verbalizing your feelings. Why? Because He already knows how you really feel and He loves you regardless of those feelings or what you say to Him.

You can get angry with God, shake your fist at Him, and even ask the “why” questions. He fully understands because He knows and empathizes with the depth of your pain. I think it is important to do some “holy” venting as part of your healing process. David did it, so can you.

**Step of faith:** “Lord, I have to be honest with You. I am angry at You for letting this happen to me. Thank you for hearing the pain of my wounded heart.”

On the following page is another example of steps of faith when we are angry at God.





**Engaging God:** If you are experiencing woundedness, take a moment and simply tell God how you feel about your pain, your doubt, your unbelief, etc. Don't hold back. Let Him know what you think and how you feel. Your "holy" venting never changes His love for you.

#### **5. Keep ENTRUSTING your pain to God.**

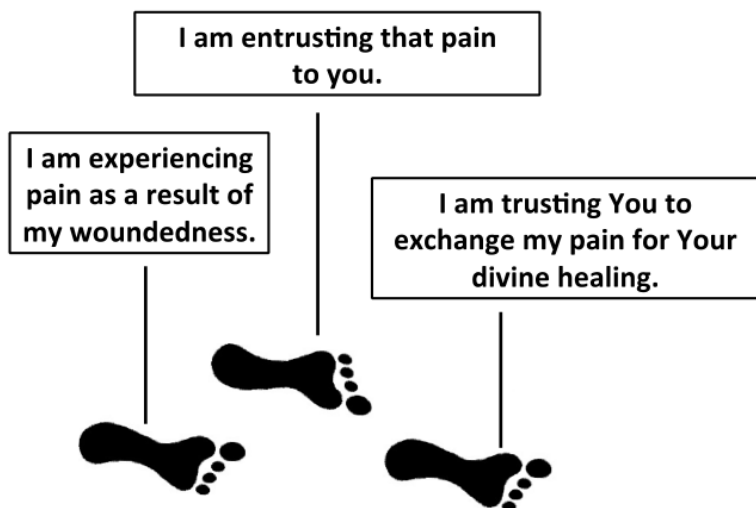
*"... and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept **entrusting Himself to Him** who judges righteously." 1 Peter 2:23*

You were never meant to hold on to your pain caused by your woundedness (or any pain for that matter). God wants you to continuously entrust your pain to Him. "Entrust" in context of healing means:

***GIVING OVER to God the pain associated with your woundedness.***

If we hold on to the pain or try to compartmentalize, deny, anesthetize, escape, etc., the pain, then it will continue to prevent us from experiencing God's healing hand. Consequently, every time that you feel the pain, give it over to God in that

moment. Sometimes the pain will come in waves, and you will have to keep entrusting the pain until it subsides. Let's look some steps of faith concerning entrustment.



**Engaging God:** Every time the pain comes to the surface begin entrusting that pain over to God.

**6. Seek the Lord to RENEW your mind to the truth concerning your false beliefs as a result of your woundedness.**

*"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the **renewing of your mind...**"*

*Romans 12:2a*

Earlier we discussed that it is no longer the past wounding events that are creating your pain. Your pain is being created by the false beliefs you have absorbed arising from those wounding events. False beliefs about yourself include such things as, "I am worthless, unloved, or rejectable."

These beliefs are false because in your true identity in Christ you are worthy, unconditionally loved, and totally accepted. Whatever your false beliefs are, God promises to renew your

mind to His truth and set you free.

***Freedom and healing come as we seek the Holy Spirit to RENEW our minds and replace our false beliefs with His TRUTH***

**Step of faith:** “Lord, I believe that I am rejected (rejectable) as a result of my woundedness. I am asking You to renew my mind to the truth that I am totally accepted in You according to Romans 15:7.

***“Therefore, **accept** one another, just as **Christ also accepted us** to the glory of God.” Romans 15:7***

**7. Part of the renewing of your mind is learning to take every thought CAPTIVE that is associated with your woundedness.**

***“We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and **we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.**”***  
***2 Corinthians 10:5***

Part of the healing process and the renewing of your mind includes dealing with the recurring thoughts and feelings associated with your woundedness. Let’s look at three key truths concerning how to take your thoughts captive.

**a. THINK about what you think about.**

***“Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith. Examine yourselves....” 2 Corinthians 13:5***

Do you think about what you think about? If not, you end up taking ownership of your wounding thoughts and so reinforce your false beliefs. What does thinking about what you think

about look like?

**b. Ask God to reveal the SOURCE of your thoughts.**

If this is true for you, begin examining your thoughts by asking God to show you the source of those thoughts. Here is an example of what that might look like.

