

INNER HEALING

**A Workbook
to apply
the Healing Power of God
to the Mind, the Will
and the Emotions**

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Session One

Introduction

Inner healing is the healing of our inner man, which we refer to as our soul. Our soul consists of our mind, our will, and our emotions. Inner healing is sometimes called emotional healing, or healing of memories, or soul healing. Therefore, inner healing is healing of the mind, the will and the emotions.

We have learned that euphoric recall tempts us to return to our addiction because it allows us to remember only the good things about our experience with chemicals. Even though euphoric recall is powerful, it is not the real reason we return to the chemicals.

When we have inner hurts and damaged emotions, because of what others have done to us or what we have done to other people, we have learned that chemicals medicate our painful memories. For many of us that is the reason we continue to drink and drug. We medicate our emotional pain.

We will look at rejection, the root of rejection, shame, physical abuse, mental abuse, sexual abuse, guilt, unworthiness, and insecurity. We will discuss how these wounds have controlled our lives.

Inner healing is a process. It is not an overnight cure for the problems of our flesh. There are many facets to inner healing. Every good thing God does for us helps us on our way to health and recovery. Inner healing is not a substitute for walking in faith. It is a part of becoming whole and healthy in the three major relationships of life:

1. Our relationship with God.
2. Our relationship with ourselves.
3. Our relationship with others.

There is a division of labor in the inner healing process. There is a part for which God is responsible, and there is a part for which we are responsible. We cannot do God's part, and God will not do our part.

As we go through this program, we will take time to get deeply into our inner man. We will give God access to the deep areas of our lives. That is the only way God will be able to change us.

Some of us have very likely experienced sobriety at some point in our lives, but have found it to be so painful we couldn't stand it. This means there are some things within us that only God can heal. These are things from which we need to be set free.

Inner healing is a process, which allows God to give us insight concerning certain problems in our lives that are related to past events. We will return to those events and allow them to surface so God can deal with them.

We will not simply use our imagination, we will actually bring the Lord Jesus Christ into each past experience. We will allow Him to give us insight in the situation, and we will allow Him to heal us in it. We will give Him complete freedom to minister His healing power.

Inner healing does not mean we will generate a memory lapse. We will not forget the bad things that have happened to us, or the bad things we have done. God gave us a memory and we are to use it. We will realize we have been healed when the memories return, but the hurt and the pain from those memories will no longer exist.

Memories will always be with us. Everything we have experienced is in either our subconscious or our conscious minds. Our problem is that things we have experienced in the past influence us in the present. They still hurt or bother us. It is as if we carry a sack full of old garbage around with us. If we have come from a dysfunctional home, or if we have been chemically addicted, we probably have painful memories from the past. In all likelihood, we have damaged emotions and fears and phobias.

One of the most common fears is the fear of rejection. We did not develop the fear of rejection when we entered a rehabilitation program. We probably had the fear of rejection before we became addicted to chemicals. Or, perhaps, because of drinking and drugging, we may have allowed such a fear to come in.

Some addicts can overcome the death of a spouse easier than they can overcome divorce. They realize their drinking and drugging probably caused the divorce. The resulting shame and guilt become a tremendous burden.

Many of the negatives we carry around with us may have come from our addiction. On the other hand, these negatives may have come from our childhood, prior to our addiction. They could even be a combination of both. We will examine these possibilities in more detail, later.

When we awoke this morning, we had within us a lot of things, which we have carried over from the past into the present. There could be a memory of one particular event that seems to surface often. It could be something we have done, or something that someone has done to us. It could be the memory of an accident, or a death, or a divorce, or abuse of some kind.

Any dominant memory that continues to surface may cause us shame or humiliation or pain or anger. This is a sure sign that something is not right within us. These are the memories we are going to bring before the Lord. We will allow Him to show us what we need to do with them.

We, ourselves, are unable to make these memories go away, and we are unable to stop them from hurting. But if we allow the Lord to show us what to do about these events in our lives, if we allow Him to do His part, we will place ourselves in a position to receive His healing.

As we bring all these things from yesterday into today, they become a part of us; therefore, we take them into tomorrow with us. There are very few wounds that time alone can heal; time usually doesn't heal anything, it tends to make things worse. Only Jesus can heal us.

Unless they are healed, those things, which have been fermenting over a long period of time, will cause us to react in a certain way toward others. We need more than just time. Healing is a process, and it will be accomplished in time, but it is only the Lord who will heal us, not the passage of time.

We have done many things that have been wrong. We have even violated our own value systems. And we have had people do us wrong. Some have abused us, and it has caused us problems. If we want to experience healing, here in the present, we have to find a way to truly let our past go.

THREE DIMENSIONAL THINKING:

The scripture upon which we base this teaching, is Philippians 3:13.14. "Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

Paul is saying that he is standing in the present today. In the first verse he makes it clear that he has not arrived, that he is not yet what he wants to become, he doesn't have it all put together. But he understands that he must constantly be putting all things behind him, not necessarily forgetting them, but practicing the ongoing process of leaving things in the past.

Paul is not talking about an absence of being able to recall, he is talking about laying aside the things that are behind him. Paul had a bad past; he was a lot like us in that respect. When the Lord got his attention on the road to Damascus, he probably felt a lot of guilt and shame because he had been murdering Christians and imprisoning them, all in the name of the Lord.

Paul didn't have a problem with alcoholism or drug addiction, but he had some issues in his past which gave him emotional pain and hurt, and he had to deal with them. He had to get right with God and receive God's forgiveness. So, he realized the need to lay those things aside in order to go on with his life. He did not ignore them and say they never happened.

Ignoring something is not the same as being healed of that thing. Ignoring is not inner healing. Each incident must be dealt with, then we can lay it behind and it will no longer bother us.

Our problem is we don't readily deal with painful events. We repress them, with the hope that if we don't think of them they will not bother us, or they will go away. But the truth is, we do think of them, and when the memories return we push them back down. This process is repeated constantly in our lives, and that leaves us hurting, dying inside.

Paul also said in those verses that at the same time he lays those things behind him, he reaches forward and presses on. He is not just pushing back, he is pressing on.

Do you see the truth that Paul has grasped? He is focusing upon the present. Today is truly important. We call this three dimensional thinking, and it is very necessary for us to develop. As Paul stands in the present, he can look at the past. He makes a decision to put some past things aside, so he can work in the present.

Because he is able to do this, his future will be different from his past. He no longer allows the events of the past to infiltrate with their negative influence.

It is the same with us. If we don't work today on our relationship with God and allow God to work in us, we will awaken tomorrow morning in the same frame of mind we are experiencing today. But if we allow God to change us today, our future will be different from our past.

ONE DIMENSIONAL THINKING:

The opposite of three-dimensional thinking is one-dimensional thinking. A good example of a one-dimensional thinker is the person who writes a bad check. That is very one-dimensional. We know there is no money in the bank to cover the check, but we think one-dimensional, we are not concerned about the future. We may even write more than one bad check. We don't look at the past and learn from it. When we are one dimensional in our thinking, we see no further than the end of our noses. Our dominant thought is, "I want it, and I want it now!"

We are like the mule the farmer puts blinders on, we can see in one direction only. We don't look at the past to learn from it, and we don't concern ourselves about the future. We are only interested in what we are going to get today and how we are going to get it.

Because we are one dimensional, we repeat the same mistakes in our lives, over and over again. We will make a mess in our lives, leave it, and go somewhere else and make another mess just like the first one, never learning from the past and never looking to the future.

But all these messes have hurt us. They have caused us problems. After we have been in a program and have been free from chemicals for a while, we begin to remember some of the things we did and some of the things we said. The Holy Spirit puts His hand upon us and brings some of those things to the surface to be dealt with.

This is what we need cleaned up. Like the Apostle Paul, we have to start laying these things aside. We have to deal with them and go on. We can't carry bags of garbage with us the rest of our lives because they will destroy us. They will generate adverse reaction and response to every experience in our lives.

Can you imagine what it would be like if we never emptied garbage can? What if we did nothing but press down the new garbage on top of the old? It wouldn't be long until we would be unable to get near the garbage can because of the smell of the putrefaction.

That is what is happening inside us. That is why many of us react the way we do. There is garbage inside us. God wants to clean it up; God wants to heal us. And we can be healed, but only through Jesus Christ. It is impossible to heal ourselves. Inner healing reaches beneath the surface problems of alcoholism and drug addiction. There may be many issues in our lives, but God will take care of all of them if we will let Him.

It is possible for us to have been in a rehabilitation program for a period of months, and to feel much better physically than when we entered the program, yet continue to be weary and heavy-laden inside.

Matthew 11:28-30. "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My Yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My load is light."

Jesus said we would find rest for our souls through Him. We have learned that our soul is our mind, our will, and our emotions. That is what is weary and heavy laden in us. That is where we hurt. And the only way the soul can be healed is through the Spirit of God. God is the One who sets us free.

Jesus is ready to heal our internal pain just as He heals our external pain. Suppose we hurt our finger some time ago, but it has since healed. We can look at the finger and remember the accident as if it was yesterday, but the finger doesn't hurt anymore because it has healed.

That is physical healing. The same principle applies to the mind, will and emotions. For our finger to heal, we had to do certain things. The doctor may have told us not to get the finger wet. If it got wet and became infected, we had to go back to the doctor. The doctor re-opened the wound and re-stitched it. Eventually, the finger healed. It took time, it didn't happen the next day. It may have taken as long as a year.

The memory of the occasion may return often, but the memory isn't painful because the finger is healed. It was important that we followed the doctor's orders, because the infection could have developed into gangrene and eventually it could have killed us. That is the process we are facing as we let God heal us of our inner wounds. It is important for us to see the principle in the relationship between the outer man and the inner man, where healing is concerned. God can heal our damaged emotions, so that when the memory of the occasion surfaces, there will be no more pain. The damage has been healed, even though the memory is still there.

Our natural inclination has been to stuff our hurts into the deepest recesses of our minds. Now, we need to learn how to allow these things to surface. We need to look at them and to give God access to them. This is very important. Once we have experienced God's healing in our lives, the fear of allowing these damaged emotions to surface will be destroyed. Until we experience that, we will have a fear of coming before the Lord with our hurts.

We have to start dealing with the past. We have to learn how to lay the past aside. Unless we do, we will have no alternative but to continue to carry our past garbage into every present moment.

BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS:

We are born into relationships. Any home, which is not Christ-centered, is dysfunctional. Every dysfunctional home experiences what we identify as breaks in relationships. The breaks occur when something is said to us or done to us that cause emotional wounds.

For instance, our parents may have told us that we were no good, or we would never amount to anything. Such a statement from someone whose opinion we respect causes a break. Lack of attention or lack of affirmation also causes a break. Rejection is a major break, and so is abandonment. Any kind of abuse, whether physical, mental or sexual, will almost always cause a break in relationship.

It is natural for us to try to recover from those breaks. We try to build a bridge back to our need for love, acceptance, and forgiveness. Some of us have attempted to use chemical addiction as our recovery program from the breaks in our relationships. Because we have received so many wounds in our early years at home, we have attempted to medicate them through chemical addiction.

In our chemical addiction, we have been led to believe we have found some worthiness, some security, and some peace. We have been disconnected in our relationships because of what has been said to us and done to us. Through chemicals, we are really trying to become reconnected to the relationships God has called us to be in from birth.

Adoption, for example, often leaves a child with a stronghold of rejection. This can go all the way back to when the child was in it's mother's womb. That feeling of being disconnected, that deep emotional wound is still there, even though the baby may have been put into a loving Christian home with fine Christian parents.

It is always present, and it continually motivates the emotionally wounded person to try to reestablish that broken connection. It is a wound that must be healed. The attempt to reconnect starts immediately after the break, and it continues until it is dealt with and healed.

It is important for us to understand that a child which has been raised in a dysfunctional home will often turn to something that will give him a sense of belonging, a sense of acceptance, a sense of security which he could not get out of the home relationship.

There is something in the use of chemicals, perhaps it is the environment, and perhaps it is the peer acceptance, which re-establishes a connection with something longed for. What most of us have been trying to do is to get reconnected. Unfortunately, we have chosen a substitute way, which will never fulfill our need.

The truth is, God is the Person to whom we have to get connected. Our relationship with God is our first step. At the same time, we must look back and examine those things that have been driving us, and understand how they have affected us.

Some of the occasions that have caused disconnections may have been relatively small. Perhaps they were affirmations, which were not said at a time when we needed to hear them. These could have been little things, but at the time, in the life of a five or six year old, they could have made a tremendous impact. Such incidents can easily cause a disconnection.

One of the main things we discovered about chemicals was that we could feel good, even if it was for only a little while. We could place ourselves into a fantasy world in which we could be accepted. Our relationships were fantasy, but at least they were relationships, and that was acceptable.

Those of us, who have grown up without a father or without a mother, or perhaps without either parent, have been disconnected from the start from what God intended for us. That doesn't mean we can justify attempting to reconnect through the use of chemicals.

We need to understand that God has a provision for these disconnections. We may not have had an earthly father, but we certainly have a heavenly Father. Unfortunately, a five or six year old child doesn't realize God has made provision for him.

We will be looking at specific events that have caused disconnections in our lives. A slap across the face is easier to take than a damaging cut with a tongue. The slap hurts less and for a shorter period of time. Damage done by the tongue stays with us for a lifetime; it contributes heavily to the malformation of a life

Physical abuse is a big problem, but an even bigger problem is what has been done to us by what has been said to us. We have grown up within the restrictive barriers of childhood put-downs. And many of us have become what we were told we would become. We have acted it out because we believed it. We need to look at these areas.

Session One . . . Introduction

Personal And Group Exercise (see page 106)

1. Why is it difficult for the chemically addicted to handle sobriety?

2. In what way does a negative memory have an effect upon our lives?

3. Why is it important for us to lay the past aside and focus upon the present?

4. Describe a one-dimensional attitude.

5. Describe what is meant by a break in relationship.

6. Why is it important for us to reconnect?

Session Two

Broken Bridges

Many people come from dysfunctional homes. That doesn't necessarily mean alcoholism or drug abuse is in the home. Alcohol and drug abuse are merely forms of dysfunction. There are many forms of dysfunction, but to simplify the term, any home in which Christ is not the Head, is dysfunctional.

Physical abuse, mental abuse, sexual abuse, or even a highly demanding parent can produce dysfunction in a home. The parent who requires constant perfection initiates a climate of performance orientation in the home. The child is prompted to perform to receive love and attention. This is a dysfunctional home atmosphere.

Psalm 139:13-15: "For thou didst form my inward parts; Thou didst weave me in my mother's womb. I will give thanks to Thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Thy works, and my soul knows it very well."

In this passage of scripture, David talks about the time of our formation in our mother's womb God formed our inward parts. God created us. There is a very important sense of connection while we are in our mother's womb. Of course, there is a physical connection through the umbilical chord, but there is also another connection. It is in the form of love and acceptance. This connection provides a feeling that all is well. It is a feeling of acceptance and security.

A certain phenomenon exists with all babies. If they are not shown love, if they are not touched and cuddled, they will die. As a matter of fact, that can happen even in the womb, when the babies are unwanted. That phenomenon is called marasmas. It is a gradual and continuous wasting away of the body. The phenomenon of marasmus proves there is a definite need within us for connectedness.

We are all born into connected relationships. Unless there is the threat of abortion or adoption while we are in the womb, we will probably feel connected and we will have a sense of love and acceptance.

As our lives unfold, we experience situations that bridge or connect us to people. One very important bridge is the act of touching. That is one of the reasons this program encourages hugging. The act of touching brings an extra dimension into the relationship. Touching is a bridge that connects people. Also, when we feel secure and accepted in the presence of others, that bridges us to them. It tightens our relationship, and promotes connectedness.

Often, our bridges of connection with people become broken. Sometimes they are repaired and reinstated, but many times they are not. For instance, our father may have disciplined or spanked us because we did something he told us not to do. During the spanking there was probably a lot of fear and anger in us.

The bridge between our father and us may have been temporarily broken. But after he disciplined us, if he sat us down and said, "I love you, and that's why I disciplined you," that bridge was repaired.

Many of our early bridges are repaired in that fashion. In early childhood we tend to experience broken bridges very easily, but some of those breaks are merely hairline fractures. Such breaks can usually be repaired with a kind word and a hug. The problem comes when we experience a broken bridge that does not get repaired. This problem is most common when we are raised in a dysfunctional home.

Breaks of this type disconnect us from the assurance of security and acceptance and love that we need. If our father tells us we are useless, we are nothing but a burden, the family would be better off if they had never had us, that creates a deep break. With such a break, all of our connection and our feeling of security and acceptance leave immediately.

Breaks of this type can produce guilt and shame and anger and fear. When bridges are broken in this manner and never repaired, the disconnection from love and security begins to widen. This may cause us to react by striving to bridge the gap with over-achievement and performance. We begin to do things to get attention because we have been disconnected

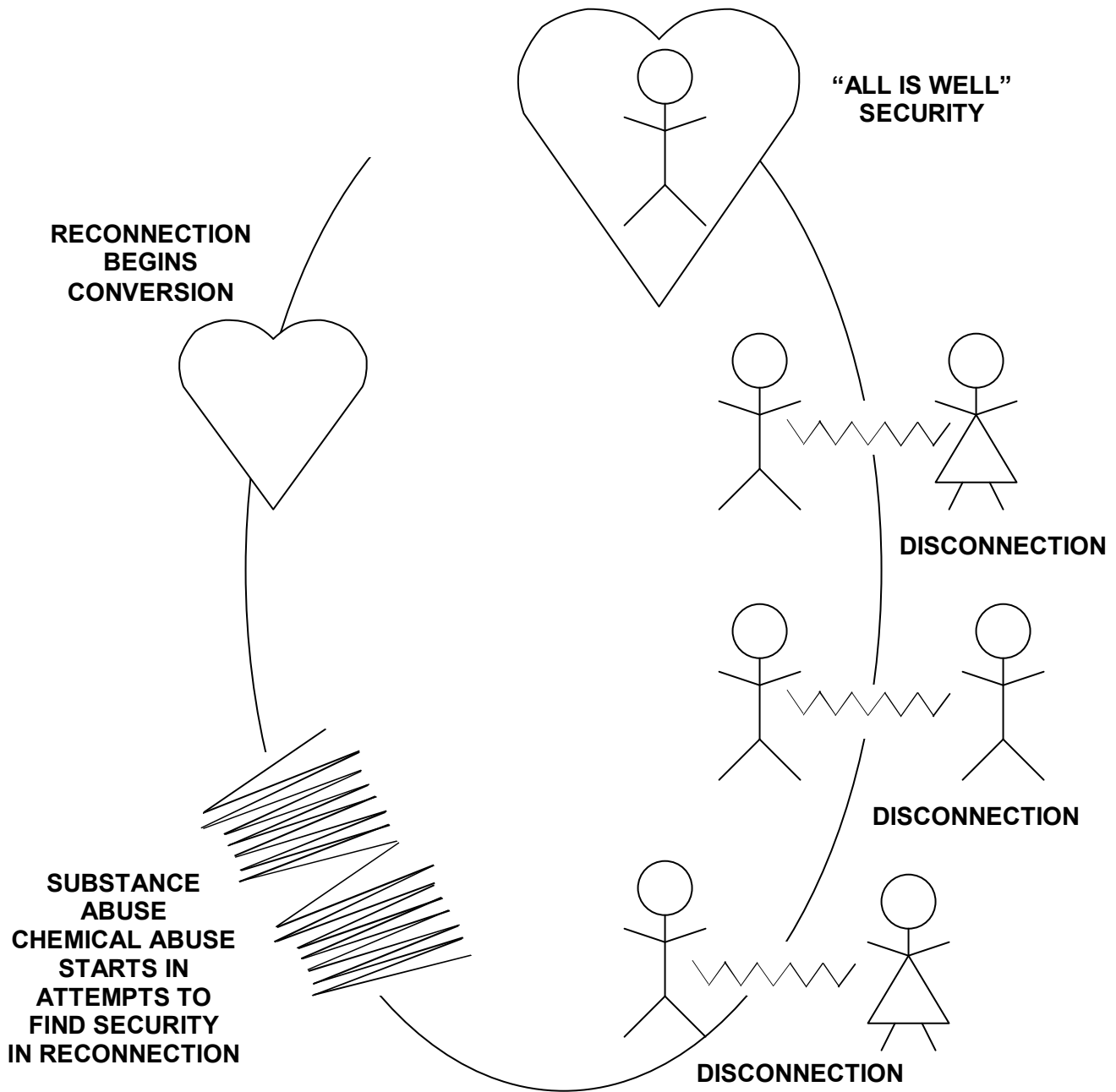
We were deeply wounded by those things that were said and done in our meaningful relationships. As a result, we reach out, we strive to make these relationships work. We are striving to restore what should be there naturally, but that bridge has been broken. We can no longer trust the people we once trusted, we can no longer depend upon what they might do or say.

