

How God Heals Hidden Wounds

*“Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh,
arm yourselves likewise with the same mind.”*

I Peter 4:1

Hidden wounds are not cuts or scrapes you may have received while preparing dinner in the kitchen. They are not wounds you may have received from a fall. Hidden wounds are memories that cause pain, thoughts that you keep secret because they hurt, wounds of rejection, desertion, abandonment, or unfaithfulness. They can even be unseen wounds of ridicule and insecurity.

These wounds are covered by bodies of flesh, but festering with bitterness, irritation, and progressive anger. It doesn't matter if you are a man or woman, the suffering and symptoms are the same. Where do these wounds come from? Everywhere! Over my twenty five years of ministry I have observed wounds from the: workplace, classrooms, friends, and family relationships. Anyone reading this article can identify at least one hidden wound in their life. As a child I remember being stung by a bee. One of the first things I had to do after being stung was make sure that I wasn't stung by another bee. Then I had to have the pulsating, painful stinger removed. Lastly, I had to apply ointments to aid in healing. Please note that healing from any wound, hidden or not, is a process.

I like the way another translation writes I Peter 4:1,

Since Christ suffered while He was in His body, strengthen yourselves with the same way of thinking Christ had.” (NCV)

The question must immediately come to mind; what is Christ way of thinking? Let us look at the ways Jesus handled hidden wounds. You may be thinking, what hidden wounds did Jesus have? We all know of His open physical wounds: nails

in His hands, stripes on His back, spear that pierced His side, and the crown of thorns forced into His head. But Jesus carried wounds of betrayal, rejection, mistreatment, and being hated by many to the cross. "Jesus knows all about your troubles," He's been there! Peter tells us that we should have the same attitude, the same way of thinking Jesus had. There are four things you need to know in order to heal unseen wounds.

1. **YOU MUST FORGIVE!**

One of the last things Jesus did before He died was forgive all those involved in His suffering. *"Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do..."* (Luke 23:34) He could have called down millions of angels, chariots of fire, opened the graves of saints, or made the plagues of Egypt materialize. But instead He said, "Forgive them." You must forgive if you will ever heal. You may say, "I don't want to forgive, they don't deserve it." You are correct, forgiveness is never deserved. Why should you forgive? Because God has already forgiven you. You can never forgive anyone more than God has forgiven you! Why should you forgive? You are going to need forgiveness in the future. Remember how Jesus taught His disciples to pray:

"And forgive us our sins, just as we have forgiven those who have sinned against us... If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you." (NLT) Matthew 6:12-14

"And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses." Mark 11:25-26

I am sure you see from the above scriptures that you are commanded from God's Word to forgive. When you pray like Jesus tells you to pray you are saying "Lord forgive me AS MUCH AS I have forgiven everybody else."

Another reason you should forgive is that you are never going to stop hurting until you learn to forgive. The only way to release hurt is to forgive hurt, for your own sake, not only theirs. Paul tells us: *"Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace*

of God; lest any **root of bitterness springing up trouble you**, and thereby many be defiled.” Hebrews 12:15

Don't let bitterness spring up and take root in your life, bitterness hurts spiritual lives. Resentment always hurts you more than the other person. I am always amazed when I hear someone complaining about something that happened five, ten, or twenty years ago, as if it happened yesterday. That person will never heal until forgiveness is learned. Never allow those who have hurt you in the past to continue hurting you today. How can they do that? They do it by you holding onto a grudge that should have been buried long ago.