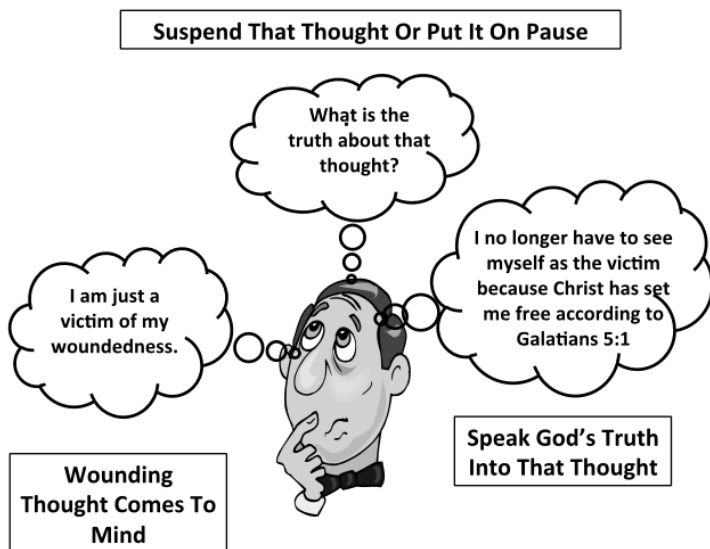
The thought: "I am (and will always be) a victim of my woundedness."

**Step of Faith:** "Lord, is this thought from You or my flesh or Satan?" (The Spirit reveals to you that thought is from the flesh.)

**b. When you recognize the wounding thought is from your flesh, put it on PAUSE and APPLY God's truth to it.**

*"But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth..." John 16:13*

Here is an illustration of this principle:

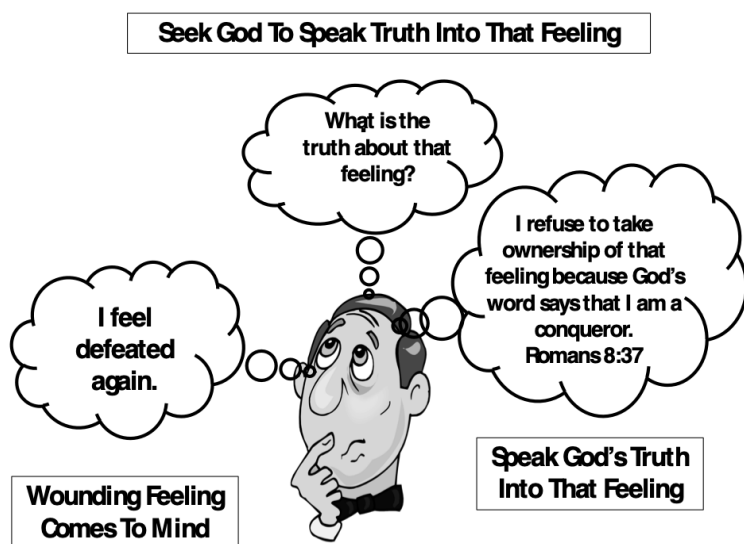


As you continue to challenge your wounding thoughts by speaking truth into them, it accomplishes two things:

- It prevents you from taking ownership of wounding thoughts. (i.e., you take the thoughts captive).
- It allows the Holy Spirit to renew your mind to the truth and set you free from your false beliefs.

### 8. Take your FEELINGS captive as well.

Taking feelings captive is much the same as taking a thought captive. Look at the following illustration.



Whether it is a thought or a feeling, it is crucial to take them captive to prevent further reinforcement of a false belief and to renew your mind to the truth so that you will eventually be set free from your false beliefs and thoughts.

## **Summary**

The ultimate goal of healing comes when you are set free from the false beliefs associated with your woundedness. We will talk about some key truths concerning the healing process in Chapter Seven. Before we do, I want to talk about forgiveness since that is the number one hindrance to healing.

## **Questions To Think About**

1. Which of the eight truths in this chapter impacted you the most? Why?

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2. Which of the truths did you struggle with? Why?

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2. What might be the consequences if we don't seek God for healing?

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4. In what ways does this chapter give you hope and encouragement for your healing?

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5. Will you engage God to start the healing process? If not, what do you think is preventing you?

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **Forgiving Others For Healing**

#### **Introduction**

***“Bear with each other and **forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.**” Colossians 3:13***

Since our wounding, for the most part, is caused by others, forgiveness is essential for the healing process. In this chapter I want to look at the effects of unforgiveness, why we feel we don't have to forgive, and the outcome when we choose to forgive. Let's begin by looking at what unforgiveness involves and the consequences of continuing to live from it.

#### **What is UNFORGIVENESS?**

Unforgiveness occurs when you take ownership of someone else's offense towards you causing you to believe, “I don't have to or I don't want to forgive that person.”