At this point, fear creeps into us. We feel shame, and we feel unworthy. When Dad says to an eight-year-old child, "You're never going to amount to anything," that statement inflicts a deep wound. Unfortunately, the break is never repaired unless Dad apologizes and says, "I was wrong, I never should have said that. I love you, and you are going to amount to something."

If that repair is not made, our belief system kicks in, and the destructive statement from our Dad becomes a part of us. We begin to believe what was told us, we begin to feel that Dad was right, and we begin to behave as if it is a fact.

As this process continues to grow, we begin to feel guilty about the things we should do but aren't doing. We may even begin to feel responsible for things that are happening in our family.

BROKEN BRIDGES



THIS DIAGRAM ILLUSTRATES THE NEGATIVE IMPACT IN THE BREAKS IN HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS, AND THE DIFFICULTIES WE INCUR IN TRYING TO RECONNECT. ALL OUR EFFORTS ARE SUBSTITUTIONAL UNTIL WE EXPERIENCE CONVERSION.

Our emotions take over and we become very angry. We ask ourselves questions, such as, "Why can't I have parents like the kid down the street? Why doesn't my daddy love me like Sam's daddy; loves him? Why do my parents have to be alcoholics?"

We feel miserable. We have lost the connection that is very necessary to us. God created us with that need built in. After the disconnection, we do not deliberately look for alcohol or drugs as a lifestyle. We look for a way in which we can be reconnected. We want what we had before. We search for the intimacy of a meaningful relationship. We long for the trust, love and acceptance we had before the bridge was broken.

As we continue this search, many of us try chemicals as a way to reconnect, be accepted and loved. Chemicals give us a feeling of worthiness. When we are under the influence of chemicals, we enter Fantasyland. We see ourselves as we wish we were instead of as we really are. We also see situations as we wish they were instead of as they are.

This diversion from the truth anesthetizes our pain. Through this whole distorted process, we are really trying to get back to where we were when we were safely connected, the place for which God created us. We are trying to restore our relationships.

It is easy to see that the more disconnected we are, the more dysfunctional we become. Also, the further our disconnection becomes, the more we try to reconnect. As we fall into chemical addiction, our behavior becomes more bizarre.

We are still trying to re-establish something that is missing, something that God ordained for us to have. What we don't understand is that re-connection can only begin when we come to God. Reconnection cannot begin in relationships with other people. It can only begin in a relationship with God.

Reconnection begins at conversion. It begins at the time we invite Jesus Christ into our heart. After the reconnection process is underway, there are still behavior patterns with which we have to deal. This is true even though we have received Christ. We still have to work with the dysfunctional behavior that has become a part of our lifestyle.

When we receive Christ, our behavior patterns are not immediately eliminated. But this is the point at which we begin to reconnect. Everyone who has come from a dysfunctional home must go through this process.

Although we have been trying to recover from the hurts and wounds of our childhood and the disconnection in our relationships, the first thing we have to recover from/is drugs and alcohol. We first have to recover from what we hoped would be the solution to our problem. After we have dealt with the addiction, we will then be free to return to the point at which our breaks took place and deal with them effectively.

There is a difference between guilt and shame. Guilt relates to behavior, while shame relates to identity. Guilt says "I made a mistake," but shame says, "I am a mistake." Shame is a powerful influence. Many addictions are shame based. If we were told we were a mistake and we accepted it as true, that broke a bridge and established a shame base.

Rejection, unworthiness, insecurity, and low self esteem all issue from bridges of relationships that were broken. Accompanying these breaks in relationship is the fear of being unprotected.

If we are told we are no good, our immediate sub-conscious reaction as a child is, "If I'm no good, I'm not going to be loved, and I'm not going to be protected." That reveals an area of our lives in which our security has been taken from us. When we attempt to recover that broken bridge, we are actually trying to recapture our security.

As we begin to deal with inner healing and reconciling relationships, there is something we must understand. If we want the Lord to work in our past, we must be willing to let Him work in the present. We must be willing to be reconciled in our present circumstances before we can expect to go back and be reconciled to past events.

We will not be able to resolve an incident that happened ten years ago if we can't resolve something that happened today. If we are not in intimate relationship with our spouse and with God, we can't expect God to deliver or to heal us from something that happened ten years ago.

Broken bridges are very serious wounds. Because of this, we need to allow the Lord to show us the breaks in our lives. We probably have forgotten some of the things that were said or done to cause the breaks. God will reveal them to us as we ask Him. We have probably repressed most of the incidents. We should begin immediately to pray for God to reveal them to us.

An estimated ninety-five per cent of the people who enter a rehabilitation program had a poor relationship with their father. They may lack any father relationship at all. It may not be entirely the fault of the father, but that really isn't important.

It doesn't matter whose fault it is. Our purpose is not to find fault, our purpose is to receive healing. To accomplish that, we have to bring our breaks in relationship before the Lord and let Him heal those areas in our lives.

Sometimes we cannot reconnect with someone, because that person is not open to us or is no longer living. But we can reconnect to God. We can't change other people, but God will show us how to love them and forgive them right where they are. God will give us His insight and His wisdom concerning our broken relationships.

We may still desire a close, intimate relationship with a particular person, but that is sometimes impossible because of the attitude or condition of the other person. However, God can still heal those hurts and wounds of the past. He will make the reconciliation possible from our end, even if the other person is not open to it.

Not all relationships can be restored, but all wounds inside us can be healed. We may never be able to have the intimate relationship we want with certain people, but we will discover that we no longer have to carry around the hurts and the wounds that we suffered from that relationship.

As we bring these things before the Lord, He will enable us to begin to understand the people who have hurt us. Understanding them is not the same as forgiving them, but understanding helps give us insight as to what happened. That is an important part of the healing process. It is much easier to forgive and to be set free when we understand more about others, about ourselves and about God's principles.

Actually, that is what healing is about. Forgiveness is the key to healing. "For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions." (**Matthew 6: 14,15**)

When we are unwilling to forgive, we are reserving the right to get even. God is unable to forgive us until we are willing to forgive others and seek forgiveness ourselves. Forgiveness is a spiritual law from which we cannot escape. Like the law of gravity, "What goes up, must go down." If we judge others, the very same characteristic we see in them that we dislike, will be repeated in us until we forgive.

One of our breaks in relationship could be with our spouse, so let's look at co-dependency and how it is formed. As chemical addiction breaks a marriage, the woman naturally looks for reconnection. In the process, she becomes a classic enabler. She begins to behave in a way she believes will bring intimacy back into the marriage

The connection is broken because the husband is out of the home, drinking and drugging. The chemical addiction is the husband's attempt at the recovery process. He tries to anesthetize the pain he feels, the loneliness, the depression, the unworthiness, and the shame

The wife, who has now become the co-dependent, has the same feelings as her husband. She feels shame, guilt, anger, rejection, and abandonment. Her attempt at recovery is to try to solve all the problems. Her behavior becomes erratic as she attempts to fix her husband so the marriage can be reconnected.

There is a major danger in co-dependency and chemical addiction. When the attempt is being made to reconnect a break, the parties involved may look to another relationship. They may try a substitute relationship, thinking if they connect to another person they can regain what they had in the beginning.

Women who have been married to alcoholics for a long time continue to seek the "all is well" connection. They may substitute relationships with the hope that they will feel reconnected. Of course, that will never work. It will always lead back to the same emptiness. The reconnection process can only begin with the acceptance of Jesus Christ.

All the teaching we receive in this program flows together, and we will have occasion to use it throughout the program. Even after conversion, some of our old habits will rise to the surface. For example, euphoric recall will still come into play, especially as we begin to feel good again physically, and fresh mentally. BUD will also happen. We have been involved with chemicals a long time, and it will take a while to return to complete normalcy.

In addition, we should know that we are dealing with spiritual warfare. Satan really wants to destroy us, and he will shoot tempting thoughts our way, such as, "Everything is all right, the pain is gone; therefore, we can go celebrate." We must remember that Paul said, "I have not arrived." This is probably a direct contradiction to how we feel and think. We may have our spouse back, sobriety, good feelings, money in our pockets, and a job. We may feel, "We have arrived!" Euphoric recall plays on that.

A final word, the things we say with our mouths have a tremendous influence upon people in our relationships. We must understand, especially those who are parents, that our words are very, very important.

Everything we have covered in this session has occurred because of the tongue of someone with whom we had a meaningful relationship. Physical abuse is bad, but the tongue is capable of total life destruction.

HOMEWORK: Write with as much detail as possible, a hurtful event that occurred in your childhood. Describe who hurt you, where you were hurt, how old you were, etc. Then determine that person's responsibility and what you are accountable for.

Session Two . . . Broken Bridges

Personal And Group Exercise (see page 107)

1. Describe a bridge of connectedness.

2. If an important bridge was broken when we were young, how does that affect us?

3. Why do we choose chemicals as a method to repair a broken connection?

4. What is the only way reconnection can begin?

5. How is it possible that our ignorance of God's principles could be part of our problem?

6. How important are the words we speak to others and the words they speak to us?

Session Three

Rejection

Rejection and the fear of rejection play a major part in the development of the character of every human being.

Proverbs 15:13: *"A joyful heart makes a cheerful face, but when the heart is sad, the spirit is broken."* One of the products of rejection is a broken spirit.

Proverbs 17:22: *"A joyful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit dries up the bones."* A broken spirit, brought about by rejection is capable of "drying up," or taking away the desire for life.

Proverbs 18:14: *"The spirit of a man can endure his sickness, but a broken spirit who can bear?"* If the desire for life has gone, there is no chance for healing to take place.

The most powerful positive force in the universe is the love of God. **1 John 4:8, 16:** *"The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. And we have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love and the one who abides in love abides in God, God abides in him, and he in God."* God is love; therefore, love is God's most powerful force.

If love is the most powerful positive force in creation, it follows that lack of love is the most powerful negative force in creation.

Rejection is the denial of love and acceptance in our lives. It is probably the most painful, the most neglected, yet one of the most common emotional wounds from which we suffer.

Some of the forms of rejection are denial, refusal, and rebuff, slighting, shunning, spurning, ignoring, neglecting, avoiding and disapproving. It becomes obvious that rejection is not always physical. Nor is it always recognizable.

God designed us in such a way that we cannot function properly without love. Our survival in life depends upon it. It is the one ingredient each of us needs in order to grow, to flourish, and to become the people we need to be, to fulfill our destiny in life. Love is to us as water and sunshine is to a flower. It is essential to our growth. If we don't understand that each of us needs to be loved, we walk on dangerous ground. Because each of us needs it, we each desire it strongly. We need to be loved and accepted.

God created us to fellowship with Him, to worship Him, and to have a relationship with Him. Love is the primary ingredient in that relationship. Love is God's motive, and it should be our motive as well. Throughout the Bible, in both the Old Testament and the New Testament, God's love is always evident. Whether we realize it or not, God loves us.

When we function in harmony with God, His love for us generates within us an ability to love one another. According to Jesus, the two greatest commandments are to love God, and to love one another. Love is the fuel that makes us function. It nourishes us and gives us meaning in life. Without love, we develop serious problems. When we are denied the love and attention we need, we experience internal affliction.

As we mature, especially as we grow spiritually, most of us can handle rejection better than we could when we were young children. We are similar to the palm tree in that respect. If we plant a small palm tree, it needs a lot of water, sun and fertilizer. It must have more attention while it is growing than after it has grown to maturity. Once it has grown, it can withstand the cold and the storms, but when it is young it cannot handle the abuse. We are pretty much the same.

Many of us today react out of the wounds of rejection we received early in our lives. We find that we still can't handle rejection. This is because we were wounded at an early age, and we have been reacting through those wounds ever since.

Emotional wounds are very painful. Nothing hurts quite like being rejected. When we are not accepted, when we are disapproved or shunned, we experience emotional pain. Once we have experienced rejection, we react by building walls. We begin to lead a life that guards against the possibility of being rejected again.

We can parallel our reaction to the way we react when we hurt ourselves physically. Everything we do revolves around that injury. For example, if we have a sprained ankle, everything we do revolves around that sprained ankle. We don't want to hurt it again and feel that pain once more. This form of self-protection is a natural reaction to any kind of physical injury.

Emotional wounds from rejection affect us the same way. Every response in every relationship revolves around our past emotional wounds in a way that protects us from experiencing the hurts again. The result is that, as a wounded person, we behave in a dysfunctional manner. We become unstable in our attitudes and out of harmony in all our relationships.

Most deep wounds of this type take place during our childhood. Children often misinterpret correction or lack of attention as rejection. It may not have been intended as rejection, but that doesn't matter. If that is how we perceived it, that is how we reacted to it.

Even today, many of us cannot distinguish between correction and rejection. We take correction as rejection, because that is the way we perceive it. Whether or not rejection actually exists doesn't matter. What matters is that we think it does, and we react as if it is rejection.

We are wounded by what is said, even though it may be constructive criticism. We may find ourselves to be particularly sensitive in a rehabilitation program. As someone corrects us, we may be devastated because we take it as rejection.

If we have accepted this wound of rejection into our lives it generates one of two things. The first is a fear of further rejection. Once we are wounded, we recoil at the prospect of being wounded again. For instance, if someone who is an authority figure in our lives has wounded us through rejection, our natural reaction is to fear authority and to guard ourselves when we are around authority figures.

For example, our incorrect concept of God almost always comes from the relationship we had with an authority figure in our lives, such as our father or our church. If we are not given the opportunity to break through that barrier, we will carry that wrong concept throughout our lives.

The fear of additional hurt causes us to put up defense mechanisms. We begin to ask, "Whom can I trust? Will the one who caused me to suffer in the past hurt me again? Will other persons also inflict wounds upon me?" We develop a distrust of everyone's motives.

The word for such feeling is paranoia. We feel that everyone is out to hurt us. We can't trust anyone. The root behind paranoia is the fear of rejection. It is the fear of not being accepted, not being a part, not being loved. The paranoid person lives in torment. Paranoia is active within the person 24 hours a day, seven days a week. He always reacts based upon his paranoia.

The other path that occurs is self-rejection. After we have accepted rejection in our lives for an extended period of time, we begin to reject ourselves. We actually believe we are unworthy and unacceptable by others. We are convinced we don't fit in or measure up, that we are not a legitimate part of society. This belief causes us to reject ourselves. Very often this will manifest itself in our relationship with God.

Both the fear of rejection and self-rejection control our behavior. They always generate unhealthy fruit. Rejection is probably the most common and the most severe problem human beings face. Everyone who enters a rehabilitation program has experienced rejection in his life. Some have been wounded over and over again. This eventually produces self-rejection.

The more rejection we receive, the more rejected we feel, and the more apt we are to believe we deserve to be rejected. We begin to ask ourselves what it is about us that repels others. Rejection from a loved one will make us think we are unacceptable or unqualified or unworthy. We can handle being spurned by someone we don't know, but when we receive rejection from someone we love, the knife goes deep. This helps convince us we are unacceptable failures.

A situation of this type occurs often in father /son relationships. If we see ourselves as failures we try desperately to change. We try to become someone acceptable, someone other than who we really are. We think if we were different, or even if we were someone else, we would be loved and accepted.

After concluding that the key to enjoying acceptance by others is to become different from our actual selves, we seek to change our personality and become someone different, so we can have the love and acceptance we need. We may begin to pattern ourselves after a fantasy of our own mind.

We may try to pattern ourselves after someone we have read about in a book, or have seen on television. We will certainly pattern ourselves after someone whom we have observed as being loved by others. Through this process, we try to reconnect a broken relationship.

Without exception, everyone attempts to recover the peace, love, affirmation, confirmation and acceptance that were lost in a broken relationship.

Some characteristics of the fear of rejection are as follows:

ANGER:

We may be angry with ourselves, at other people, or at God. Anger always follows closely behind fear. We can become very dependent upon anger, because it becomes an excellent barrier to protect us from others

HARDNESS.

This is another defense mechanism that keeps people away.

BITTERNESS:

About the situation or condition in which we were wounded. Anger, left unattended, will eventually generate a root of bitterness.

REBELLION:

An outward expression caused by an inner feeling of rejection.

Before World War II, mothers stayed home with their children. During the war, the economy picked up and the standard of living improved. Eventually, the standard of living became much higher, with the addition of television sets and other material things. Then the economy softened. Families discovered that one person could not earn enough money to maintain the new standard of living.

Because of this, mothers left their homes to seek employment to help maintain the standard of living. As a result, the children came home from school to an empty house. This was unnatural to them, so they felt rejected. They felt they were not important. The parents did not intend this to be rejection, but many of the children took it that way.

Those who grew up under those circumstances reacted to the rejection. They became rebellious. Those were the days that spawned the hippie era. It became an age of rebellion. Then, out of that rebellious generation came a generation that became susceptible to addiction. The result is that today there are more single parent homes than in any other time in history.