2. TURN YOUR ATTENTION TO GOD

*“And you won't spend the rest of your life chasing after evil desires, but you will be anxious to **do the will of God**.” 1 Peter 4:2*

Turn your attentions from self to God. No matter what has happened in your life, it is time to re-center your thoughts on God. It is time to focus on God's will. This requires you to let the mind of God direct your mind; a conscious shifting of your thinking to God's will. This is a choice you make. You don't have to ignore the past. But don't live there. It's alright to have sadness over your hurts. Jesus said:

“Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.” (Matthew 5:4)

It is time to focus on the Healer and not the hurter. When Jesus was threatened, He didn't fight or strike back. (1 Peter 2:23) You must begin to trust God. We forget that God sees everything. You think that if you forget the pain no one will remember how bad you were hurt. God remembers! King David poured out his heart to God saying,

“...You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected all my tears in your bottle. You have recorded each one in your book.” (NLT) (Psalm 56:8)

God keeps track of your tears, wounds, and hurts. Your tears matter to God and He will help, but you must trust Him. Let Him settle your score. You can stop rehearsing the pain, because God is going to remember it for you.

“Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, ... for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.” (Romans 12:19)

Do you have any idea what happens when you give your hurt to God? God replaces it with HOPE, PEACE, and JOY.

*“So I pray that God, who gives you **hope**, will keep you **happy** and full of **peace** as you believe in him. May you overflow with hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.” (NLT) (Romans 15:13)*

Wouldn't you rather have peace instead of pain; hope instead of heartbreak; and joy instead of resentment?

3. LOOK TO THE FUTURE

Courage is not the absence of fear. Courage is moving ahead despite fear. God will remove your wounds like receding flood waters. Then you must look to the future and start rebuilding your life. Give your pain to God and move on! Start where you are. Don't keep reliving the past over and over like a broken record, or should I say a broken compact disk. Something “miraculous” happens when you look to God for your future. When you focus on the future, the wounds of the past fade away. You cannot think about two things at once. Paul writes:

*“Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended (reached my goal): but this one thing I do, **forgetting those things which are behind**, and **reaching forth unto those things which are before**,” (Philip. 3:13)*

It is time to refocus, and let the old memories fade away. The future can be frightening and scary. A road that you have never traveled before can be fearful. But tell yourself the same thing King David said:

*“The righteous cry out, and **the Lord hears them; He delivers** them from **all their troubles**.” (Psalm 34:17)*

Call to God and tell Him that you are afraid. Tell Him you hurt. Tell Him you are depressed. Tell Him you are angry and resentful. He will listen and deliver you from

all your troubles. Trust Him! In order to heal that old wound it must be reopened to God. He will pour His ointment of love into it, and immediately you will feel the cooling power of His healing.

Quick fixes don't work when you are wounded. Sometimes the pain from secret wounds hurt so bad that people are willing to do anything to dull it. They try excessive drinking, popping pills, (prescription and non-prescription), and even sex. The world only has cheap, temporary pain killers to offer. The only way to spell relief is J-E-S-U-S. The problem with the world's pain killers is that they don't last. Drinking and drugs become addictive. In addition to transgressing God's law, sex and "one night stands" can cost you your life. Don't mask your hurt with quick fixes, they always come back, worse than before. Peter tell us that,

"You have had enough in the past of the evil things that godless people enjoy—their immorality and lust, their feasting and drunkenness and wild parties, and their terrible worship of idols." (NLT) (1 Peter 4:3)

4. GO TO CHURCH

Attending regular worship services will help you recover from your hurts. Loners never fully recover. The church is God's family and a place where you can find someone to talk with, pray with, and give you spiritual support. God told Adam, "It is not good for man to be alone." Even in a paradise, man was never meant to be alone. Wounds heal quicker when you can find a praying saint to pray with you. Christian love is the cure for guilt, fear, and resentment. When your life is full of love, there is no room for hate or resentment. God's love is the ultimate healing power. We must meet together and encourage each other:

*"Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us **encourage one another**--and all the more as you see the Day approaching. (NIV) (Hebrews 10:25)*

There are over fifty places in the New Testament where the Bible use the phrase "one another." We are to love one another, care for one another, greet one another, pray for one another, help one another, support one another, and the list goes on. That is why the church of God is the family of God.

Jesus said, “*Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*” (Matthew 11:28)

Give your hurt to God and move on! May God richly bless you and keep you in His peace.

In God’s Service,

Pastor I. S. Tapper