Taking ownership of someone else's offense towards you simply means you receive that offense and allow your flesh to act on it.

Some examples of offenses would be:

- Verbal and non-verbal words of rejection, anger, guilt, shame, condemnation, etc.
- Abuse (sexual, physical, emotional, and/or verbal).
- Lack of being valued, loved, and/or accepted in the ways you expected or needed.
- Adultery.
- Abandonment.

Write down the names of one or more persons who have wounded you. What feelings come to mind when you think about that person(s) and what they did to offend or wound you?

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For me, my unforgiveness towards my dad after 48 years led me to deep anger and bitterness towards him.

### **Unforgiveness Leads To The Fleshly Right Not To Forgive**

Concerning unforgiveness, we can move from not wanting to forgive to what I described earlier as “fleshly right” not to forgive.

When our flesh has been offended, it often must fight back. It is like a prosecutor who builds a case against the person who has wounded us. As a result, the flesh demands, justifies, and defends its fleshly right not to forgive the offender.

Over the years, my flesh continued building a case against my abusive dad and justifying why, because of that abuse, I had the right not to forgive him. The longer I spent in unforgiveness, the more reinforced my fleshly right became.

### **Why We Believe We Have the Fleshly Right Not to Forgive**

The following are some examples of reasons why we feel or believe we have the fleshly right not to forgive.

1. This person does not deserve forgiveness.
2. This person has ruined my life.
3. Forgiving this person makes me look weak.
4. This person has to pay for my woundedness. They need to be punished.
5. If I forgive this person, it would mean I'm overlooking or condoning their offenses towards me.



**Question:** Are you holding offenses against anyone? If so, do any of the reasons given above apply to you? Please write those reasons down.

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**Question:** Are there any other reasons not listed above that you believe or feel are justifications for not forgiving your offender? Please write those down.

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### **What Are The Results of Unforgiveness?**

Unforgiveness is like living in a toxic waste dump because its toxicity is destructive both to you and everyone around you. Below are some of the short- and long-term results of unforgiveness.

### **If we choose not to forgive, what will be some of the consequences?**

- a. In your mind, you continue to think and rethink about the wounding events and the person(s) who offended you.
- b. Emotionally it can cause stress, anxiety, and even depression.
- c. It can lead to unresolved frustration, anger, and bitterness towards your offender.
- d. You continue to take ownership of offenses from the person(s) offending you.
- e. It opens you up for Satan to gain a foothold and, eventually, a stronghold in your life.

- f. On some level, it will poison every one of your relationships.

**Question:** Are you experiencing any of the consequences listed above due to your unforgiveness? Please write those down and any other consequences you are experiencing due to your unforgiveness.

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### Ultimately, Unforgiveness Imprisons You

When you have an attitude of unforgiveness toward someone, you have placed yourself in your own prison. Since your unforgiveness has hindered Christ's life and power from flowing in you, you have basically built yourself a prison made up of walls of anger, bitterness, and unforgiveness. Here is a further problem:

***The LONGER you live in unforgiveness, the more FORTIFIED and REINFORCED your prison walls become.***

Have you realized before now that the only person imprisoned by unforgiveness is the one who is not forgiving? It is like drinking poison and expecting your offender to die.

### Unforgiveness Results In Hardening Your Heart Towards God

We talked earlier about how coping can lead to hardening of your heart. The same is true of unforgiveness. In what way?

***Unforgiveness DISTANCES a person from God  
which results in RESISTANCE to His  
transforming work in our lives.***

This is a crucial truth because when distance creates resistance you will move further and further away from God causing you to resist His healing work in you to set you free from your unforgiveness. Consequently, unforgiveness is not only toxic to you and those around you, it distances you from experiencing God's healing and continues to harden your heart towards Him.

Can you imagine how hard my heart was towards God after 48 years of unforgiveness towards my dad?

**Question:** Do you believe that unforgiveness can create a distancing or hardness of heart towards God? What might be some of the consequences of hardening your heart towards God?

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[**Note:** At salvation, the Holy Spirit came to dwell in you forever. There is never any distance from you on God's part. But when you harden your heart towards God in unbelief, you will hinder your ability to receive all He has for you.]

### **The Truth About FORGIVENESS**

I believe there are four key truths that are crucial in understanding forgiveness. Let's take a look at them.

**TRUTH #1: God Will Deal with Your Offender. Your Part Is To FORGIVE**

***"Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord." Romans 12:19***

The temptation of your flesh is to retaliate or get revenge on your offender. This will not lead to forgiveness. It will only lead to more sin and a greater resistance to the work of the Holy Spirit to heal you.