There are more absentee fathers than any other time in history. The current generation is creating the same atmosphere, another generation that is being rejected. Parental rejection doesn't necessarily have anything to do with abuse. It primarily has to do with not being there when needed. In the case of parents, it is an example of misplaced priorities.

This is the source of most rebellion. Rebellion says, "Nobody loves me, so I'm going to do what I want to do, regardless! Other people don't care about me, so I don't care about other people!"

CULTS:

False religions come out of rejection. The hippies were a type of cult. They promoted peace, love, and sex. They had their own belief system. Most 4th world people are considered to be outcasts, so they have formed their own cults in order to be loved and accepted.

Today's new age movement, Satan worshippers, and all the other cults are able to recruit from this sea of dysfunctional people. These are hurting people who are looking for a place in life. They are looking for acceptance and love, and the cults fill that need. The cults draw them in and accept them, no questions asked.

A young teenager who has a wound of rejection is an easy target for an organization such as the Moonies. The Moonies accept hurting teenagers. They love and feed them, and the teenagers willingly become part of the organization. They are simply looking for a loving relationship.

That is also what happens in addiction. When the addict is unsuccessful in his attempt to reconnect to a loving relationship, he anesthetizes his pain. It becomes clear that when love is denied somebody, the door is open for Satan to step in.

True love repels anything ungodly. When a baby is born, Satan cannot attack it because the love and the covering of the parents protect it from anything ungodly. However, if the covering is not there, the baby will be exposed to satanic attack.

Spiritual covering is available to us through the love of the people with whom we have relationship, and through those who have spiritual authority over us. If we don't have that covering, and if we're looking for love and acceptance, we are subject to the influence of cults or anything else ungodly that might offer us acceptance.

There is a strong movement of cults around the world today. One of the main reasons they are gaining ground is the breakdown of the family. The father image has been removed: therefore, the stability is gone. Rejection is rampant. This forces the children to look to whatever source is available to receive love and acceptance.

When the fear of rejection has established a stronghold in a person, he learns to reject others before being rejected himself. Although he may not realize it, his thought is, "If I reject first, I won't get rejected." Unfortunately, that attitude generates an inability to receive love or to love others. And out of that attitude grows rebellion. His statement to the world becomes, "Before you get me, I will get you."

SELF-REJECTION:

This is another product of rejection by others. We buy the lie that we are unworthy of acceptance by others; therefore we are unworthy of acceptance by ourselves. Self-rejection spawns other negative emotions.

HURT:

There is pain inside us. Because we hurt, we feel that we have done everything wrong. We are to blame, and there is no place to turn to make the hurt go away.

SELF PITY:

This is the "poor little me" syndrome. We become very conscious of our inadequacies and the fact that no one seems to understand or care what is happening to us.

DESPAIR:

Another word for despair is hopelessness. When we have totally rejected ourselves, we can't see ourselves as capable of being loved by others. Through this attitude, we lead ourselves into a hopeless state of mind.

DEPRESSION:

When we have rejected ourselves, we will always have a spirit of depression about us. We have resigned ourselves to the fact that we are useless. Depression becomes a very thick wall around us that doesn't come down easily.

ISOLATION:

This becomes our next move. Because we feel hopeless, it seems logical to us to withdraw from society. Society will never miss us because we have nothing to contribute to it.

SUICIDE:

If no one else cares, why should we? Suicide becomes the ultimate withdrawal. We are so desperate; we develop an underlying death wish. What we don't realize is that suicide is the ultimate ego trip. We are totally "turned in" at this point, our total attention is on self. We have become our own god, even to the point of making the ultimate decision in our lives, our time of death.

As we observe the two paths of rejection, we can see the expression of two distinct personalities reacting in different ways as they are exposed to rejection. One personality is mostly aggressive, while the other is mostly passive. It is not unusual for us to move from one path to the other.

We may display characteristics from both sides at different times. But one side will eventually emerge to be more dominant than the other.

It is possible for us to become very critical or very judgmental when we have experienced rejection. That is one of the ways we deal with the fear of rejection. We put other people down, and we become very critical.

The pathway of the fear of rejection is always aggressive. Anger and resentment dominate us. We become aggressively active. On this path, we are more prone to overdose or to be killed in an automobile accident.

On the other hand, the pathway of self-rejection displays a personality that is generally beat down. On this path we are more prone to suicide. There is always hope for those who are on either pathway, and neither pathway is worse than the other.

As we study inner healing, we are always drawn back to God's word and our need to understand our relationship with Him. God is love. That means He loves us. People whom we love may have hurt us, and we may have experienced broken bridges, breaks in our relationships that have devastated us. But we have God, and God tells us He wants us to bring our hurts to Him.

Understanding these situations in our lives helps us to recognize our need for healing and wholeness. But inner healing is beyond our capability, there is no way we can heal ourselves. Only God can heal us permanently. Once we realize this, our next step is to look at our responsibility in this matter.

As we reach this point, it is time to ask ourselves who has felt rejection more than anyone else in the world? We don't have to look any further than Jesus Christ. He has felt what we have felt, and undoubtedly much more.

Now let's think logically. If we suddenly were confronted with a big problem, whom should we look to for help with it? Naturally, we would look to somebody who had been through a similar problem. Jesus Christ has certainly been through rejection, because He experienced the ultimate rejection.

To get Jesus involved in our hurts and wounds, we need to get in touch with those hurts and wounds. We need to take a bold look at what we have experienced through rejection. This brings us to the grieving process. We are not to become preoccupied with behavioral changes. We want to look at the losses in our lives, the loss of love, the deep cuts, and the wounds of rejection.

Our lives have been orchestrated and directed by our reactions to those wounds we have received. We need healing in those wounded areas, those specific events in our lives in which we received rejection. We need healing whether the wounds were inflicted intentionally or not. The process, in which we get healing from rejection, is to say, "Lord, this specific incident I have written down still hurts me. I am hurting, Lord. I need Your help. I give this to you right now. Please take it from me."

HOMEWORK: Take one incident of rejection in your life, and write down the details. Share it with another brother, and ask the Lord to help you with that wound of rejection. Ask Him to show you the fruit of that wound. Let Him show you what has come out of the wound, what your reaction has been and how it has affected your life and the lives around you.

Session Three . . . Rejection

Personal And Group Exercise (see page 108)

1. Why do emotional wounds we received as children continue to affect us today?

2. Why is self-rejection so destructive?

3. Why do we try to act like someone other than who we really are?

4. What generates rejection even more than physical abuse?

5. Why are cults so successful today?

6. Why is it important for us to take a bold look at what we have experienced through rejection?

Session Four

The Fruit of Rejection and Reasons for Rejection

Rejection acts like a tree with a bitter root. It can only produce bitter fruit. Listed below are some examples of the fruit rejection produces:

Inability to receive love.

When someone who is significant in our lives has rejected us, it makes us feel unworthy. It establishes a root belief that if we are unworthy, we are unlovable; therefore, we are unable to receive love.

Inability to love others.

The root of rejection destroys our ability to trust others. We are reluctant to allow ourselves to get into close relationship with others. Obviously, if we can't get close to another person, we can't consider loving that person.

Insecurity.

After we have experienced rejection by someone significant in our lives, we don't know whom we can trust. Subconsciously, we walk through life as if we were walking on eggs. We always expect betrayal or criticism to be right around the corner.

Withdrawal.

Because we feel vulnerable in the presence of others, we feel there is safety in isolation. Our natural tendency, therefore, is to withdraw from the mainstream of society.

Suspicion.

Our inability to trust others breeds suspicion of everyone. We never really know when we might be rejected again.

Inferiority.

Because we feel unworthy, we naturally feel inferior to others. This inferiority is reflected in our relationships and in our work.

Social Shyness.

Social gatherings are painful to us because we feel we are surrounded by superior people who look upon us as we look upon ourselves. Although this is not true, our mind-set will not allow us to think differently.

Fear of failure.

We are convinced we are incapable of accomplishing anything as well as others can accomplish them. Our low expectation of ourselves is usually reflected in our willingness to stay in jobs or relationships that require little of us.

Fear of man.

Because we look upon everyone else as superior to ourselves, we rarely initiate anything on our own for fear of being criticized. We prefer to be told what to do and when and how to do it. Our only problem from that point is to follow directions accurately.

Fear of rejection.

We discussed this in an earlier lesson. The fear of rejection keeps us from ever being our real selves. We are always in a performance mode, hoping to please others.

Self-rejection.

This was discussed earlier, also. We consider ourselves to be misfits, with no place in society.

Daydreaming/fantasizing.

Because we fear reality, we have a tendency to live in a world of our own fantasy. We are safe in this world of fantasy, never challenged, always victorious. This is an obvious form of withdrawal. It can only generate an unhealthy personality.

REASONS FOR REJECTION

PRENATAL REJECTIONS:

1. Conceived too soon after marriage.

The newlyweds may have planned to wait for some time before starting their family. The baby becomes an intrusion in the parents' plans, and is rejected.

2. Conceived too close to the birth of a previous child.

The parents groan under the realization that they will be caring for two babies in diapers at the same time. They had planned to space the birth of their children further apart. The baby is therefore rejected, because its birth is deemed untimely.

3. A financial strain on the family is created.

The baby was not planned. It comes as an accident, and is blamed for putting additional stress on an already strained budget.

4. Fear of failure.

Fear of childbirth pain, fear of complications, or fear of bearing a deformed child may cause the mother to wish she had never become pregnant.

5. Conflict between the parents-to-be.

The marriage may be on the verge of divorce; therefore, it is not considered to be the proper time to have a baby arrive.

6. Contemplated or attempted abortion.

In this case the rejection is extreme, in that the parents consider murdering the baby through abortion. Mounting evidence indicates the baby is aware its life is threatened. Even though the abortion may not actually be carried out, or is not successful, the desire the parents had to kill the baby is registered in its awareness.

WRONG SEX PREFERENCE.

A child may be very much wanted until it is born. The sex preference is a serious matter with some parents. However, no matter how strong the personal preference might be, it can be very destructive to the child for the parents to reject it because of something over which the child had no control. The sex was predetermined by God and should be accepted by the parents.

Many parents are deeply disappointed over the sex of their children. The rejection of the babies may not be done maliciously, but done, nevertheless, with no understanding of the consequences.

When this wound occurs, the devil is quick to take advantage of it. Parental rejection due to the wrong sex sometimes causes boys to become effeminate, and girls to become masculine.

A child who is rejected because it is the wrong sex, will sense this at a very early age. They will often seek to gain parental acceptance by performing as one of the opposite sex.

Consequently, a child who is rejected because of its wrong sex may grow to hate and reject itself. Rejection of one's own sexuality can ultimately lead that person into homosexuality.

PHYSICAL PROBLEMS

A baby may be rejected at birth because it is born with imperfect physical features, or imperfections such as Mongolism.

VICTIM OF CIRCUMSTANCES:

The wound of rejection may occur if for any reason the child is deprived of a close relationship with the parents.

Examples:

- a) Rejection may come to a child if the child is left with others while the mother works outside the home.
- b) The father may work long hours away from home and may not be able to have quality time with his child.
- c) Any time the parents devote too little time to their child, the child will usually sense their absence as rejection.
- d) Some children are given up for adoption. For the child, this may translate to abandonment by the parents. If so, this produces a severe wound. Although adopted children may be well loved by the adopting parents, many are unable to receive love or to return love adequately, because the wound of rejection has already occurred.
- e) The death of one or both parents creates a severe wound in the personality of the young child. The child, who is now an orphan, cannot comprehend what has happened to his parents. He relates their disappearance from his life as abandonment.
- f) Divorce is a very disruptive force in the life of a child. The wound may be deepened if the child has been subjected to an atmosphere of strife and conflict in the home.
- g) Jealousy in a home is also a disruptive force. An older sibling in a growing family is often forced to compete with a younger brother or sister for parental attention. The new rival may be looked upon with jealousy. To a young mind, seeing someone else on Mother's lap may indicate, "Mother loves baby instead of me."

VICTIM OF ABUSE.

1. Verbal abuse.

Some children seldom hear a kind or encouraging word. Instead they are berated ridiculed, cursed and teased. Typical put-downs that burn deep wounds in the child's memory, are:

- "I wish you had never been born!"
- "You can't do anything right!"

- "You will never amount to anything!"
- "You are stupid!"
- "I wish you were dead!"

It is difficult to measure the injury that occurs to children who are constantly abused with such cruel words.

2. Physical abuse.

The physically abused child is immediately filled with fear and confusion. There is no doubt in its mind that it has been rejected. Deep down, feelings of anger, and a desire to get even and to punish, begin to build. Because the child has an abusive role model, he is likely to become an abuser, himself.

3. Sexual abuse.

The child who has been subject to molestation develops an inability to be open and warm with people. He usually displays a victim mentality, and lacks the ability to trust anyone, especially authority figures. Because he has been "used" in an unnatural way, he feels the pain of rejection.

Session Four . . . The Fruit of Rejection and Reasons For Rejection

Personal And Group Exercise (see page 109)

1. Why does rejection produce such a great amount of negative fruit?

2. If we feel we may have been rejected in the womb, what can we do about it?

3. If we were told our parents wanted a child of the opposite sex when we were born how should we respond?

4. If you were an adopted child, how should we view our adoption?

5. If we were verbally or physically abused as a child, what can we do?

6. If we were sexually abused as a child, how can we overcome that trauma?



Session Five

Grieving

One of the most important things we need to learn is how to grieve. Grieving is the ability to recognize and mourn the losses we have experienced. God has given us the ability to grieve. If any of us have lost a family member through death, we may have grieved that loss.

Problems arise within us when we experience losses in our lives, but do not grieve those losses. Instead of grieving, we allow ourselves to become hardened inside. As a result, we react to those things in the wrong way. We become resentful and angry about them. We do not recognize the hurt, pain and loss, and we do not allow the Lord to minister to us in those areas.

Society has told us a lie we believe to be true. We were told that men don't cry; therefore brave little boys don't cry if they want to become men. A man should not show hurt or emotion, or pain. But that is a lie.

We need to see, from a Biblical standpoint, what grieving is, and Jesus Christ is our model. **Matthew 14:13:** *"Now when Jesus heard it, He withdrew from there in a boat, to a lonely place by Himself..."* Jesus went to a place where He could be alone to grieve for John the Baptist who had been beheaded by Herod.

John 11:33-36: *"When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her, also weeping, He was deeply moved in spirit, and was troubled, and said, 'Where have you laid him?' They said to Him, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus wept. And so the Jews were saying, 'Behold how He loved him.'"* Jesus wept at the tomb of Lazarus, for He was grieved in His spirit.

It becomes a major problem with us when we don't allow ourselves to express the sorrow we feel. We don't realize that if we will be open and honest with God, He will heal us in those areas of our lives. As we bring these things to the light of Christ, He is able to minister His healing to us.

Many of the things that hurt us in our lives have been jammed into the inner recesses of our minds with the hope that they will be forgotten. What we don't realize is that these things

continue to affect us in our reactions to the events and the people we encounter daily. We need to learn how to be honest, how to bring out the emotions, and how to grieve about them. As we allow them to surface, God begins a process in us that gives us insight and wisdom about them. The healing can then take place.

One obstacle to our healing is that when we are hurt, we are able to see only our side of the situation. We are unable to see the situation from God's side. This means we are unable to see the whole picture, we see only one side of it.

When we grieve, we usually need the presence of another person to help us. It isn't necessary for that person to tell us whether we are right or wrong, or to set boundaries for us. He only needs to listen to us.

There is one danger in grieving. We can become caught up in it and never allow ourselves to get out. If we are caught up in grieving, we become very depressed. We find ourselves filled with self-pity and self-condemnation. There is a legitimate time for grieving but there is definitely a time to move on.

There are six stages of grief which usually manifest themselves in the following sequence:

1. Denial

We simply do not want to accept the misfortune.

2. Bargaining with God

If God will restore or repair or replace what we are grieving about, we will do whatever He wants.

3. Anger

We are totally undeserving of what has happened and we feel we have been treated unfairly. This justifies our anger.

4. Acceptance

We accept that it happened, and we concede that we can do nothing about it.

5. Grief of the loss

We become honest about our feelings, share those feelings with others and allow ourselves to be healed.

6. Resolution

We resolve to pick up the pieces and get on with life.

If we share our thoughts and emotions in each of these stages with the Lord, and receive the input He offers us, we will move readily through each phase, into resolution. We will then be able to lay aside our loss and go on. If we should get stuck at any point, it is important that we get someone to help us through.

The most effective way in which to grieve is to grieve one loss at a time. We may have a tendency to look into our past and see all the hurt, pain, and abuse, and say, "I can't handle all that, Lord!" It would be like having all the food we were going to eat for the entire week, lined up on some tables. It would be overwhelming to think that we had to eat all that food at one time. The fact is, we eat the food one meal at a time. And that is the way we should grieve, one loss at a time.

The proper way to grieve is to let the Lord show us which incidents He wants us to deal with, and the order in which He wants us to handle them. It becomes a process, so we don't have the overwhelming sensation that we could never get through it. In the grieving process, we want to be honest about how each incident affected us, and the hurt and pain each caused.

We also want to be honest about our sinful reactions. There are three principles we have violated in our reactions to what people have done to us.

1. Judgment.

We are told in scripture we are not to judge, lest we be judged.

2. Honoring our father and our mother.

If we do not, our life will not go well with us.

3. Sowing and Reaping.

When we plant seeds, we can expect to reap a harvest.

We will discuss these reactions in depth in later sessions.

Session Five . . . Grieving

Personal And Group Exercise (see page 110)

1. Why is it important for us to learn how to grieve?

2. What happens to us when we do not grieve about our hurts, pains and losses?

3. In what way do our hidden emotions affect our relationship with others in our daily walk?

4. Why is it important for us to be able to see both sides of a painful situation?

5. Why is it important for us not to continue too long in our grieving?

6. What is the proper way in which to involve the Lord in our grieving?



Session Six

Forgiveness

Matthew 18:21-35: *"Then Peter came and said to Him, 'Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a certain king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. And when he had begun to settle them, there was brought to him one who owed him ten thousand talents. But since he did not have the means to repay, his lord commanded him to be sold, along with his wife and children and all that he had, and repayment be made.*

The slave therefore falling down, prostrated himself before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will repay you everything.' And the lord of that slave felt compassion and released him and forgave him the debt.

But that slave went out and found one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and he seized him and began to choke him, saying, 'Pay back what you owe.' So his fellow slave fell down and began to entreat him, saying, 'Have patience with me and I will repay you.' He was unwilling however, but went and threw him in prison until he should pay back what was owed. So when his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were deeply grieved and came and reported to their lord all that had happened.

Then summoning him, his lord said to him, 'you wicked slave; I forgave you all that debt because you entreated me. Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, even as I had mercy on you?' And his lord, moved with anger handed him over to the torturers until he should repay all that was owed him.

So shall my heavenly Father also do to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart?"