***Remember, there are ALWAYS consequences of sin, so your offender does NOT get off the hook if he/she is NOT repentant.***

There is a price to pay but that price will be determined by God and not by you. Believe me when I say this, God does not condone what happened to you and there will be consequences for your offender. Therefore, leave your offender in the hands of God and move towards forgiveness, not revenge.

**TRUTH #2: In the Midst of Your Sin God Forgave You UNCONDITIONALLY**

***"And when you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions"***  
*Colossians 2:13*

God did not wait for you to confess and repent of your sins before you were forgiven. His forgiveness took place over 2000 years ago on the cross, long before you ever had the chance to repent of your sins. Your flesh recoils at this truth because it

demands your offender confess and repent before you offer forgiveness.

Where would we be today if God dealt with us in the same way? The good news for you and me is that God's forgiveness is unconditional. The same applies to you and forgiving your offender.

***In Christ, your forgiveness is UNCONDITIONAL because you forgive regardless of WHETHER your offender ever repents of his/her offenses against you.***

If you are struggling with this truth, is it possible you are believing your forgiveness of your offender is contingent upon his/her repenting to you first?

### **TRUTH #3: God's Forgiveness Is COMPLETE.**

***"It is finished."*** John 19:30

When Jesus said on the cross "It is finished," He was saying, "I have paid everything in full." This means past, present and future sins have all been paid for. Accordingly, as Christ has totally forgiven you, so should you allow Christ to totally forgive your offender through you. To confirm this truth, look again at the last part of Colossians 2:13:

***"... having forgiven us **all** our transgressions"***

**Remember:** Forgiveness is an act of obedience to Christ and not based on feelings which likely will come later than the act of forgiveness. You may also need to repeat the exercise of forgiveness if there are multiple, deep and/or persistent woundedness caused by your offender. The key is to persevere in forgiving your offender in Christ. It took me 18 months to

totally forgive my father. It all started when Jesus asked me if I were willing to let Him forgive my father through me.

**TRUTH #4: Since God Forgave You, He No Longer HOLDS Any Sin Against You.**

***“He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west.” Psalm 103:12***

*“I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and **remembers your sins no more.**” Isaiah 43:25*

When we read the passages above, we can see that God not only **removed** our sins, but He also no longer **remembers** them. In other words, He no longer holds the offense against us.

If you were deep in debt to your creditors, how would you feel if you got a call from a friend saying that she totally paid off your debts? Joy? Freedom? Relief? We should feel that and even more towards the Lord because He totally canceled our debt of sin. He will never hold your sins against you.

How do you think this applies to the debt created by the person who wounded you?

***Because God has **TOTALLY** canceled your debt, then you are to **CANCEL** (forgive) the debt that was created by the person who wounded you.***

**What Are the Results of Forgiveness?**

Now that we know some of the key truths about forgiveness, let's explore some of the results when we do forgive.

**1. First and foremost, it removes any hindrance to Christ's life flowing in and through you.**

*"He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.' "*

*John 7:38*

We said earlier that unforgiveness hinders your ability to experience the flow of Christ's life in you. Conversely, forgiveness allows you to experience Christ's life, love, acceptance, etc., flowing in and through you.

## **2. Forgiveness tears down the walls of your prison and sets you free.**

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

Just as unforgiveness built the walls of your prison, so forgiveness will tear your prison walls down and set you free. Your freedom will come in two categories: What you will be free FROM and what you will be free TO. Let's look at some examples of both.

### **You are free FROM:**

- Bondage and death caused by your unforgiveness.
- The frustration, anger, and bitterness towards your offender.
- The pain associated with your woundedness.
- Having to hold the offense(s) against your offender.

### **You are free TO:**

- Love your offender with Christ's love.
- Experience Christ's life in and through you (i.e., His peace, rest, etc.).
- Have compassion for your offender.
- Be used of the Lord to move your offender to repent of his/her offense.

#### 4. Forgiveness is an ESSENTIAL part of your healing.

We said earlier that forgiveness opens the way for you to be able to experience the flow of Christ's life in you. It also opens the door for the Holy Spirit's power to flow in you to begin the healing process. Therefore, the longer you stay in unforgiveness, the longer it will take you to heal.

The truth for me is that if I hadn't forgiven my dad, I would still be living in the death my unforgiveness created and there would have been no healing. Here is a final thought about unforgiveness.