We can see from this scripture, spoken by Jesus Christ, our Lord, that forgiveness is a serious matter. Throughout the Bible we find God's "prescription" for us when we are offended:

forgiveness. We find that when we refuse to forgive, we suffer as a direct result. Our lives are severely damaged when there is unforgiveness in our hearts.

To forgive is to "release from judgment," and to "give up the right to get even." When we do not release others from our judgment and give up our right to get even, we place ourselves in the position of the man in the story above who was unwilling to cancel the debt of his fellow slave.

His judgment upon his fellow slave was in his own mind. He had the power to decide to cancel the debt and release the judgment. He had the power to decide to throw his fellow slave into prison, and "get even." The decision he made set into force the judgment that came back upon him. If we are not willing to forgive, we will not progress in wholeness, and we will not experience inner healing.

The problem is that we have been unwilling to forgive, or we didn't know it was necessary to forgive, or we may not have been aware that we held unforgiveness in our hearts. But it is very clear that forgiveness is a key relational issue in all the scriptures.

Forgiveness will bring healing into our lives. It is the spiritual ointment God uses to soothe our emotional wounds. Forgiveness removes the sting from the wound. And in many instances it restores relationships that have been broken.

Forgiveness has nothing to do with feelings. It is entirely dependent upon our will. If we wait until we "feel" like forgiving, we will never forgive. The decision to forgive is made with our will, and we submit our feelings to God. He will change our feelings in due time.

Forgiveness has no bearing upon the consequences we experience because of our previous sins. Some people believe if God forgives us for our sins, we won't face any consequences for what we have done. That isn't true. God's forgiveness of our sins and the consequences of our sins are two different things.

For example, let's say you are on the roof of a building, and you look down and say to yourself, "It looks as if the ground is about 20 feet down. I believe if I jump down I will make it all right." So you jump, and you break your leg. You then realize what you did, made no sense. You pray, "Lord, I ask you to forgive me for being so stupid. You gave me better sense than that." God will forgive you for your stupid act, but you still have the broken leg.

The forgiveness of God has nothing to do with the consequences we have established for ourselves. We will always face consequences because they are a direct effect of something we have caused to happen. But those consequences have nothing to do with God's forgiveness.

One of the reasons we don't forgive could be that we don't understand what forgiveness is. We have some incorrect concepts about forgiveness. Some of us think we have forgiven but we have not. Let's take a closer look at what forgiveness is and is not.

FORGIVENESS IS NOT:

1. Overlooking the wrong done to us.

We like to believe that if we overlook a wrong done to us, it will go away. In reality it does not. Overlooking something is not forgiveness; it is a form of repression or denial.

Some of us were hurt by what people said or did as we were growing up, and we tried to overlook those things. But the truth is, they had a great effect upon our lives. Repressing and overlooking offenses does not mean we have forgiven. If there is still pain inside, it is a sign there is probably unforgiveness still inside.

2. Excusing or whitewashing the wrong done to us.

When we try to make excuses or water down an offense, we are actually trying to tell ourselves that it really wasn't as bad as it seemed. This is justifying or rationalizing, but it is not forgiveness.

3. Psycho-analyzing a person's nature to explain why he did the wrong to us.

It is important that we understand exactly what happened, but understanding and forgiveness are two different things. While Jesus was hanging on the cross, He said, "*Forgive them for they know not what they do.*" As we come out of chemical addiction, we may be able to analyze our actions, but we really can't explain them away.

Knowing what has motivated a person to behave the way he has will help us forgive that person. But knowing is not the same as forgiving. We can know about a person, and we can even know why he behaved the way he did, but still not forgive him. Understanding a person's behavior doesn't mean we have forgiven him.

Sin is moral stupidity, it is unexplainable. The Apostle Paul said, "*The things I do I do not understand.*" (**Romans 7:15**) So we must know that we don't base our forgiveness upon understanding. That means we don't have to understand in order to forgive.

Some people spend years in self-help and therapy groups, trying to analyze their childhood and understand why their parents mistreated them. They are often disillusioned to find they are no better off after their efforts than before they started. Forgiveness is the key that unlocks us from the binding judgments we formed in our painful past.

We have to look at ourselves before we can experience healing. It is possible for us to say, "I understand why my father acted the way he did. I understand where he was coming from, but I just can't forgive him."

If we are unwilling to get beyond our feelings and make a decision to forgive, we will never be able to receive God's healing in our lives. We may finally understand the reason for a person's behavior, but if we don't have the will to forgive, there will be no forgiveness for either party.

4. Taking the blame for the wrong done to us.

This happens often in child abuse. Taking the blame is not the same thing as forgiveness. It is proper for us to take the blame for our reaction to the experience. But if we were physically, mentally or sexually abused as a child, it was not our fault. If we take the blame for it, that is not forgiveness.

Many of those who have been sexually abused have the blame imposed upon them. Many young victims are told it was their fault, that they had a part in it. If they are convinced it was their fault and they take the blame that is still not the same as forgiveness. It may create the feeling of forgiveness toward the abuser, but that is only because the anger has been turned inward.

All the above reactions are improper attitudes, which reflect internal problems and misunderstandings. We short-circuit what God wants to accomplish in us if we attempt to substitute any of these attitudes for forgiveness.

FORGIVENESS IS:

1. Facing the specific wrong done to us.

We can neither excuse it nor rationalize it. We have to be honest. Listed below are six words. Taking each word independently, close your eyes and picture in your mind specific events related to them.

a) Rejection.

Picture events in which you may have felt the need for love and acceptance, but it was withheld from you; you wanted attention, but you were ignored.

b) Neglect.

A typical example of neglect in an alcoholic family is when the parents spend money on liquor instead of purchasing food or other essentials.

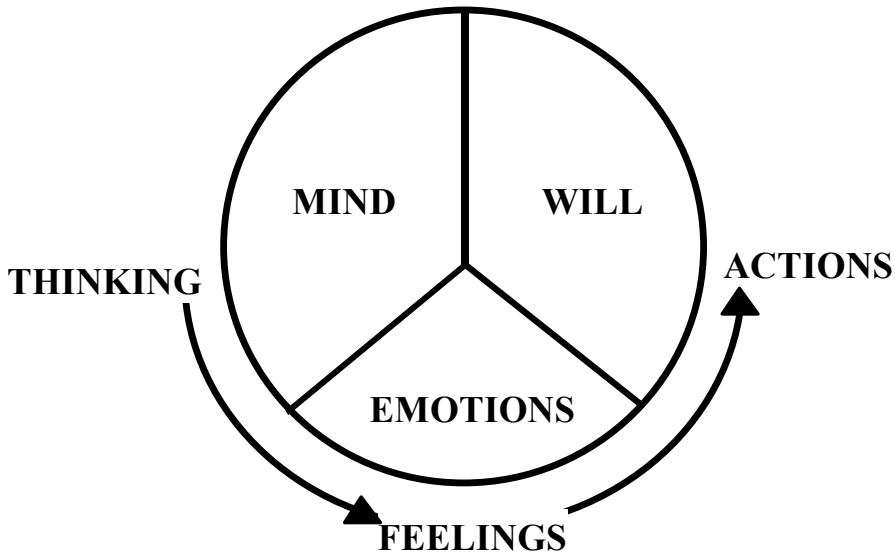
c) Injustice or unfairness.

This is when the punishment doesn't fit the crime. You may never have known whether you were going to be hugged or slapped. It also may have been difficult for you to figure out what brought on the different reactions.

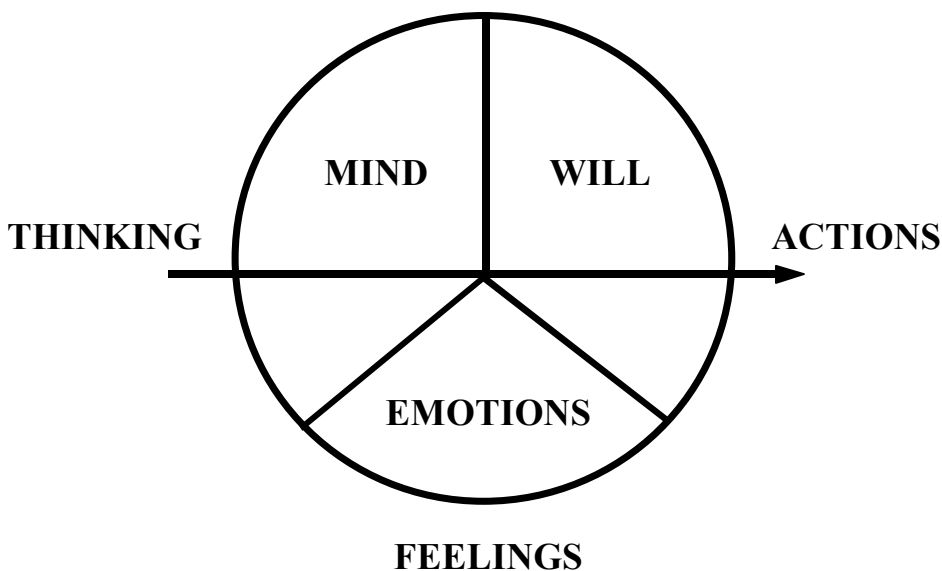
d) Cruelty or brutality.

This could have been either physical or verbal. Verbal cruelty always identified you with your actions. For example, you were not told you did something stupid, you were told you were stupid because of what you did.

FORGIVENESS



OUR NORMAL BEHAVIOR IN THE FLESH IS TO BEGIN WITH A THOUGHT, FILTER THOUGHT THROUGH OUR EMOTIONS, THEN ACT ACCORDING TO THE WAY WE FEEL ABOUT IT. IN THE IS PROCESS, OUR EMOTIONS DICTATE OUR BEHAVIOR.



IN OUR WALK WITH GOD, WE STILL EXPERIENCE EMOTIONS, BUT WE DON'T ALLOW THEM TO DICTATE OUR BEHAVIOR. WHEN GOD SPEAKS TO US THROUGH HIS WORD, WE DETERMINE TO ACT ACCORDINGLY TO HIS WORD, BYPASSING OUR EMOTIONS WHICH RETARD US. THIS IS AN EXERCISE OF OUR FAITH. WE OBEY, AND TRUST GOD TO TAKE CARE OF OUR FEELINGS.

e) Betrayal.

Adultery is an example of betrayal in a family. Adultery is a betrayal of the love and trust of one for another. The pain of betrayal is felt, not only by the spouse who has been betrayed, but also by the children in the family.

f) Abandonment.

When a child is abandoned by his parents, the trauma produces deep roots of painful rejection. When a loved one leaves a home without good reason, the abandoned spouse and children suffer greatly. Broken homes register as abandonment in the minds of children.

Were you able to get in touch with some specific events? This is an important exercise, because the first thing we have to do is face the specific wrongs that have been done to us. We must deal with them specifically, not in generalities. The Holy Spirit works in specifics.

Another title for the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth. It is very important for us to face the truth in those areas of our lives in which we have been hurt.

2. Facing the pain, hurt, etc., not dismissing it with some cliché or saying.

We don't dismiss hurts and wounds with some all-purpose Christian saying. We can quote a lot of victorious sounding scripture, but that doesn't get rid of anything. We need to be careful about trying to sound bold and full of faith because it is the Christian thing to do.

3. Facing and identifying our reaction to the wrong done to us.

Our reaction to our mistreatment may have been a violent lifestyle. We may have been filled with anger and hatred. We may have even committed murder, if not actually, in our hearts. Our intense reactions may have led us far from God. It is important for us to take an honest look at our reactions, how God feels about them, and what we should do about them.

4. Facing the cross.

Ephesians 4:32: "And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you." The cross is the point at which forgiveness became possible. No human being has the ability to forgive another human being except for what happened at the cross. We cannot forgive without God's help, and without our understanding of what took place at the cross.

The choice is still ours. We don't have to forgive anybody; God is not going to force us to forgive. Even though He has commanded us to forgive, forgiveness is still our free choice.

1 John 1:9: *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* Many of us have a problem accepting God's forgiveness. We don't feel as if God can forgive us because we know we don't deserve to be forgiven.

When we understand what happened at the cross and we see by this scripture that God wants to forgive us, we begin to understand why God does forgive us. He is a loving God, but He is also a just God and, until the episode at the cross, He couldn't forgive us.

There had to be a sacrifice, and Jesus Christ was the provision God arranged. He became the sacrificial Lamb to redeem all mankind. Through that sacrifice came the forgiveness of sin. Our responsibility is to be willing to receive God's forgiveness.

If we don't accept God's forgiveness, we place ourselves on a higher plane than God. It is like saying, "No!" to God, "I will not accept your forgiveness!" It becomes obvious that we must lay our feelings aside and act on God's Word. That is the decision of our will that enables God to set us free.

There are two parts to forgiveness, the human part, and the Divine part; our part and God's part. We can't do God's part, and He will not do our part. The human part is the crisis of the will. "Am I willing? Do I will to forgive somebody?" That is our decision. If we do not "will" to forgive, forgiveness will never take place. But we must understand if we are unwilling to forgive, God will not do our part.

God's part is to change our feelings. We are responsible for submitting our will to God, regardless of how we feel. We are not to go by our feelings. God will change our feelings after we have made our decision to forgive. As we step out in obedience, God will change us. If we refuse to forgive, that means we are reserving the right to get even; therefore, we are cutting off God's forgiveness.

We should also understand that when we are unwilling to forgive, we are bound to the person we refuse to forgive. Forgiveness sets us free. If there is someone we are unwilling to forgive, our unforgiveness becomes a hook that binds us to that person. If we are willing to forgive, God will remove the hook. What God wants from us is a submissive will.

Our natural tendency is to use this process in our daily life:

1. We think.
2. We feel.
3. We act.

Our emotional feelings are seldom correct; nevertheless, we process everything through this method.

- First: Something negative or hurtful is brought to mind.
- Second: We react by feeling anger, hatred, or resentment.
- Third: We make a decision based upon our negative feelings. Many people get drunk simply because they are angry, they act based upon their feelings.

We don't have to follow this process. The crisis of the will is to make the proper decision, regardless of how we feel. There are some mornings, when the alarm goes off, that we feel like staying in bed. But we make the decision to get up. We ignore how we feel. After we get up and get going, our feelings change. To do this, we have had to make a decision to go against how we felt.

That is what we are facing where forgiveness is concerned. We have to short-circuit our emotions, and not be governed by them. We understand that the Word of God tells us we are to forgive. Even though we may be hurt or angry, nowhere in God's Word does it say, "Forgive, if you feel like forgiving."

When it comes to forgiveness, the Lord is not concerned about our emotions. He does not expect us to get our emotions lined up in order to forgive. He simply wants us to submit our will to His will, and to forgive, regardless of how we feel.

Our attitude should be, "Lord, I don't feel like forgiving, but I submit my will to Your Word. I am willing to forgive." That is the human part, that is the crisis of our will. When we take the attitude that we will no longer move on the basis of how we feel, that is our decision to obey God's Word.

Our emotions will then begin to harmonize with our decisions. God will take over and change our feelings. We don't have to labor to change our feelings. Our responsibility is to submit our will to the will of God. God will then change our feelings.

The Bible, although written long ago, was written for us today. It is always current. The Bible will relate to our lives if we apply it to our every day circumstances. If we need to forgive and we are willing to forgive, God has arranged for that forgiveness to take place.

If we are not willing to forgive, we have not entered into repentance. Forgiveness is an act of repentance. We have been walking away from God, harboring bitterness, envy, and malice in our heart. Repentance means to turn around, to turn away from our worldly ways and to turn back to God.

This is where we start. Repentance begins when we say, "Lord, I'm going to be obedient to what You tell me. I'm going to turn from my way, and follow Your way." We begin by agreeing with God. We make a 180-degree turn away from darkness toward God, with a willingness to walk in His light.

We understand the truth as God states it in His Word that we need to forgive. We make a decision based upon that truth, regardless of how we feel. This is the point at which we will begin to be set free.

Homework: Look back at a certain event in your life in which you need to forgive someone. Write the name of this person and the violation committed against you. Bring this to the next class, prepared to participate in a relational exercise of forgiveness.

Session Six . . . Forgiveness

Personal And Group Exercise (see page 111)

1. Why does God place such priority upon forgiveness?

2. Why is it so difficult to forgive someone who has hurt us?

3. Why is it important for us to face the pain, plus our reaction to it?

4. What part does the cross play in forgiveness?

5. Why is forgiveness not an emotional thing?

6. What part does repentance play in forgiveness?



Session Seven

The Condominium Concept

It is difficult for us to face the reality of how we feel about ourselves. It is therefore difficult for us to be honest with God about how we feel. God can handle the truth about us. Once we get a handle on how we really feel, we can approach Him with complete honesty. He already knows how we feel, so we drop our facades, and ask Him to help us get through our problem.

One way to approach God concerning specific incidents in our lives that had a negative effect upon our personalities is to visualize a high-rise condominium. The condominium should have one floor for every year of our age. Let's say, for example, we are 37 years old. That means we will have a 37-story condominium to visualize.

Now, let's say on the 32nd floor of our lives we invited the Lord Jesus Christ to come live in our condo with us. That is when we received the Lord. Prior to that time, there were 31 floors in which we lived according to our own lifestyle.

When Jesus came to live with us on the 32nd floor, there were some messes on that floor. There were some rooms, or areas of our lives, which were unclean. The first thing Jesus did was to help us clean up the 32nd floor. Jesus didn't want to live in that mess. In effect, He became our roommate, and He helped us clean up everything.

Since the time He came to live with us, together we have kept a pretty clean house. We have been able to keep floors 33 through 37 clean and livable. Not too many messes have been made.

Problems still exist from floors 31, on down. We realize there are some messes on the lower floors, but we don't necessarily want to go down and clean up any of them. Even though we can remember those messes and can still feel some of the hurts from them, we are now living on the 32nd floor and it is clean, so we don't want to go back down and experience those messes again.

The Lord isn't willing to leave those messes the way they are. The stench from the lower floors keeps getting stronger on the 37th floor. So the Lord finally gets through to us that we must get

on the elevator and go down to one of those floors. We get on the elevator on the 37th floor, a 37 year-old man, together with Jesus. We go down to the 10th floor, to an event that happened when we were 10 years old.

As a 37 year-old man, we recall an event that happened to a 10 year-old boy. But this time, the Lord is right alongside the 37 year-old man. We ask Him questions about that event. We may ask Him, "Why did this happen, Lord? What made this happen? This hurt very much."

Let's say our father had come home drunk and slapped us against a wall. The slap didn't hurt very much, but something else hurt inside. It was the rejection, the fear, and the unworthiness that came upon us.

We need to let the Lord show us that event from a different perspective. The 37 year old needs to be healed from the feelings of that 10 year-old boy. As we watch this event again in our minds, we usually begin to feel the pain of the 10 year-old boy.