***Unforgiveness is like drinking POISON and  
expecting your offender to die.***

#### What Does It Look Like Practically To Forgive?

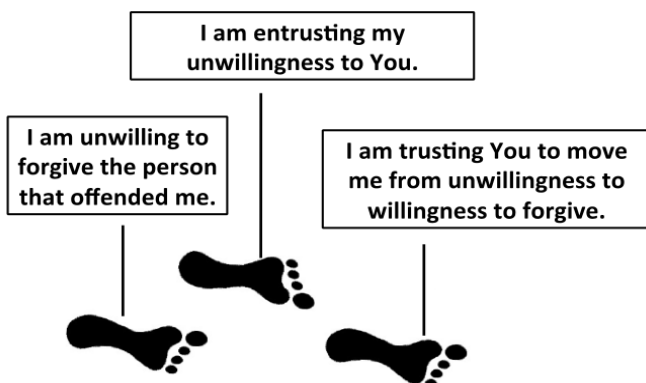
**Example #1:** Let's assume that you are unwilling to forgive the person who wounded you. (I say this because I was totally unwilling to forgive my dad.)

**The Truth:** God knows if you are unwilling and He is the only One who can transform your unwillingness into having a willing heart to forgive your offender.

**Steps of faith:** "Lord. I can't forgive this person for what they did to me. I know that I have no excuse for not forgiving but I simply am unwilling to do so. I am asking you to transform my heart so that I will be willing to forgive.

The following diagram illustrates other steps of faith you could take if you are unwilling to forgive:





***Key Truth:***

***If you are UNWILLING to forgive, God is the ONLY One who can transform you to BE willing to forgive.***

**Example #2:** Because of what was done to you, you believe you have the fleshly right not to forgive.

**The Truth:** God completely forgave you for your past, present and even future offenses towards Him (i.e., sins). Since He forgave you unconditionally, you have no right not to forgive.

**Steps of faith:** “Lord, persuade me that through Your death on the cross, You forgave me unconditionally which means I have no right not to forgive.”

**Example #3:** You are saying to yourself, “If I forgive this person they may think that I am overlooking or condoning their sin.”

**The Truth:** God never condones or overlooks sin and neither should you. However, forgiveness does not in any way mean that you are overlooking or condoning their sin. In addition, you do not have to concern yourself with what your offender thinks.

Your part is to forgive. Leave it to God to deal with your offender's sin.

**Steps of faith:** "I am afraid that if I forgive, I am telling my offender that I am overlooking their sin. Lord, persuade me that is a lie, that my part is to forgive, and that You will deal with my offender's sin."

**Example #4:** You don't feel like forgiving.

**The Truth:** Forgiveness is a choice not a feeling. If you are walking in the power of the Holy Spirit, you can choose to forgive whether you feel like it or not.

**Steps of faith:** "Lord, I don't feel like forgiving \_\_\_\_\_ for what they did to me. I am asking You to give me the willingness to choose to forgive even though nothing in my emotions agrees with that choice."

### **Forgiving My Father**

The truths that I shared in this chapter eventually led to me fully and completely forgive my dad right before he died. I won't say the journey to forgiveness was easy because it took 18 months of the Spirit's working in my life to forgive. In fact, it was one of the hardest journeys in my Christian walk since my flesh continually justified my unforgiveness because of all the extremely hurtful things my dad did to me. However, as I sought the Holy Spirit to give me a willingness to forgive, over time He broke down my resistance and I was able to forgive him.

Can you imagine the freedom I felt when I was set free from my unforgiveness? For me personally, I compare this to Moses and the opening of the Red Sea because I never thought it was possible for me to ever be able to forgive my dad. However, this freedom went way beyond forgiving my dad. It freed me up to more easily forgive others. Please believe me when I say, there is no greater freedom than that.

This is my personal plea to you: please don't wait another minute. Begin seeking God to give you the willingness to forgive and when you do you will experience a freedom that you never thought possible.

[**Note:** If you would like to read more about forgiveness, please go to our website and download our discipleship booklet titled: *Forgive (Will You?)*]

**Questions To Think About**

1. What key truth(s) impacted you the most in this chapter?  
Why?

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2. What is your justification for not forgiving? How do you think God feels about your justification not to forgive?

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3. Which of the results of unforgiveness most impacted you personally? Why?

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4. In what ways did this chapter help you understand your need to forgive?

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5. If you are unwilling to forgive, are you willing for the Lord to forgive that person through you?

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### Key Truths About The Healing Process

Before we end this study, I want to share some key truths about moving from woundedness to healing.

#### 1. Healing takes time. It is a PROCESS.

When it comes to any part of God transforming our lives, I have discovered from those I have ministered to that they don't like the word "process." Why? When we seek God for healing or anything else, we want it, and we want it now. Would you agree?

Even though we know that God can heal instantly, my personal experience and my experience in walking with those seeking healing, is that transformation and healing will, for the most part, be a process.

In my experience, when it comes to healing, how deep the woundedness is determines how long the healing process will take. It may be a long-term process if you have been deeply wounded.

#### 2. God's healing process is SUPERNATURAL.

A key truth in understanding God's healing process is to grasp the truth that it is always a supernatural process. I define supernatural this way:

***A work that God accomplishes IN us as we walk by faith for which there is NO natural or man-made explanation.***

Who can explain supernatural? It is not explainable nor understandable. Even though I didn't know what or how God was healing me, I continued walking by faith until He

supernaturally did so.

**3. Early on in your healing process, you may not FEEL or EXPERIENCE God's work of healing.**

As human beings who feel and experience life every moment, it is only natural to think that when we engage God to heal our woundedness that we will experience His work in us from the beginning. For the most part, when you engage God to heal, you may not initially experience healing. Why is that? We see the answer in 2 Corinthians 5:7:

*"... for we walk by **faith** and **not** by **sight** [**experience**]."*

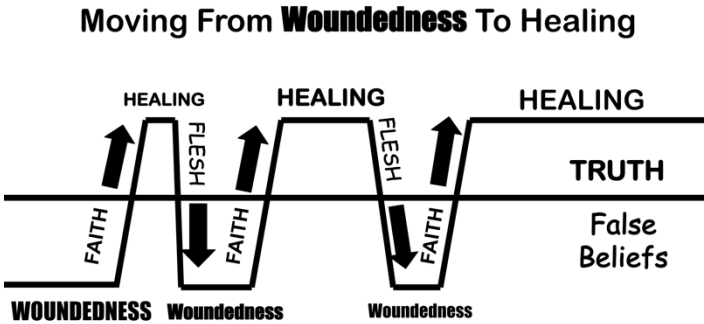
God has a two-fold objective in your healing process. First, to teach you how to walk by faith. Second, to heal you of your woundedness. As much as we want God's main thing to be about healing, in my experience, His greater priority is teaching us how to walk by faith. Consequently, we may have to "faith" it for a period of time before we experience healing.

I wish that I could tell you what your particular timeline from faith to experience will be, but only the Spirit knows that. The good news is that if you continue to "faith it," you will, over time, begin to experience healing. Here is an illustration of moving from faith to experiential healing:



#### 4. You will FAIL many times BUT keep walking by faith.

Look at the diagram below. There is a horizontal line. Below the line is your False Beliefs. Above the line is the Truth. Healing above the line comes as you walk by faith and the Spirit renews your mind to the truth resulting in His setting you free from your false beliefs.



I wish this were a straight forward linear process but, as you can see by the diagram, you will frequently succumb to the flesh, the wounding thoughts and feelings and fall back below the line.

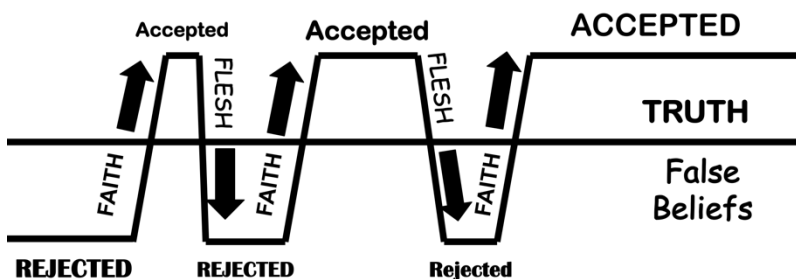
Why? Because of the grip your false beliefs and fleshly behaviors have on you, especially if you have been living from your woundedness for many years. Satan is in the mix bigtime, as well, tempting you to take ownership of wounding thoughts and feelings. His only objective is to keep you in bondage to your false beliefs and he accomplishes that by tempting you to continue taking ownership of your wounding thoughts.

When you do fall prey to your flesh, you don't need to wallow in self-condemnation. Rather, repent of those fleshly thoughts and take another step of faith believing that with each step of faith you are progressively being set free which leads to greater healing.

Before I go to the next truth, let's apply the line analogy to the specific false belief, "I am rejected." The truth is that you are

accepted in your true identity in Christ (Romans 15:7). To counteract the lying belief, you start your steps of faith by taking thoughts captive and seeking God to renew your mind to the truth that you are accepted and acceptable.

Early on, your false belief has such a grip on you that you take ownership of the fleshly thought of rejection and fall below the line. When you do, repent of your flesh, take another step of faith for the Spirit to continue renewing your mind.



As you can see from the diagram, as your mind is being renewed, your false belief of rejection below the line, will have less and less a grip on you while above the line your mind is being renewed to believe that truth that you are accepted in your true identity. We never know how long the timeline will be to be set free but regardless of how many times you dip below the line, stay encouraged that your next step of faith will bring you even closer to your complete healing.