We may ask the Lord, "Lord, where were you when this took place?" He will show us where He was. When we were thrown against the wall, the Lord was the one who picked us up. He was the one who got us through the situation. He was present all the time and He cared for us. He will let us see that it hurt Him as much as it hurt us.

This exercise is not some kind of hocus pocus mind game. This is the way we get in touch with significant events in our lives. This is the way the Holy Spirit heals us. As we look at that situation with the Lord at our side, we will probably begin to feel the hurt again. We may begin to weep. But the Lord will be there with us. He was there when we were 10 years old and He will be there when we are 37 years old.

When we ask Him why He allowed it to happen, why He allowed a 10 year old to be slapped by a drunk father, His reply will probably be that there are a lot of things which happen to us that grieve and hurt Him.

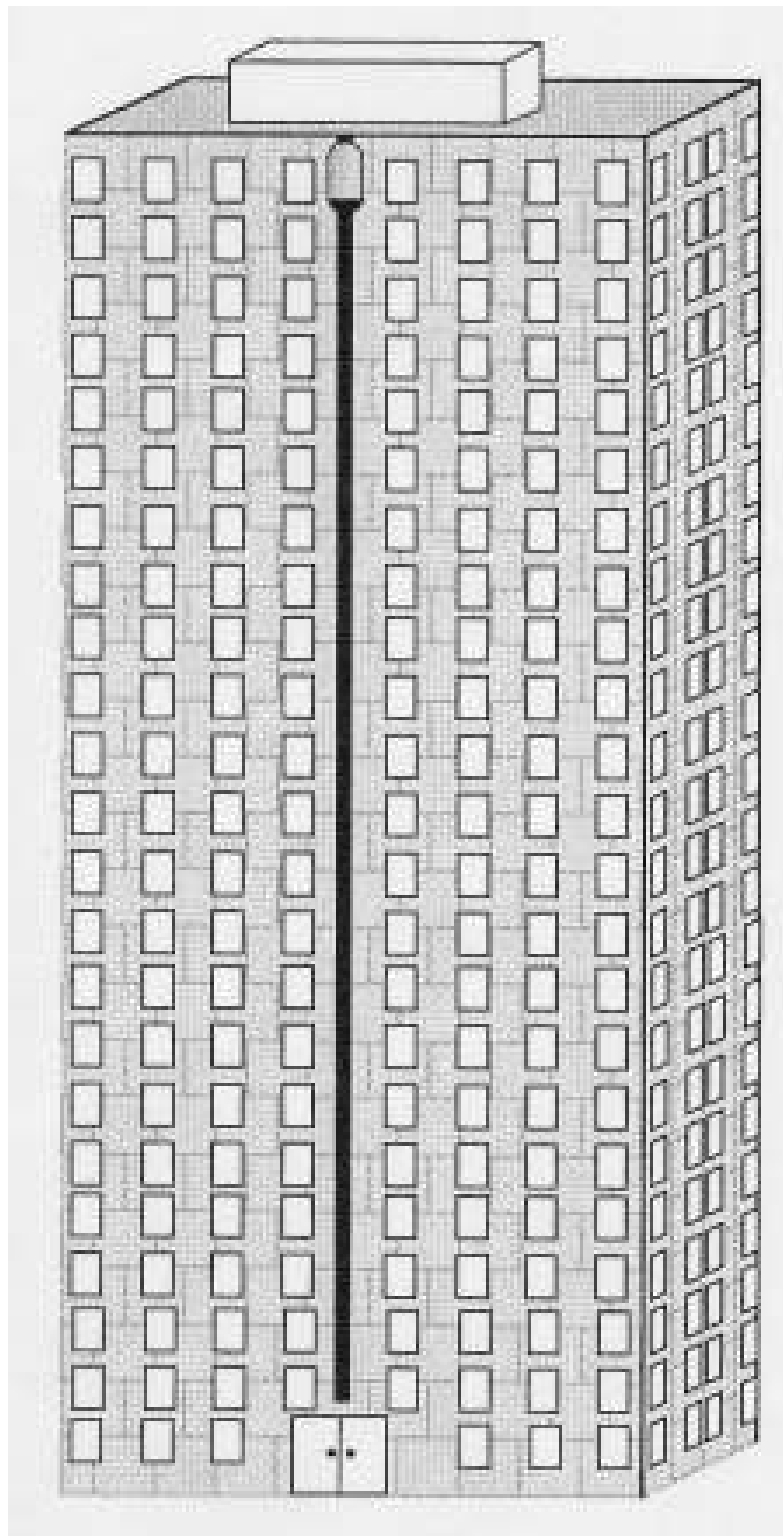
We will be able to visualize Jesus, and see that it really did hurt Jesus. We will see also that He experienced the same thing we experienced. He was despised, rejected, slapped and abused. And He will show us that the way to get rid of the hurt and the pain is to forgive the person who slapped us.

That is just one event down on the 10th floor. Recalling the first event will be the hardest. We will recall the event just as if it happened today, but there will be a major difference. This time the Lord will be with us. We don't go back through it to get revenge, but to be healed of the hurt. And the Lord will go with us. We will discover we can ask God questions and get answers, because He cares about us.

We don't like to look at our negative memories because there is always some pain involved. That 10 year old is still inside the 37 year old, and he is still hurting. Subconsciously, he is adversely affecting our lives.

Fortunately, the Lord can heal us while we are on that 10th floor. When we leave that floor, we may be able to feel sorry for our father. We won't hate him. We won't be angry with him anymore.

CONDOMINIUM



THIS IS YOUR PERSONAL CONDOMINIUM. EACH FLOOR REPRESENTS ONE YEAR OF YOUR LIFE. AS YOU VISIT EACH FLOOR, TAKE JESUS WITH YOU. ASK HIM TO REVEAL INCIDENTS HE WOULD LIKE TO HEAL. RELIVE EACH INCIDENT, THIS TIME AT YOUR PRESENT AGE AND WITH JESUS ALONGSIDE YOU, ASK HIM QUESTIONS, RECORD HIS ANSWERS, ALLOW HIM TO HEAL YOUR MEMORIES.

There may still be some pain remaining, but not nearly so much as when we were going down in the elevator.

After we clean up this mess and come back up to the 37th floor, we can rest awhile. Then we will be able to go down to other floors and clean up other messes. Other people may have caused some of those messes. But a lot of them are ours, especially those caused by our addictions.

When the Lord accompanies us to those areas, we can ask Him, "Lord, what do I do to clean up this mess? What should I do to make this right?"

This is when we find it is not a mind game. God will give us mental visions. He will take us back to certain events in our lives. One of the things that can help us in this Biblical imagery is to remember how Jesus was with little children. He always invited them to come to Him. He never turned them away. God can put that image in our minds. He can show our little 10 year old that Jesus was there at the time of our pain with His arms reaching out to us.

That can begin a healing process in us. Our 10 year old, at the moment of the incident, felt as if there was nobody in the world to turn to. Nobody he could love, or who loved him. That feeling has stayed with us for 27 years. It has put doubts in our minds that are still present 27 years later, because it has never been dealt with. But Jesus will bring the healing.

Vividly recalling our past can be very painful. But beyond the pain is the peace and serenity only the Holy Spirit can give. Jesus said in the Gospel of John that He would give us peace. Not the peace that the world would give to us, but His peace. That is what makes us whole and healthy.

It is not necessary for us to turn over rocks, looking for things to bring to the surface. God will bring up what He wants to deal with. God will put His finger on whatever He sees that needs healing at this time.

God puts His finger on one important issue at a time. He will not point out the 10th floor, the 12th floor and the 14th floor at one time. He will only point out the 10th floor, and say, "Let's go together and deal with that." After we have cleaned out that mess, there will be a period of rest. We will not have to go immediately to the 12th floor. God never puts more on us than we can handle.

We can't change the events of the past, but God can minister to the pain that grew out of those negative events. If we are willing to deal with our part of it, the anger, fear, hatred, and unforgiveness, God will see to it that healing takes place.

Once we start this process, our lives begin to make a positive change. There will probably be some messes on every floor of our lives. But now we have learned that every time we make a mess we can clean it up with Jesus.

We will no longer be inclined to close the door, leave the mess and never go back into that room again. When the Lord comes to live in us we clean up our messes as we go. We deal with the issues as they come up. We allow Him to lead us and we do what we have to do.

Let's take a moment to see how Jesus re-creates an event in order to accomplish an inner healing:

John 18:15-27: *“And Simon Peter was following Jesus, and so was another disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and entered with Jesus into the court of the high priest, but Peter was standing at the door outside. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the doorkeeper, and brought in Peter.*

The slave-girl therefore who kept the door said to Peter, 'You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?' He said, 'I am not.'

Now the slaves and the officers were standing there, having made a charcoal fire, for it was cold and they were warming themselves; and Peter also was with them, standing and warming himself.

The high priest therefore questioned Jesus about His disciples, and about His teaching. Jesus answered him, 'I have spoken openly to the world; I always taught in synagogues, and in the temple, where all the Jews come together; and I spoke nothing in secret.

Why do you question Me? Question those who have heard what I spoke to them; behold, these know what I said.'

And when He had said this, one of the officers standing by gave Jesus a blow, saying, 'Is that the way You answer the high priest?' Jesus answered him, 'If I have spoken wrongly, bear witness of the wrong; but if rightly, why do you strike Me?'

Annas therefore sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest. Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They said therefore to him, 'You are not also one of His disciples, are you?' He denied it and said, 'I am not.' One of the slaves of the high priest, being a relative of the one whose ear Peter cut off, said, 'Did I not see you in the garden with Him?' Peter therefore denied it again; and immediately a cock crowed.”

That was the story of the denial of Jesus by Peter. Now watch closely, as we see Jesus arrange events in a way to accomplish a healing in Peter.

John 21:3,4,9, 15-17: *“Simon Peter said to them, 'I am going fishing.' They said to him, 'We will also come with you.' They went out, and got into the boat; and that night they caught nothing. But when the day was now breaking, Jesus stood on the beach; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. And so when they got out upon the land, they saw a charcoal fire already laid, and fish placed on it, and bread.*

So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?' He said to Him, 'Yes, Lord; You know that I love You,' He said to him, 'Tend My lambs.'

He said to him again a second time, 'Simon, son of John, do you love Me?' He said to Him, 'Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.' He said to him, 'Shepherd My sheep.'

He said to him a third time, 'Simon, son of John, do you love Me?' Peter was grieved because He said to him a third time, 'Do you love Me?' And he said to Him, 'Lord You know all things; You know that I love You.' Jesus said to him, 'Tend My sheep.' "

Jesus arranged the same circumstances to heal Peter. He restructured the same type conditions:

1. It was early in the morning.
2. There was a charcoal fire.
3. Jesus required a threefold confession to repair the breach caused by the threefold denial.

Peter had returned to his old trade of fishing because of his shame and guilt and his feeling of unworthiness. We have a tendency to react in a similar way when we experience damaged relationships.

Jesus told Peter to tend His lambs, to shepherd His sheep, and to tend His sheep. That is restoration; that is healing. Peter's relationship with Jesus was restored.

When we observe that Jesus recreated the event in order to heal Peter, we see the value of returning to the event so Jesus can accomplish our healing. It is very important that we allow the Lord to take us back to the painful events.

Sometimes when someone has hurt us, we need to ask Jesus, "Do you love me?" Other times we have to ask, "Lord, do you forgive me?" At other times we will feel compelled to say, "Lord, I love you!"

Some of us walk around with constant pain. God wants to heal our pain. The only way for us to be healed of our past hurts is to let the Lord do this for us. No medicine can accomplish this type of healing. He will gladly do it.

The memory of that incident will stay with us the rest of our lives, but we will no longer feel the pain. We will not be angry, or fearful, nor will we feel rejected. That wound will have been healed.

Because we have been healed in certain areas of our lives, we will be able to reach out and minister to other people who have personal hurts in those same areas.

HOMEWORK: Pray and ask God to reveal past hurts and pains which He wants to heal. Write each of them on a piece of paper and prepare yourself to take them to the Lord.

Session Seven . . . The Condominium Concept

Personal And Group Exercise (see page 112)

1. Why is it important for us to know how we really feel about ourselves?

2. Why is it important for us to have one floor in our condominium for every year of our lives?

3. Why should we not be reluctant to vividly recall past painful experiences?

4. Why is it important for us to handle only one important issue at a time?

5. What is the similarity to the way Jesus handled Peter's healing and the way He handles our healing?

6. Why is it important for us to allow Jesus to select which areas of our lives He wants to heal and the order in which He wants to heal them?

Session Eight

Judgments And Soul Ties

Judgments:

"Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord has commanded you, that your days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with you in the land which the Lord your God gives you."
(Deuteronomy 5:16)

"Do not judge lest you be judged. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you." **(Matthew 7: 1,2)**

It is a principle of God that for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. As we study the two scriptures quoted above, we may receive some insight as to why we are experiencing problems in our lives. If we have been the victim of child abuse, for example, it is a natural response for us to feel bitter about it. What is actually occurring, however, is that our hatred and resentment toward the one who abused us may be activating a negative influence in our lives. We are judging, we are not honoring, and we are reaping the negative harvest.

It usually comes as a great surprise to many men when they discover they are just like their fathers. It is most common for an alcoholic to have an alcoholic father. Likewise, child abusers have often been abused as children.

When we can see that, a healing can take place because we can realize what our father had experienced. When we can begin to see what happened to us emotionally during our lifetime, we can understand what happened emotionally to our father during his lifetime.

If God tells us we are just like our Daddy, only worse, we can say, "Well, now I understand why my Daddy did some of the things he did. He did them because he couldn't help it. He was an alcoholic, a sick man, just the same as I am." Many nights we went to bed wishing we weren't an alcoholic and wishing we hadn't done some of the things we did. Daddy must have done the same thing.

But perhaps Daddy didn't have the opportunity to enter an alcohol and drug rehab program. Perhaps he died in his addiction, because he had no way out. This should enable us to see that God has been gracious enough to us to give us a way out. He has introduced us to this program. When we realize that, we should have no problem whatsoever forgiving Daddy. God is giving us an understanding of ourselves, and an understanding of our Daddy.

"Therefore, you are without excuse, every man of you who passes judgment, for in that you judge another, you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things." (Rom 2:1)

In His principle concerning judgment, God declares that when we live in an ongoing judgmental attitude, we are captured by that attitude and we become what we are judging. What has happened is that we have become focused upon a sin issue rather than upon our Lord Jesus Christ, and whatever we focus upon becomes the driving dynamic force in our lives. That is why we often find that what we hate in our parents becomes evident in our lives, also.

"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap." (Galatians 6:7)

Whatever judgments we sow against another, we will receive from others. Knowing this, we should desire to sow love and mercy wherever we go, knowing we will receive love and mercy in return.

In the matter of healing hidden root judgments, we should look at healing the root causes of the problems in our inner man. If we have a bitter root expectation that we will fail, we will find ourselves constantly failing. If we have a bitter root expectation of being rejected, we will bring rejection upon ourselves.

Whatever is incubated within our souls is created in our circumstances. Whatever we project out through our souls to others is received by their souls and sent back to us. For this reason, we should keep our souls soaked in Divine love.

"And the axe is already laid at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." (Matthew 3: 10)

In dealing with the heart, we must allow God to go deep into the roots of our heart's attitudes, motivations and character traits. He will do this as we commune with Him during our quiet time. He will reveal our motives by asking us why we want to do a certain thing. He will expose poor attitudes, and challenge us to allow Him to heal them with His love.

We need to allow God to show us where we have been judgmental so we can ask His forgiveness and receive His healing.

Soul Ties:

Soul ties are formed when two or more persons become bonded together. Soul ties can be good or evil, either holy or profane. God has sanctioned soul ties through the bonding of children with parents, husbands with wives, friends with friends, and Christians with Christians. Soul ties approved by God represent the bonding of persons together with bonds of agape love.

MARRIAGE SOUL TIES.

"For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh." (Ephesians 5:31) A husband and wife are bonded together by love.

"Consequently they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate" (Matthew 19:6)

The Bible states that God joins a husband and wife together in marriage, and that divorce separates what God has joined together. This means divorce separates the soul tie which God created. That is one reason there is so much pain, sorrow and trauma in divorce.

FRIENDSHIP SOUL TIES.

"Now it came about when he had finished speaking to Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as himself." (1 Samuel 18:1) This is another type of soul tie which is pure and is based upon love. *"A man of many friends comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother." (Proverbs 18:24)* This is a special kind of loyalty that exists between devoted friends.

PARENT/CHILD SOUL TIES.

"Now, therefore, when I come to your servant my father, and the lad is not with us, since his life is bound up in the lad's life (his soul knit with the lad's soul), it will come about when he sees that the lad is not with us, that he will die..." (Genesis 44:30,31)

When a child is born, the infant should be bonded to its parents. A healthy soul tie should be formed which ministers love and security to that child throughout life. This soul tie serves to stabilize the child's personality.

CHRISTIAN SOUL TIES.

"...from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love." (Ephesians 4: 16)

The relationship between Christians is compared to the relationship between the various parts of the human body. These soul ties enable the body of Christ to mature and fulfill its calling.

DEMONIC SOUL TIES.

"Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a harlot is one body with her? For He says, the two will become one flesh." (1 Corinthians 6:16)

Demonic soul ties form out of perversions of the good and holy founded upon love. Good soul ties are founded upon love. Demonic soul ties are founded upon lust.

For example, sexual relationships outside of marriage forge demonic soul ties. Through adultery, an evil soul tie is created in lust. This demonic soul tie destroys the holy union that was based upon mutual love and trust.

“For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged their natural function for that which is unnatural, and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire for one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.” (Romans 1:26,27)

Perverse soul ties are also formed between persons of the same sex. Homosexuals and lesbians are motivated by lust, though they may call themselves lovers.

Also, perverse soul ties extend themselves to those formed between human beings and animals. The ultimate expression of perversion is bestiality, lying carnally with animals. Some soul ties with animals all short of bestiality. They are characterized by an inordinate affection for animals.

EVIL COMPANION SOUL TIES.

“Do not be deceived; bad company corrupts good morals.” (1 Corinthians 15:33) “Do not associate with a man given to anger; or go with a hot-tempered man, lest you learn his ways, and find a snare for yourself (for your soul).” (Proverbs 22:24,25)

Soul ties with evil companions will so ensnare a person that he will become entangled in the grasp of wickedness. Our friends influence us, so it is important to choose the right ones.

PERVERTED FAMILY SOUL TIES.

The soul tie between a parent and a child is healthy and beneficial, except when it continues into the adult life of the child. When a son or daughter is ready for marriage, the soul tie with the parents must be terminated in order for a soul tie of marriage to be formed.

When the father gives his daughter in marriage, he severs the soul tie with her in preference to her husband. When the soul tie is not severed between the parent and the child at the proper time, that which was good and beneficial becomes evil through control and possessiveness.

Sexual perverseness within family relations occurs when there is incest between father/daughter, mother/son, brother/sister, father-in-law/daughter-in-law, mother-in-law/son-in-law, or other close family ties.