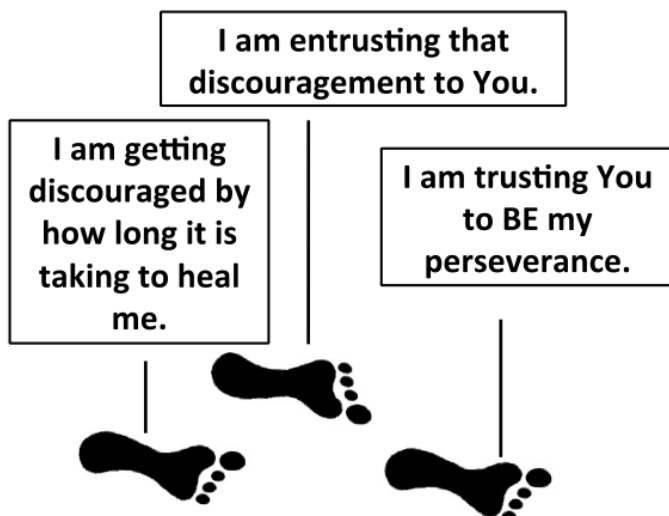
##### 5. During the healing process, you may be tempted to give up on God to heal you.

When your timetable or any other expectation you might have about God's healing process is not being met, you may be tempted to be frustrated, impatient, etc. At some point, you may even want to give up on God's ability or willingness to heal you.

When you get to that place, seek God to give you the willingness to take another step of faith. In the example on the following page, you may be getting discouraged because you are



not experiencing healing as quickly as you would like or expect. Instead of taking ownership of that feeling, at that moment entrust your discouragement to God and seek Him to be your perseverance to take another step of faith.



**6. Good news! At some point you will begin to experience changes that bring healing.**

As you continue taking steps of faith, at some point you will experience changes. Here are some changes you can expect:

- You will find yourself taking ownership of your wounding thoughts and feelings less and less.
- Your wounded thoughts and feelings will be replaced with God's truth.
- You will experience a thought or a feeling that lines up with God's truth and confirms you are being set free.
- You will go to your coping mechanisms (denial, escape, stuffing, etc.) less and less.

- You will find yourself walking more in the Spirit and less in the fleshly behaviors tied to your woundedness.
- You will be set free from your unforgiving attitude and begin forgiving your offender.
- Your faith and confidence in God's ability and willingness to heal you will grow.

The key is to continue asking the Lord to reveal to you that He is working and then be on the lookout for changes in your thoughts, feelings, beliefs and/or behaviors.

### 7. Celebrate with God when you experience changes.

*"They **celebrate** your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of your righteousness." Psalm 145:7*

Can you imagine how God would feel if you came to Him in praise and thanksgiving as you experience healing? I can promise you He gets excited every time His kids come to Him. He is so delighted, especially when we are thanking and praising Him for the changes He is making take place in our lives. So, every time you experience a change, celebrate with God the amazing, supernatural work He is doing in healing you because He wants to celebrate with you!

**Questions To Think About**

1. Which of the truths in this chapter impacted/encouraged you the most? Why?

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2. If so, in what ways did the line analogies on page 80-81 help you understand God’s healing process?

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3. What truths did you struggle with? Why?

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4. In what ways does this chapter give you hope and encouragement for your healing?

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5. Are you willing to engage God to heal you? Why or why not?

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## **CHAPTER NINE**

### **Conclusion**

#### **Where I Am Today In My Healing Process**

As I have testified, my woundedness was deep and dark. My fleshly behaviors flowing out of my woundedness poisoned me and everyone around me. However, I can testify today that God has done an amazing, supernatural work of healing.

Was the journey to healing hard? Yes. Very hard. Did I want to give up? A thousand times. Was their pain? Yes. Why didn't I give up? I knew that I had to be healed because I could no longer bear the pain of my 48 years of woundedness. I began the journey of healing not truly believing God could heal me. But what were my options? Either more pain and misery or supernatural healing.

As I said, when I began this journey, I didn't really believe that God could heal me. I thought my woundedness was so deep, it was beyond His reach. But, I wanted out of the pain so much that I began taking steps of faith. I fell below the line many times but by the grace and mercy of God, I kept taking steps of faith. Over time I quit taking ownership of rejecting, unworthy, and unforgiving thoughts. Those thoughts were replaced with the truth that I am accepted, worthy, and forgiving in my true identity.

I became less toxic to myself and others. I went to my coping mechanisms of stuffing and self-protection less and less. I began to experience freedom from my false beliefs with the result that I was willing to forgive my father and many others I had not forgiven. Now, I find myself loving the people who wounded me with the love of Christ. I am experiencing freedom on a level I never thought possible. I have not been completely healed but if this were my last day on this earth, I would proclaim with Paul these words:

***“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”***  
*Ephesians 3:20-21*

## **Conclusion**

I wrote this book not only because the truths I have shared are healing me, but because I don't want you or anyone else to spend one more moment in the misery of their woundedness when we have the divine healer living in us.