When the essential bonding between parents and child is missed at birth, the child is left with a sense of incompleteness. This can leave him restless and searching throughout his life. Satan can easily draw such a person into false and perverse soul ties with others.

"When they came to the threshing floor of Arad, which is beyond the Jordan, they lamented there with a very great and sorrowful lamentation; and he observed seven days mourning for his father." (Genesis 50:10) "So the sons of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days; then the days of weeping and mourning for Moses came to an end." (Deuteronomy 34:8)

When a family member or close friend dies, the soul tie formed with that person must be dissolved. The period of sorrow following the death of a loved one is primarily due to the adjustment time during which the soul tie is ended. Prolonged mourning indicates the continuation of the soul tie. This invites spirits of sorrow, grief, loneliness and others to enter.

BREAKING DEMONIC SOUL TIES.

As evil soul ties are identified, their power should be reversed.

First: Repentance for the sin against God is necessary. God's ordinances have been violated. Lust has taken us beyond the boundaries of purity that the Lord set for us.

Even if the sin was committed in ignorance, it still requires forgiveness. Ask God to forgive you for each perverse soul tie that you have created.

Second: Spoil the devil's house by taking back all that he has gained against you. Confess before God that Satan has no further legal right to you. Declare each demonic soul tie that you have identified to be broken in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Third: Command the evil spirits associated with the soul ties to leave you in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Note. Be as specific as possible when breaking soul ties. Soul ties are formed with each person with whom you have had sexual relationship outside of marriage. Name each person and break the soul tie. Are there any soul ties with animals? Are there any unnatural soul ties with family members? Have spiritually perverse soul ties been created through homosexuality or through occult (idolatrous) involvements, such as fortune telling, hypnotism, ESP, blood covenants, unholy vows, horoscopes, etc?

Session Eight . . . Judgments and Soul Ties

Personal And Group Exercise (see page 113)

1. In what ways are good soul ties established?

2. In what ways are evil soul ties established?

3. When the proper parent/child soul tie isn't established, what happens?

4. How can family soul ties become perverted?

5. In what way do judging and sowing and reaping bring similar results?

6. Why is it important to be specific when breaking soul ties, or when asking God's forgiveness for being judgmental?

Session Nine

Identifying With Jesus

Psalm 51:5,6: *“Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.”* We were born in sin. That does not mean we were born out of wedlock, it means we inherited at birth the Adamic nature to sin.

Romans 5:12: *“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned...”* We are born in flesh that desires to do evil. That sinful nature has been passed down from Adam to the present generation.

We may feel that is highly unfair. How can God reckon Himself to be fair and just when He allowed us to be born into this condition through no choice of our own?

Job 9:32,33: *“For He (God) is not a man as I am that I may answer Him, that we may go to court together. There is no umpire between us, who may lay his hand upon both of us.”* Job requested a face-to-face encounter with God, so God could explain what happened to him. In Chapter 38, God finally responds to Job's plea, and confronts Job with many difficult questions, such as, "Where were you when I created the world?"

When confronted directly by God, Job eventually fell on his face, crying, *“I heard about You before, but now I have seen you face to face, and I repent!”* Job had become self-righteous, like many of us who get a small taste of God. We soar into the realms of self-righteousness, demanding things of God, instead of asking.

To paraphrase **verse 33**, Job was saying to God, "God, it would be different if you were a man like me, then you would understand. Our problem is that there is no go-between who can lay his hand on each of us." That was actually the truth in Job's day, but the situation has since changed.

According to the scriptures, we were born sinners. Because of that, we were also born, in many respects, with the potential to be losers. That is the raw reality. If we were born with that kind of nature and that kind of propensity, it seems that we have been set up to fail, doesn't it?

At first, this appears to put God on the spot. But if we listen carefully to the scriptures, we are going to have to let God off the hook and put ourselves on the spot, instead.

Isaiah 7:14: *“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.”* Until this prophecy was fulfilled, man and the devil could shout all kinds of accusations toward God. "God, you're unfair," "God, you don't understand," "God, you're not a man."

About 800 years before Jesus was born, God revealed His forthcoming birth through prophecy. Neither man nor the devil bothers God. Until this event, man and the devil felt they had a legitimate argument with God, but when this prophecy became a reality it changed the relationship between God and man.

Matthew, Chapter 1, tells about the change in the way in which God began to relate with man. At this point, God united Himself with us. He became flesh; He took on our humanity, and identified Himself with us. Now, He wants us to learn to identify ourselves with Him. If we can grasp that, we have accepted a mighty revelation.

God came down to this earth and began to experience life from our perspective. The God of the universe, in the Person of His Son, came through the vessel of the virgin Mary. He entered our world, experienced our temptations and our woundedness. He opened Himself to attack by the same sinfulness that attacks us. That is what God did through Jesus.

Because of that, we now have a mediator, an umpire. We can no longer use the excuse that God doesn't understand. We can't get away with that. God did this to bring healing, deliverance, and salvation to His people. He brought to us the fullness of who He really is. As a result, we can now enter into the fullness of God.

But it is hard for us to let any part of God come into us when we are so full of ourselves. We are filled with what has transpired throughout our lives since we took our first breath. Our lives have been stuffed with sinfulness and woundedness and junk. It becomes obvious that when we ask Jesus to come into our lives, there isn't much room left for Him.

But Jesus takes whatever we offer Him. He takes the smallest part we give Him, and begins the process of identifying His presence within us. We need to allow that. It is not enough for us to understand that we have been rejected during our lives. It is not enough for us to understand we have an incredible root of fear. It not enough to simply understand that we are wounded people.

Understanding our problem is only the start. Unfortunately, many people go off on a tangent of being wounded and sick, because they now have an understanding of why they are the way they are. That gives them a reason to continue being that way.

Emotional sickness is in right now in America. It is in to have something emotionally wrong with us. People spend millions going to psychiatrists and doctors and health clinics, so someone can tell them there is something wrong with them. People say, "I'm an ACOA (Adult Child Of Alcoholics), I now understand why I behave the way I do." "I'm a serious co-dependent."

But as we allow Jesus Christ to identify with us as Savior and Lord, health and wholeness begin to enter our lives. The Apostle Paul actually came to a level of maturity where he could rejoice in his infirmities, because God could manifest His strength in Paul's weaknesses.

We need to see the depth of what God actually accomplished. He not only identified Himself with our flesh, He also identified with our human life situations. He even aligned Himself with a dysfunctional genealogical background.

Matthew, Chapter 1, contains the genealogy of Jesus. Perhaps there are some strange people in our family trees. Sometimes, we use that for an excuse. "Well, I'm an alcoholic because there are four generations of alcoholics in my family."

Let's take a look at the family tree of Jesus. First of all, Jesus was called the son of David. David was the greatest king Israel ever had, in the flesh. But as David got comfortable and relaxed in his laurels, he also got lax in his walk with God. He committed adultery and murder, yet he is in the genealogy of Jesus.

Also, there was Abraham. Abraham had a terrible problem with fear and with lying. God told him to go in a certain direction, but because there was a famine in the land he went to Egypt, instead.

He feared the king, because Abraham had a beautiful wife and he thought the king might kill him and take her for himself. So he told Sarah to tell the king she was Abraham's sister, which she did. When the king took her in, God caused havoc in his house, and the king confronted Abraham for lying. Later, Abraham did the very same thing. He relapsed.

God had promised him a son, and he wanted to see the promises of God fulfilled. He also had a problem with impatience. He wasn't willing to wait on God because God was moving too slowly.

Sarah came up with a plan. She suggested that Abraham should go into her handmaiden Hagar and let Hagar conceive. Abraham gladly complied, but God would not accept that son as the promise of the covenant. Abraham was a man just like we are, in that he had problems, yet he is in the genealogy of Jesus.

Abraham's grandson, Jacob, was also less than perfect. He was a deceiver, a supplanter. He stole the birthright from his older brother, and deceived his father by putting hairy skins on his arms. Even though God had promised to bless him, he still connived and deceived.

However, his life drastically changed one night after he wrestled with an angel of the Lord. God changed his name to Israel, which means overcomer, prince of God. He is also in the genealogy of Jesus. Can we appreciate the scope of this? God is not interested in our background.

There was also a woman named Ruth. She wasn't even a Jew, she was a Moabite. She was a Gentile, yet she was in the genealogy of Jesus. There are some adulterous women in His genealogy, such as Tamar, and Rahab, the harlot, and others.

It is important for us to see how He identified with us. His family tree by human standards was just like ours. It was full of sinful human beings. But Jesus did not use that as an excuse. He did not let it affect Him. A lot of us have been sloughing off all our lives because our fathers were not what they should have been.

It's time we let our fathers off the hook. They were the product of the generation before them. Dysfunction gets passed down through generations. That may be the reason we are the way we are, but it is not a legitimate excuse to stay the way we are.

Jesus took on a genealogy like ours so He could identify with us and we could identify with Him. He humbled Himself to that depth. What does that say about our God?

He also had an opportunity to experience the same kind of wounds we experience. **Matt 1**, reveals something about that. We should admire the parents of Jesus the more we study them. Joseph was a good man, but inadvertently he did something a lot of fathers have done, especially in our generation. During the betrothal period, Joseph and Mary were not allowed to see each other, so they obviously had no physical contact.

When Joseph discovered Mary was pregnant, he decided to divorce her quietly. Now, how did that affect the child in the womb? Psychologists have determined that a child can be affected while in its mother's womb. So we see that Jesus was rejected in the womb by his earthly father. That rejection didn't last long, because an angel visited Joseph and explained that Mary was telling the truth.

There are many cases of children suffering rejection while still in the womb. It is not uncommon to have a husband walk out on his wife during her pregnancy. It is not inconceivable to expect the mother to lay awake nights, thinking it would be a whole lot easier if she weren't pregnant. That could generate a lot of rejection. A child may be born not knowing its father, never hearing its father's voice. It is important to young children, for dad to be there.

That is the sort of thing we must let Jesus identify with. When Jesus is allowed to enter that type situation, He will take the hurt away. We identify with Jesus, and we allow Him to identify with us. Many of us need to let Jesus identify with us at the point of rejection in our lives.

Luke 2:7: *“And she gave birth to her first-born son; and she wrapped him in cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them at the inn.”* Joseph and Mary were both of the lineage of David. That meant their parents were also of the lineage of David. It is possible that at least one set of parents had a home in Bethlehem, since it was the city of David. Also, being the age they were, it is highly unlikely that both sets of parents were dead.

That raises a question. Why would Joseph and Mary go to an inn, when they probably had at least one set of grandparents living in town? The answer is that their parents rejected them because of the pregnancy issue. So, we see that Jesus was turned away by other parts of His family.

In addition, He was turned away from the inn. There was much rejection in the early experiences of Jesus. Again, we can see that He entered into and identified with a form of our woundedness.

Deuteronomy 23:2: *“No one of illegitimate birth shall enter the assembly of the Lord, none of his descendants, even to the tenth generation, shall enter the assembly of the Lord.”* Jesus also experienced generational curses. The strongest curse in the Old Testament is found in this verse.

The illegitimate person was excommunicated from the congregation, and so were his descendants to the 10th generation. This is any child who was born without a father. That gives us an indication of how important fathers are in God's eyes. Jesus was called illegitimate all His life.

John 8:19: *“And so they were saying to Him, ‘Where is Your Father?’ Jesus answered, ‘You know neither Me, nor My Father; if you knew Me, you would know My Father also.’ “ The Pharisees are saying, "You, who have no father, who are you to tell us about our father? Our father was Abraham." But Jesus responded by telling them their father was the "father of lies" the devil.*

Galatians 3:13: *“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us-- for it is written, ‘CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE...’ ” It was no accident that Christ identified Himself with being illegitimate, of being subject to the strongest curse in the Old Testament. By going to the bottom, that meant He covered all of the curses.*

Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us. *“That the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit, through faith.”*

We may have generational curses in our families, but that means nothing to Jesus because He has identified with all curses. For the born-again believer, He has broken all curses, which may have been passed down through the family. Even if alcoholism has wrecked our families for three generations, it will not wreck the fourth generation. That won't happen, if we let Jesus identify Himself with the curse in us. He will take it upon Himself and remove it from us. He wants to do that with each of us.

Hebrews 2: 14-18: *“Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.*

For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendants of Abraham. Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

For since He Himself was tempted in that which He suffered, He is able to come to the aid of *those who are tempted.*” These verses show us Jesus also identified with our temptations. The Bible says He was tempted in all points. We have no legitimate reason to remain sick or wounded any longer.

Jesus is able to help us because of what He accomplished. **1 Corinthians 10:13** tells us there is no temptation which is not common to man. When that temptation comes, God will provide a way of escape. James said, *“Blessed is the man who endures temptation, for after he has been tested, he will receive the crown of life.”* If He says we can endure it, we can endure it, because the power of Jesus Christ comes into us to identify with us.

Hebrews 4:14-16: *“Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.”*

Our High Priest can sympathize with our weakness. He was tempted in all points, yet He was without sin. Jesus walked the earth for 33 years and He never gave in to sin. That tells us about

the magnitude of His temptation. Once we give in, it is not difficult for Satan to get us to sin again. On the other hand, if someone has never submitted to sin he can expect to receive a double dose from the devil, who is intent upon making him fall

Verse 16 says we are to come boldly before the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in the time of need. We usually get that backwards. We run to God for help when we're already in the time of need. But he is telling us to come beforehand so we'll be ready in our time of need.

So we can see, Jesus entered the world through a dysfunctional family tree. He identified with us in that respect. He also identified with our woundedness. He took on and walked through our temptations and weaknesses, and He is now our merciful and faithful High Priest.

When we pray to God about our struggles, He is there to identify with us, to give us grace and mercy and help. He is waiting for us to tell Him, "Jesus, take this, identify with me and help me."

Isaiah 53 tells us Jesus was despised and rejected; He was a man of sorrows (pains); He was acquainted with grief (sicknesses); He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes (lashes), we are (have been) healed.

The Bible says that Jesus is the last Adam. He came to restore and to recover what the first Adam lost. The first thing He encountered as He started His ministry was the wilderness experience with the devil. He faced three temptations in the wilderness. It is interesting that we can find three similar temptations in the Garden of Eden.

The first temptation involved food. For Adam, it was the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil. For Jesus, it was turning stones into bread. But Jesus said, "*Man shall not live by bread alone.*"

The second temptation involved the deception of magic. Satan appeared as magical creature who had great wisdom. Satan also tried to tempt Jesus to do something God had not told Him to do, with the promise that if He did, everyone would follow Him.

The third temptation implied that God had lied to Adam and Eve, and if they would eat of the fruit they would be as God. Likewise, the devil promised Jesus the kingdoms if He would simply bow down before him.

We can see that Jesus identified with Adam by experiencing the same type of temptations. But He refused to be deceived by the devil. Jesus lived 33 years of perfection, meeting every temptation and deception through His faith in the Father. He then walked to Calvary and exchanged His life for the life of Adam and all his descendants.

It is good for us to understand that we have experienced rejection. Now it is time to allow Jesus to identify with our rejection, and heal the wounds caused by it. Also, it is all right to understand that we have an inner problem, such as a root of fear. But we are not to just sit around, bemoaning the fact that we have fear. We are to let Jesus identify with our fear and take it from us.

God may show us that we have had all manner of abuse in our lives, but Jesus can handle it all. Let Him identify with each one. Remember those Roman guards put their fists in His face. They spit in His face, and they called Him everything under the sun. He can understand abuse.

The key to inner healing is to accept the good news of the Gospel: that Jesus Christ came to earth, entered our level, no matter how low, and gave Himself for us freely. He willingly poured out His blood for our redemption. Our healing is involved in taking that truth and applying it to our inner man. The key is in the application of the good news to our inner man

When we give things to Jesus, it is really an unfair exchange, because we get all the benefit. Jesus tells us, "I know you have been rejected, so I want to take your rejection from you and give you My acceptance. I want to take your sense of unworthiness from you and give you of My worth."

That is the application of the Gospel at a level where inner healing will really take place. We are not to get caught up in identifying with being rejected, neglected, or terrorized. Those can become excuses for failure. We must begin to allow Jesus to identify Himself with us. We have to let Him give us His identity.

Galatians 2:20: "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me."

That needs to be our daily experience. Whatever our problems happen to be, in our quiet time we need to tell Jesus, "Jesus, I come to you and I identify this part of me, this weakness, this woundedness, this sinfulness. I really need to identify this with you, and I ask you, in place of that, identify with me your health and strength and the godliness that is You. I want to relate to You from the perspective of who I am in Christ, not who I am in the flesh."

In exchange, as we willingly give Him those things, He gives us His righteousness, His health, His wholeness and His right standing with God.

Colossians 2:13, 14: "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, having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us and which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross."

When we know in our heart we have received Jesus Christ as our Savior, this scripture becomes ours. It is as if we have a bank account with God. He has a book of remembrance for those who refuse to accept what God has done. It contains a record of all we have ever been or done before we began our walk with Christ. That is all we have to offer God on the day of judgment.

But when we received Jesus as Lord and Savior, God wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was charged against us. We had an incredible debt we could never pay, but when we took Jesus into our heart, God canceled our debt. He marked it "paid in full."

Ephesians 1:13, 14: *"In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation--having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory."* By this we can see that He didn't leave the account empty. What He has started in us, He will complete.

If we ever decide to go in the other direction, we will never enjoy things of the world the way we once did. We will not enjoy sin any more. We will not enjoy getting high or getting drunk, or having sex outside of God. We will give up those things.

The Holy Spirit came to live in our hearts when we received Jesus Christ as our Savior. He is the guarantee that we will receive the inheritance of God. He is like a down payment on what is to come. God filled our account with the down payment that guarantees we will receive His inheritance.

Some of us still have a hard time believing that. We have become so accustomed to believing lies all our lives that the lies seem like the truth in our minds. Now, when the truth comes, the lies in our minds say, "No, that isn't the truth." So, we have to go to war against the lies, and we do it with the truth of the Gospel.

The scripture says we are sealed. Back in the old days, the kings wore signet rings, which carried a copy of their own face. After they had written a mandate, they would impress their signet ring on the wax seal. The seal conveyed the message that it was the mandate of the king.

God has taken His own impression, His own signet and He has placed His mark upon us. It is His statement to the world that we are His possession. That is why the devil hates us so much. We belong to God, and we carry His mark.

HOMEWORK: Write down the areas of your life in which you need to let Jesus identify.

Session Nine . . . Identifying With Jesus

Personal And Group Exercise (see page 114)

1. In what way did God provide us with a Mediator, or an Umpire who can understand our human feelings?

2. Why is it important for us to be aware of the genealogy of Jesus?

3. If we have inherited certain dysfunctional characteristics, which have been passed down to us through previous generations, what should we do?