I pray that through this study God has given you hope (confident expectation) that He will heal and restore your life. It may be a journey that is difficult, but I can assure you that it will be eternally worth traveling.

Let me end with the encouraging words of Corrie ten Boom, who was a Christian imprisoned in a Nazi concentration camp during World War II. She went through horrific abuse by the Nazis, including seeing her beloved sister die at their hands. You can only imagine the woundedness that came from that horrible ordeal. Yet, in spite of what she went through, God brought her to a place where she made this proclamation:

*“There is no pit so deep, that God's love is not deeper still.”*

## Promises For Healing

***“He will restore the years the locusts have eaten”***

*Joel 2:25*

*“The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me. To preach the gospel to the poor; **He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,** To proclaim release to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, **To set free all those who are oppressed.”** Luke 4:18*

***“He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.”***

*Psalms 147:3*

*And Jesus said to him, “‘If You can?’ **All things are possible to him who believes....”***

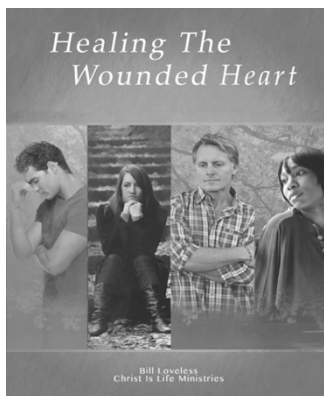
*Matthew 9:23, 24*

## Note About Counseling

You may be at a place where you will need someone to walk with you through the healing process such as a spiritual mentor or a professional counselor. If so, I can't encourage you enough to do so. The key for choosing someone to help you is to make sure he/she is Christ-centered and Christ-focused. By that I mean that he/she will always take you to God's truth and to God as the only Source to accomplish the healing.

I say this because there are Christian counselors that use Biblical truth in counseling but bring it back to you to be the source for healing. I trust by this point you realize that will never work.

## Would You Like To Go Deeper?



If you would like to know more about God's healing process, I would encourage you to go to pursue my in-depth study called *Healing The Wounded Heart*. In it, I go into more depth on the topics covered in this booklet as well as discussing additional related topics.

This curriculum is available on my website ([www.christislifeministries.com](http://www.christislifeministries.com)). Online you may either download the curriculum for free or purchase a written copy of it which will be mailed to you.

I hope you will take advantage of this study and seek the Lord for a deeper understanding of His ability and willingness to heal your wounded heart.

*Blessings in Christ,*

*Bill Loveless*

P.S., If you have any thoughts concerning what you have read that you would like to share or have any questions about what I have written, please email me at the address below:

***Christ Is Life Ministries***

***Website: [www.christislifeministries.com](http://www.christislifeministries.com)***

***Email: [bill@christislifeministries.com](mailto:bill@christislifeministries.com)***

### **Other Discipleship Booklets Available On Our Website:**

- **Forgive (Will You?)**
- **A Life? Or THE Life?**
- **Who Are You?**
- **Experiencing The Heart of God**
- **Stress? Or Rest?**
- **The Battle of the Mind**
- **What's Next**
- **What Did You Expect?**
- **Press On**
- **Your Marriage**
- **Resolving Marital Conflict**

(9-24-21)



# WOUNDED?

Have you been wounded in the past through sexual, emotional, physical or verbal abuse? Or have you been wounded through traumatic events such as divorce or the early death of a loved one? As a result of your woundedness, are you experiencing feelings, such as anger, frustration, hopelessness, or unforgiveness? How do you think the effects of your woundedness might be negatively impacting your life as well as the lives of those around you? One final question: Do you want to be healed?

If the answer is “Yes” to the final question, then I want to encourage you to read this booklet. In it, we will explore:

- The two types of woundedness: overt and covert.
- The negative impact of woundedness in our lives.
- Ways in which we try to cope with our woundedness.
- Our Source for healing.
- What it looks like to engage God to begin the healing process.

This is a very personal booklet for me because the biblical truths I have discovered are allowing me to experience deep healing of my woundedness and freedom from the negative impact it has had on my life for 48 years. My prayer for you is that as you read this booklet, these same truths will give you hope and the healing that God promises.



Bill Loveless is the director of Christ Is Life Ministries (CILM). CILM is a non-profit, non-denominational ministry that focuses on discipleship. We teach Christians that Christ is our only Source for living the Christian life and what it looks like to be transformed into Christ-likeness.

For further information, see the ministry website at: [www.christislifeministries.com](http://www.christislifeministries.com)