4. How do we let Jesus identify with our dysfunction?

5. Why is it important for us to come to Jesus before our time of need rather than wait until our: time of need, then come to Him?

6. What is the real key to inner healing?

Session Ten

Scabs, Scars, Success

Romans 12:2: *"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."*

In regard to renewing the mind, we have had many opportunities during this study to forgive everyone who has caused us harm during our lifetime. This is a giant step in the process of renewal. Now it is time to see how well we have done in the area of forgiveness.

Perhaps we have been told that unless we are able to forget, we really haven't forgiven, but that is simply untrue.

For example, everyone probably has scars that have healed. We all have scars we can point to. We experienced some sort of physical mishap, which caused an abrasion in our skin. It probably bled for a while, and then it scabbed over. Finally, it healed.

After it healed, it became a scar. Now, as we relive that experience, we can still remember it well, but we do not feel any of the hurt. We can remember it and point to it, but we no longer feel the pain.

Is such a thing possible emotionally as well as physically? Is it possible that we might be able to remember a past hurt, yet not feel the hurt in the present? It is time for us to understand that although we have been hurt inside, and we have suffered because of the emotional things that have happened to us, it isn't necessary for us to forget those things. Forgetting is not necessarily a part of the healing process.

As a matter of fact, Jesus Christ would have us not forget those things. He wants to heal our hurts and let them become scars, which we can point to for His glory. There is nothing wrong in having a scar. As a matter of fact, a scar can be a plus. We need to get beyond the scars and begin thinking about how Jesus is going to lead us from this point onward. We can look at the incidents in our lives that hurt us, allow Jesus to heal the hurts, then use those incidents to His glory.

It is important for us to discover our purpose in life. It may never have occurred to us that one of the purposes in our lives is to utilize the scars in our lives to His glory. Imagine what it would be like to be able to point to an emotional scar and tell a hurting person, "I know what you are going through, because I have experienced that hurt. That happened to me also.

"But look here, it has healed. I can tell you the details, I can tell you everything that happened, I can remember word for word what happened. But you see, I don't feel the pain any more, because it is healed. God healed it in me; therefore, He can heal it in you."

Every one of us has at least one incident, and some of us have many incidents in our lives, which have been traumatic to us. We now have a choice while we are in this program. Our choice is, if our hurt has not been healed yet, what are we going to do about it?

There is one sure way in which we can tell whether or not we have forgiven someone: When we talk about it, when we share it, are we picking at a scab, or are we pointing at a scar? We can pick at the scab, and it will never heal. We can continue to pick at the scab, and continue, and continue, and it will continue to bleed, and continue to hurt, and continue to fester, and continue to poison us.

We may even deliberately pick at it to make it bleed some more. We may even want to feel the pain again. It may have become a way for us to manipulate others, or to receive sympathy from someone.

The alternative is to give the hurt to God and allow Him to heal it. We can let it become a scar, so we will be able to point to it, and say, "God healed this. I know what you're going through, I went through the same thing. But God healed it. Let me tell you about it, because He can heal you, too."

It becomes obvious that we have to begin to think beyond where we are this moment. We have to think beyond the suffering we may be feeling right now. We can get ourselves beyond that, because God has another purpose for us.

Do we realize how unique we are? We may not feel very unique, but stop to think a moment. How many people are embroiled in drugs and alcohol in the world? Certainly, millions of people are victims of addiction. And how many people have been exposed to secular programs where they have been taught why they became addicts? Probably hundreds of thousands. They came away from those programs able to say, "O.K., now I know why I drink," but they continued to drink and drug.

That is not the case with us. We are in an entirely different type of program. Those millions of addicts are not exposed to this program, but we are. That makes us unique. In this program, we discover there is a Divine purpose for us being where we are.

When God breathed life into us, He didn't do it because He thought it would be nice and cute for us to be born. He has a Divine purpose for our lives. But we will not realize what it is, we will not realize that successful walk with God, until we get beyond our scabs.

We have to move into a scar status in order to reach the fulfillment of God's plan, because the scabs will stand in our way to God's purpose. The reason is that the scabs will always influence

our responses and our reactions to everything that occurs in our lives. So long as our wounds are still bleeding, so long as we are still picking at them, subconsciously they have an effect upon our response to everything that is said to us. Every situation that occurs in our lives will be filtered through our emotional scabs, until those scabs have been healed.

Let's think for a moment. What would we look like if we had only scabs and no scars? And suppose every day we would keep knocking or picking those scabs loose, and we would be bleeding all over everything? Wouldn't that be a mess?

Now, let's look at it through the eyes of God. Imagine how we look in God's eyes when we refuse to receive His healing power for our emotional hurts. All that internal bleeding, an absolute mess inside, because we insist upon picking at the emotional scabs!

How does God feel about that type of rebellion against His love? There He stands, with outstretched arms, ready to heal us, but we turn our backs on Him. Instead, we go into a corner and pick at our emotional scabs and cry ourselves to sleep. Is that how we want to spend the rest of our lives, as scab pickers, instead of being able to point at scars? The reality is that those of us who refuse to forgive, are scab pickers.

So we are faced with a decision. Jesus Christ always works on the basis of our will, not our emotions. He always brings us to a point of choice. Now he has led us to the point of having to make a decision concerning what we are going to do about certain situations in our lives. That decision cannot be based upon our emotions.

He has brought us to that point, right now, concerning the things we have been picking at and allowing to bleed. He is saying to us, "I am ready to make scars out of those wounds, how about you? Are you willing to receive My healing, or would you rather continue to walk around and pick at the scabs?"

If we decide to continue to pick at the scabs, what we are actually saying is, "I'm going to continue on the program I have always been on, centering on my own navel. I'm going to concentrate upon myself and all the things that have happened to me. I'm going to focus upon that, and have my own pity party. I refuse to allow You to heal me, Jesus." That is a form of rebellion in God's eyes, but He gives us the free choice.

He will always give us the choice. What we need to see clearly is that our decision cannot be based upon our emotions. It is solely our decision to say, "Jesus, I know You can heal; therefore, I'm going to allow You to heal me." We lay the wounds at His feet, and we give Him an opportunity to heal them. After that, we can start thinking in terms of our successful walk with Him.

Most of us who enter a rehabilitation program are centered upon ourselves. Our idea of success is to become drug free. Our thought is, "If I can attain being clean and sober in this program and if I can hang onto that, I'll be successful."

That is all right in the beginning, but we really need to begin thinking in the next dimension. There is no sense in attempting to stay drug free, until we get rid of our scabs. We will never attain true success so long as we are still bleeding.

We must understand that we are in charge of what we do with our lives. We can release control of our lives to somebody else, but we can't release responsibility for our lives to anybody. Many of us have released control of our lives to other people and to circumstances in which we have found ourselves. But we haven't been able to release responsibility, because that is impossible. Our responsibility for our lives still rests with us.

Eleanor Roosevelt said, "You are no one's victim without your permission." That wasn't true when we were children, but it is true now. We no longer have to be the victims we were as children, unless we give those wounds permission, unless we insist upon picking at the scabs.

One thing for certain, we are never going to have public success until we have private success. We must have success within our lives before we can have success out in life. The only way to overcome the world is to overcome the world in us. And the only way to overcome the world in us is through Jesus Christ, who said, "I have overcome the world!" So, we are constantly brought back to Jesus, who is our High Priest.

Hebrews 3:1: *"Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession." It is time for us to begin to look to Jesus as our High Priest. It is necessary for us to see Him in this role in order accomplish our healing.*

Hebrews 8:1-3: *"Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a High Priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens, a minister in the sanctuary, and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man. For every High Priest appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices; hence it is necessary that this High Priest also have something to offer."*

Every High Priest must have something to offer. Obviously, Jesus does not have to keep offering His blood over and over again. Once was enough. So, what does He have to offer now? He has the sacrifices we take to Him. He is standing, as our High Priest, with His hands outstretched, waiting for each of us to come to Him and lay in His hands those things over which we are willing to give Him control in our lives.

If we have certain personality characteristics which are not good, we can lay those in His hands. Our High Priest has His all-consuming fire going constantly, day and night, 24 hours per day. And what is most important, he is also ready to take our scabs from us. He is ready to take them from us and heal them with His all-consuming fire. A wound that is sealed by fire is cauterized. That is, it is sealed by intense heat. He is ready to cauterize our wounds and leave us scars as evidence of our healing.

If we want to step from scab to scar to success, now is the time. So, let's take five minutes, right now, to write down those areas inside us that need to be healed. We will ask the Holy Spirit for revelation and trust Him to reveal the wounds within us that are still bleeding. We will ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to us those whom we have never really forgiven.

It is not that these people deserve to be forgiven. We are forgiving out of obedience to God's command, trusting that He will set us free from the emotional pains. We will ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to us those attitudes and characteristics and thought patterns which are not pleasing to Him. This is our opportunity to have a moment of truth with our Lord.

(TAKE FIVE MINUTES TO PRAY AND RECORD EVERYTHING THE HOLY SPIRIT BRINGS TO THE SURFACE TO BE HEALED)

Now, let's visualize Jesus Christ as our High Priest. That doesn't mean we have to see Jesus Christ in our minds. We just need to visualize Him as being our High Priest in the holy of holies in heaven. He said we could come into the throne room with boldness, so He expects us to do that. He wants us to get beyond the scab, into the scar, and on to success with Him. Our ultimate goal should be to fulfill God's purpose for our lives, regardless of what it might be. That is true success.

GROUP EXERCISE:

If possible, divide into groups of three persons each. Arrange chairs so they are facing each other.

This is important. Do not pray "for" each other. Instead, two of you support the third person as he takes his scabs to the Lord. Simply be beside him as he prays for himself, and lend him your support.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PERSON WHO PRAYS:

Go into the presence of Jesus and confess to Him that you have the scabs you have written down. Then visualize yourself giving those scabs to Jesus. Ask Him to heal those areas of your life. Picture Jesus taking those scabs from you. Identify them specifically, whether they are people, or circumstances, or attitudes, etc. Be specific.

You are releasing those specific scabs to Jesus, your High Priest. You are asking Him to heal them, to cauterize them, to seal them with His all-consuming fire. He will take those things from you and let them become scars in your life. You will then be able to point to them as being healed. In this fashion, God will be glorified.

The other two members of the group are to support that one as he is taking his scabs to Jesus. Do not interfere with him, or pray for him, just support him quietly. You are giving him spiritual strength. That is ministry.

Repeat this process until everyone in the group has had an opportunity to release his wounds to the Lord.

REMEMBER: PART OF THE PROCESS OF HAVING OUR WOUNDS HEALED IS FORGIVING THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE HURT US!

HOMEWORK: Record what the Lord accomplished while you were in your group

Session Ten . . . Scabs, Scars, Success

Personal and Group Exercise (see page 115)

1. Why is it unnecessary for us to forget in order to forgive?

2. Why is the act of forgiving a necessary part of healing?

3. Why are scars positive rather than negative?

4. In what way is refusing God's healing a form of rebellion?

5. Why is it important for us to accept Jesus as our High Priest?

6. What is true success in life?

Session Eleven

Low Self Esteem and the Importance of a Goal

Low self-esteem is a scab in our lives. Low self-esteem has an effect upon everything that transpires during our lifetime. Every circumstance and every situation that occurs throughout our lives, we filter through our low self-esteem.

Low self-esteem has an initial cause, and it has a maintenance factor. The cause of low self-esteem is probably the programming we received as children. As impressionable little children, we may have received put-downs, such as.

- "You can't walk across the room without falling on your face!"
- "You'll never amount to anything!"
- "Why are you so stupid?!"

A myriad of put-downs said to us by parents who didn't realize what they were doing to us have programmed us into having a low opinion of ourselves. We respected the wisdom of our elders, so we received their put-downs as truth.

That is the probable cause of our low self-esteem. But it has been maintained throughout our adulthood in a different way. We continue to believe we are less than worthwhile because we really don't know who we are in Christ.

When we were conceived, when we became form and substance in our mother's womb, the Lord, by His Spirit, gave us a spirit. He breathed life into us. There is no life without God. God is the Author and the Finisher of life.

Man has tried over and over to create life, but he has never been successful. For example, we can manufacture a facsimile of a grain of rice so that it will look and feel exactly like a grain of rice. We can even plant it, but it will not grow, because it must have God's life in it.

God imparted life to us. We became a spirit person. Now, because we were not supernaturally conceived, we inherited the genetic nature of Adam. We inherited the ability and the nature to sin, right there in the womb. It came genetically, down through mankind from Adam to our parents.

When we came forth into the world, we had the sin nature in us. But, we were still a spirit person. Our life is in our spirit. When we die our spirit doesn't die, only our flesh dies. Our spirit goes either to be with the Lord, or it goes to hell.

Then, at the moment we accepted Jesus Christ as our Savior, something supernatural happened. A transplantation took place in us. The old man, the old spirit person, became fused with Christ, and God considered him as crucified, dead and buried with Christ. He then imparted to us a new nature, a new man, and a new spirit person incapable of sin.

Inside us is a spirit being which contains the Spirit of Christ, and the Spirit of Christ is incapable of sin (**2 Corinthians 5:17**). We have within us this spirit person, this new being, this new birth, that says, "I am incapable of sin, and I will not sin. There is no way in the world I am going to sin."

Now, we have a mild problem in all of this. God couldn't give us a supernatural body without killing us, so He put that new nature, that new spirit being incapable of sin, into our old earthen vessel. And the old earthen vessel has programmed by the old man with the Adamic nature. It has developed certain personality characteristics and habit patterns that are sinful.

We are confronted with a battle between the new nature and the old nature habit patterns that remain. They are only leftovers from the influence of the old man, but they are still powerful habits. Inside us we have those natural tendencies, those natural habit patterns with the disposition to sin. But that is all they are, habit patterns established down through the years of programming by our old man.

Our challenge is the necessity to bring out the new nature, the nature incapable of sin, while eradicating the old habit patterns. Most of us try to do this by our own will. We determine, "I will not do that anymore!" Unfortunately, the will is part of our flesh, so we have a situation in which flesh is fighting flesh, and there is not going to be a spiritual victory.

There is a solution, and we can find it right in the Bible. John the Baptist didn't say, "I must decrease, that He may increase." He said, "*He must increase, but I must decrease.*" (**John 3:30**)

The only way to win the battle which is going on inside is to bring in more of Jesus Christ, to focus upon Jesus Christ. Whatever we focus upon tends to grow larger within us. As we bring in more Light by focusing upon Jesus, there is less room for darkness. The sole thing upon which we need to concentrate is our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

We need to get into a deep, heavy relationship with Jesus Christ. The heavier the relationship with Jesus, the greater His opportunity to make the necessary changes within us. And the more changes take place in our flesh, the more that old nature is washed out.

We're not even conscious of the change because we are not accomplishing it on our own. But when we look back a couple of months we can see we have changed. Not because we did it deliberately, it was the effect of concentrating upon Jesus Christ, and allowing Him to bring forth that new nature which He put in us.

However, at the same time, we are still programmed to believe we continue to have the old sinful nature. The truth is, we no longer have the old nature, we have the carryover from the old nature. What we have to do now is to eliminate the old habit patterns and old thought processes. We don't have to fight the old man anymore, the old man is dead. God did that in a supernatural way. God is the only one who can give life, so He made that transplantation inside us. Study **Romans 6, and Galatians 2**.

When we begin to understand all this, we can see that the reason we have low self-esteem is because we still think we have the old man inside us, pushing us to sin. That is a lie, because the old man is dead. The only thing we have pushing us to sin is the carryover from the influence of the old man. Satan would have us focus on the carryover, so he can bring us under condemnation because of the sin that remains in our lives.

But Jesus says, "No, don't focus upon the sin that remains, simply focus upon Me." We must understand that focusing upon the carryover is focusing upon self, and that is exactly what Satan wants us to do. But the Lord says, "Don't do that, focus on Me. I'll take care of that sinful nature. Just relax about that. If you will focus on Me, I will prove to you that I can wash you clean. I can really make you a new creature in Me."

We see that low self-esteem is a scab. What we have to do is lay that low self-esteem on the altar before the Lord and ask Him to consume it. We are to ask Him to replace it with His self-esteem, which He gave us along with our new man. Then we will know who we are in Christ, and we can move on with Him. If we continue in our low self-esteem, we will filter everything through it, and it will have an adverse effect upon everything we do.

Low self-esteem generates self-consciousness. But self-consciousness is really "others consciousness". Because we have a low opinion of ourselves, we are concerned about what other people may think about what we say or do. **1 Sam 15:19-24**: *"I feared the people and listened to their voice"*.

In many ways, we are like King Saul. Our concern for what others think creates inhibitions within us, and those inhibitions can cause us to miss God's perfect will for our lives. Because King Saul was more concerned with what the people thought than what God thought, he missed God's perfect will for his life. Like King Saul, we are going to be challenged constantly to compromise.

We must understand that if we pay more attention to what people think and say about us, if we are more concerned about that, we may in fact miss God's perfect will for our lives.

It is never too late to change. It is never too late for God to do something worthwhile in our lives. God has the ability to accelerate healing, and to accelerate His purposes in a person's life. It is a mistake to think it is too late. We never come to a point where we must say, "Oh well, what's the use." That will never be true, regardless of our age. It is never too late. When we believe that for ourselves, we can convey it to others.

GOALS and EXPEDIENCE:

Now let's consider the concept of establishing goals in our lives. We should accept the fact that no goal is worthwhile unless it glorifies God in some fashion. For this reason we need to take a long, hard look at our goals.

One of the problems we have as a society is what we will call the “E” Factor. The “E” Factor is the Expediency Factor. We have become an expedient society. Because of that, we have lost our ability to successfully meet our goals in life.

It is really interesting that we get a big kick out of seeing a man win a million dollars in a lottery, but we resent the fellow who has worked all his life, invested properly and has accumulated a million dollars. There is something wrong with a society like that.

The problem is the Expediency Factor. We want what we want now, we’re not willing to discipline ourselves. For example, the “E” Factor says, “I’m am not willing to wait on God. As a matter of fact, I’m not willing to wait on anything.” The “E” Factor says, I’m not going to wait until I can afford the television set, I’m going to go out and get the television set and charge it. I will pay that extra 18% finance charge because I want it now, and I’m going to get it now.” But if someone suggests that we save 18% every week out of our pay check, we’ll say, “What are you talking about, I can’t save that much, I need that to live on!”

The “E” Factor says, “We’ve got to fulfill the great American dream, to have the maximum house we can possibly afford.” But, in reality, that is the great American nightmare, because we become financially locked into the house. Everything we do centers around that house. The money we pour into the house is absolutely incredible! We sacrifice all our freedom to do other things.

Why is it that the little Armenian comes to America, moves into a basement apartment, pays rent, and pretty soon he owns the entire city block? But the American who was born here can’t even own his own home. The reason is the “E” Factor. The Armenian saves his money, he does without, and he invests wisely. But the American indulges in the “E” Factor, goes into debt and never gets out.

It all comes back to not being willing to wait on God to direct our steps. It simply takes too much time. We have developed a drive-through window mentality. We use the drive-through window, we pick up our order, and we eat it on the run. We pay more for it, and we know it isn’t very healthy for us, but that’s all right because it satisfies our need for expediency.

We have a tough day at work, so we come home and grab a beer out of the refrigerator. Why? Because we want to change our feeling, right now! It helps us to relax, immediately. It is the “E” Factor at work. That beer does its job so well, we decide we’ll have another. Then, before long, we have blown the whole evening, including our relationship with our family. It doesn’t have to be beer; it could be marijuana, or any other mood-altering drug.

We don’t even consider the possibility of sitting down with our wives and saying, “I had kind of a tough time today. I’d like to tell you about it, then I would appreciate it if you will pray for me.” We are unwilling to wait for God to settle us down, we want relief, now! It’s the “E” Factor at work.

The “E” Factor is a trap. Satan is riding hard on the “E” Factor in each of us. That very same trap has gotten the entire United States into an incredible indebtedness. Some day we are going to have to pay for it, as a nation.

There is a way to escape that bondage. If we will put to work for ourselves the process of compound interest, within 20 years we can be absolutely financially independent. This is how

we can do it. From whatever we earn, we give 10% to God, and invest 10%, starting with a savings account. It doesn't make any difference how much we earn per week. We have been blowing that 20% all along.

If we will put it to work, in five years we will begin to see the exponential curve that takes place when compound interest takes over. Depending upon how much we put in, we can shorten that to ten or fifteen years, but it is a guarantee that if we will do it for 20 years, each and everyone of us can be financially independent. That means we will not be financially dependent upon anybody else, except Jesus.

To work toward financial independence can be a good goal. However, there are other good goals in life. We have been so accustomed to one-dimensional thinking, with all our wounds and addiction problems, that we are not used to setting goals. We may need help learning how to evaluate, set up and work toward healthy, godly goals for our lives.

Our goals can now be established from a basis of healthy self-esteem, since we are learning to identify with Christ. He will help us reach for goals of ministering to Him and to others. He will help us walk toward Him and His desire for us, in faith, hope and love.

The majority of people have no idea how to go about establishing goals. It is all right to establish goals, then to continue to adjust them as our situations change. That is a healthy approach to goal setting.

Listed below is an exercise that can help each of us establish his initial goal.

1. What five things do I value most in life? (Things I would be willing to fight for)

2. What are my three most important goals right now?

3. If I won a million dollars in a lottery, how would I spend it? List 4 ways, with no limitations)

4. How would I spend my time if I knew I had only six months to live?

5. What have I always wanted to do but been afraid to try?

6. Of all the things I have done, what has given me the greatest feeling of importance or success? (This could be my area of excellence)

7. If I had one wish, or could take one pill which would enable me to accomplish whatever I want, what would that be, if I knew absolutely that I could not fail?

8. Now I will pick one major definite purpose and I will commit all my energies and efforts to achieve that one goal. The goal is:

9. Next, I will list six activities necessary to accomplish my goal.

10. I will now list six actions necessary to accomplish each of the six activities. (You will need to record this on a separate page. You will have 36 separate actions when you have finished, six actions for each of the six activities necessary to accomplish your goal).

11. Finally, I will prioritize each of the six actions and schedule in a monthly plan book specific days, along with the time of those days that I will implement each action.

This is a process through which we can arrive at our primary goal in life. It would be wise to give this some time. We must remember, we are new creatures in Christ. And we must also

remember, Christ has to be in the goal. That doesn't mean the goal should be a super spiritual goal, it just means that Christ has to be in everything we do.

A word about prosperity. We can't handle it on our own. If we will study the nation of Israel, we will see they could never handle God's prosperity. They always took their eyes off God and put their eyes on material things. In every case, it wasn't very long before they were back in bondage to another nation.

Prosperity can be very deceptive. In the majority of cases, if we approach a wealthy man and tell him he needs Jesus Christ, he will reply, "Why do I need Jesus Christ? I have everything I need." He feels no need for Jesus Christ. There will come a time in our lives, if we keep our eyes focused upon Jesus Christ, that He will, in fact, exalt us. That will probably be the biggest test in our lives, because we will have a tendency, a natural tendency, especially if we have had low self esteem, to take the prosperity God is giving us, and get puffed up like a bantam rooster. But it won't be long before somebody will chop off our head.

The more material things we have and the more success we experience, the less time we spend with God. Possessions have a tendency to possess us. The man who has a million dollars is very concerned about keeping that million dollars. He is so concerned that he puts all his energies and efforts upon keeping that million dollars. He tries to get another million just so he can protect the first million. And in the process, God is left out.

Some of us will do as suggested here, keeping Jesus as the center all the way through. If so, it is a principle that He will, in all probability, prosper us in some fashion. If so, we should never forget where it came from. We should never think we have it figured out, and that we can handle whatever comes our way. The fact is, as soon as we think we are in charge, we are not in charge. The prince of the power of the air will come in and guide and direct us, and the result will be disaster. So, our acid test may come in the form of prosperity. It is easy to look to God when we are down, but when we are on top of the world, it is a different story.

The goal exercise we just participated in, takes us beyond simply getting healed from drugs and alcohol. It takes us into another dimension. We must keep in mind that we have to take Jesus Christ with us into that next dimension. We are back in the flesh and headed toward oblivion if we don't.

It has been said that true healing is not a manipulation of the external situation, it is a change of heart. It is not brought on by a change of circumstances, even though a change of circumstances may accompany it. As we discover who we are in Christ, our goals for this life will adequately reflect His heart.

HOMEWORK: Seek the Lord's guidance, and complete the questionnaire.

Session Eleven . . . Low Self Esteem and The Importance of A Goal

Personal and Group Exercise (see page 116)

1. Why is low self-esteem a scab that must become a scar?

2. Why do we continue to sin even though we have a new nature incapable of sin?

3. How do we decrease in order for the Spirit of Jesus to increase within us?

4. Why is it important for us not to be overly conscious of what others think and say about us?

5. In what way does the “E” Factor work against our relationship with God?

6. Why is it important for us to be Christ-conscious when we are establishing and fulfilling our goals?

Session Twelve

The Purpose of Life

As we come to the final session of our teaching on inner healing, we have had many opportunities to experience some painful experiences from our past. Hopefully, God has begun a major healing process in our lives.

In the midst of our addiction, the majority of us didn't take the time to examine our lives with the intention of identifying our goals, or to look for any purpose in living. The reason for this session is to look back upon our lives and see clearly how our motives, values, goals and purposes have been focused in the wrong direction. We will see how that has caused painful and frustrating experiences in our lives.

We will also look at God's purpose for our lives, and how to live that purpose on a daily basis. There are four major areas surrounding the subject of purpose. We will approach them from a Biblical viewpoint as well as from a relational aspect.

WRONG PURPOSE

"And He told them a parable, saying, 'The land of a certain rich man was very productive. And he began reasoning to himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?' And he said, 'This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods, and I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry.' But God said to him, 'you fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?' So is the man who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.'"
(Luke 12:16-21)

Most of us have had the same problem as the rich man. Our purpose in life has been to accumulate enough wealth to be able to take it easy as soon as possible for the rest of our lives. That is the reason so many people play the lottery.

All our energies have been focused upon money, alcohol, drugs, sex, power, and every kind of materialistic toy that promises to make life easier and more fun. We spend our entire lives striving to achieve success in the world. We never come to the realization, like the rich man, that our purpose for life, even though successful in the world's eyes, has been a failure in the eyes of God.

We are similar to the man who climbed the ladder of success and, after many years of hard work, reached the top, only to discover that the ladder was leaning against the wrong building.

Like the rich man, we who live for the wrong purpose in life, don't have time for God. What has actually happened is that our purpose for life has become our god. When our belief system in life is wrong because we don't include God, our behavior will also be wrong.

NO PURPOSE

“As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming.”
(Ephesians 4:14)

The most common cliché of people who live with no purpose in life is, "If it feels good, do it." The hippie mentality is a good example of this type of lifestyle.

Many of us who have been heavily into drugs and alcohol, at one time may have lost hope, existing only under the medication of the chemicals, with no purpose for our lives. We were as the scripture states, tossed to and fro. We did whatever made us feel good.

Transients and other street people are examples of those who live with no purpose for their lives. Another example is a person who gives up completely, and takes his own life.

Generally speaking, the profile of a person who lives with no purpose in life, is that he has no belief in God, and he behaves as he wants to behave, regardless of the consequences.

CROSS PURPOSE

“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.” **(Matthew 6:24)**

“You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.” **(1 Corinthians 10:21)**

Living our lives in cross purposes produces misery. A man caught up in a cross purpose believes in God, but he lives a hellish life. He grasps at God with one hand while his other hand holds onto certain vices he continues to enjoy in life.

It has been said that such a man howls with the wolves on Saturday night and bleats with the sheep on Sunday morning. It is impossible for him to be at peace in either place.

As the scripture says, that man is trying to serve two masters. That is an impossible task.

RIGHT PURPOSE

“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you.” **(Matthew 6:33)** See also, ***Ephesians 1:4-12*** and ***Ephesians 3:6-21***, for further study on purpose.

The man who lives with a right purpose is, first of all, a man who has a close personal relationship with God. God is number one in his life. Because of this, God is able to work in him both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

God's purpose for us is revealed throughout the scriptures. Simply put, we were created to commune with Him and to receive and give His love. We are examples to others of His grace and love because He has chosen to impart His life and His righteousness to vessels as faulty as ours.

As we seek His kingdom first, we realize He is mainly interested in loving His creation. As we allow Him to use us to love others with His love we fulfill our greatest call, and bring honor and praise to God.

When we are living in the right purpose, God is able to bring healing and restoration into our lives. Our motives, values and goals in life will conform to His purpose for us. As a result, we experience the inner peace and security for which we have been searching.

The man with a right purpose has a Godly belief system, and his behavior conforms to his Godly beliefs. He not only thinks right, he lives life right according to the plans God has for him.

Session Twelve . . . The Purpose of Life

Personal And Group Exercise (see page 117)

1. Why is it important for me to examine my life and to look for a purpose to live?

2. Why is it a wrong purpose to want to accumulate wealth in order to live an easy life?

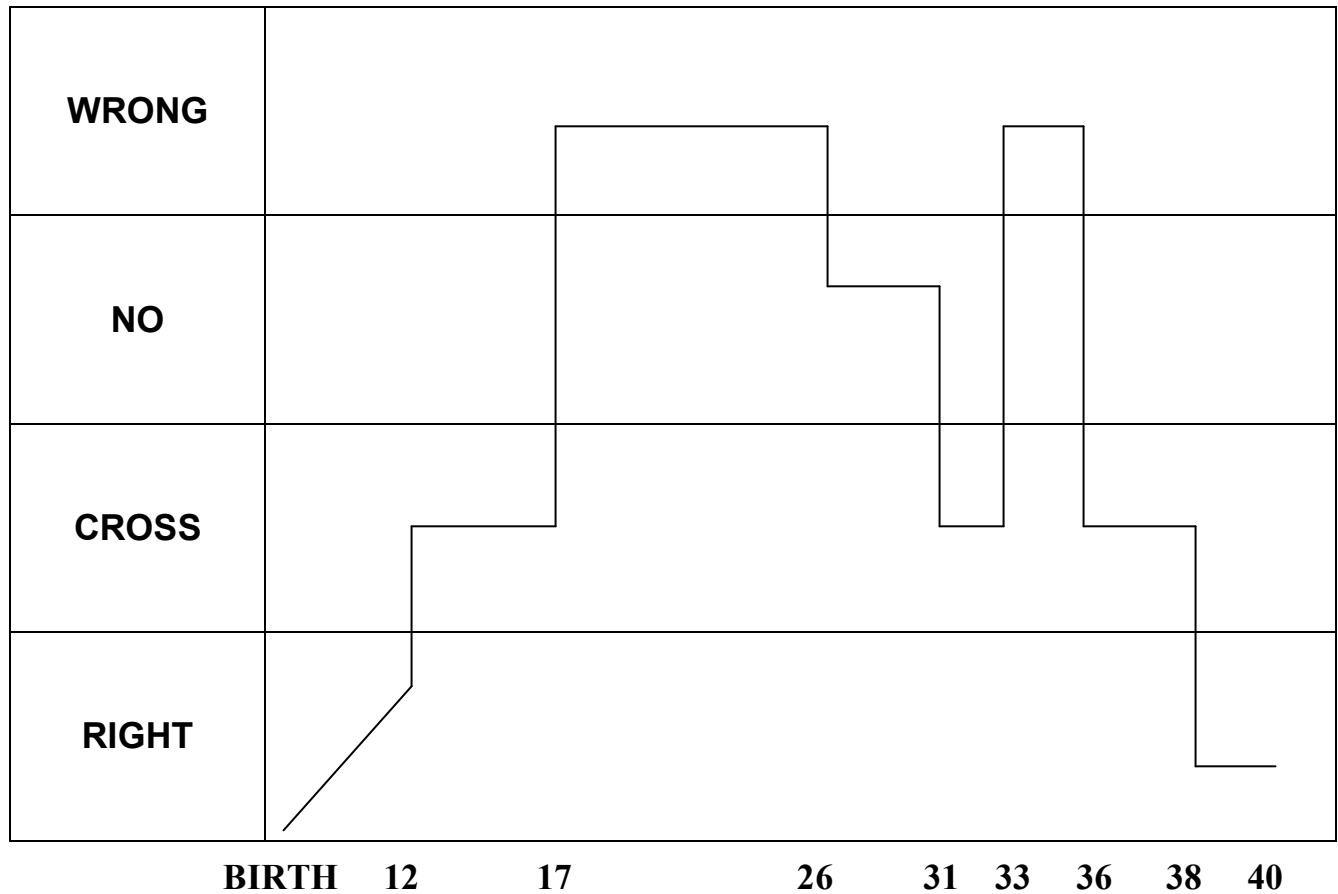
3. What is wrong with the concept, "If it feels good, do it?"

4. Why is it impossible to serve both God and mammon?

5. What is the one, distinct characteristic of the man who lives with a right purpose?

6. How is it possible for me to live God's purpose for my life on a daily basis?

THE PURPOSE CHART



THE ABOVE EXAMPLE SHOWS THE LIFE OF A 40 YEAR OLD MAN

FOR THE FIRST 12 YEARS OF HIS LIFE, HE LIVED IN RIGHT PURPOSE.

FROM AGE 12 – 17 HE MOVED INTO CROSS PURPOSE, AS HE BEGAN TO EXPERIMENT WITH ALCHOL AND DRUGS.

FROM AGE 17 – 26, HE LIVED WRONG PURPOSE, SEEKING TO BECOME RICH AND INCREASING HIS DRUG USAGE.

FROM AGE 26 – 31, HE ENTERED NO PURPOSE, AS HE LIVED ONLY TO USE ALCOHOL AND DRUGS AND FEEL “HIGH”.

FROM AGE 31 – 33, HE MOVED INTO CROSS PURPOSE. HE TRIED TO GO TO CHURCH, GOT MARRIED, BUT TRIED TO CONTINUE TO USE DRUGS.

FROM AGE 33 – 36, HE MOVED BACK TO WRONG PURPOSE, AS HE STOPPED TRYING TO RELATE TO GOD, USED DRUGS, AND TRIED AGAIN TO GET RICH.

AT AGE 36, HE FELL BACK INTO CROSS PURPOSE WHEN HE GOT ARRESTED, AND PLACED ON PROBATION. HE TRIED AGAIN TO CLEAN UP HIS LIFE, BUT CONTINUED TO USE CHEMICALS.

AT AGE 38, HE ENTERED TREATMENT, GAVE HIS LIFE TO THE LORD, AND REMAINED IN THE RIGHT PURPOSE.

THE PURPOSE CHART

WRONG	
NO	
CROSS	
RIGHT	

LOOK BACK OVER YOUR OWN LIFE AND CHART THE PRUPOSES YOU HAVE LIVED IN, THE CAUSES OF MVING FROM PURPOSE TO PURPOSE, AND WHAT YOU CONSIDER TO BE GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE.

ALSO, SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES TO FIND ONE THAT YOU CONSIDER DEFINES THE PURPOSE FOR LIVING.

WRITE ONE PAGE OF INSIGHTS THAT YOU LEARNED FROM DOING YOUR PURPOSE CHART.

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Session One . . . Introduction

Points For Discussion (See pages 8 and 9)

1. It is often difficult for the chemically addicted to handle sobriety because the deep emotional wounds are no longer medicated. Feelings such as inferiority and insecurity are free to surface and become too difficult to handle. This prompts us to return to our chemical addiction.
2. Negative memories act as barriers through which all life's circumstances must be filtered. A sincere compliment is filtered through our negative memories of inadequacies. This dilutes the compliment, and we are inclined to receive it as insincere. Negative memories have a tendency to offset all positive events in our lives. We find ourselves looking for the negatives in every relationship and every situation.
3. The present is all we have. The past can be used as a reference point for learning, but it has very little value other than that. God is interested in utilizing our present lives, but He is unable to use us so long as we are bound to the past. When the present becomes our focus, we will very likely not repeat the failures of the past.
4. A one dimensional attitude does not take into consideration the consequences of our actions. Our focus is only upon what we desire, no matter what the cost may be to others. A three dimensional attitude looks at the past, learns from it and looks toward the future and plans for it.
5. A break in relationship occurs when we receive an emotional wound. This is most likely to be caused by someone we respect or love. We have placed a high value on the relationship, and the other person breaches the trust or disregards our feelings.
6. Unless we reconnect, we feel incomplete. Unfortunately, very often we find that it is impossible to reconnect with the one with whom the connection was broken. This causes frustration, or perhaps even trauma, because we feel we will be forced to go through life in our present unfulfilled state. It is a blessing to discover that God has made provision for our reconnection.

Session Two . . . Broken Bridges

Points For Discussion (See pages 19 and 20)

1. A bridge of connectedness occurs when we feel secure and accepted by another person, not because of something we have done, or can do, but just because we are ourselves. Bridges of connectedness can exist between two people, or among a group of people.
2. If an important bridge was broken when we were young, we lost our sense of security and acceptance. Unless that bridge is repaired, we will spend the rest of our lives trying to reconstruct the bridge, or trying to ease the pain from the break
3. Chemicals give us a false sense of security. The pain leaves as we enter our fantasy land. We see things as we wish them to be, rather than as they really are. Although we are deceiving ourselves, we continue to use the chemicals because they enable us to avoid the awful truth of what is happening in our lives.
4. There is no other way for true reconnection to take place apart from a relationship with God. Only God can heal the deep inner pain within us. Only God can bring us to the point of being able to look directly at the past. Only God can reach into the deepest recesses of our hearts and apply the healing balm of His forgiveness.
5. God is a loving God, but He is also a just God. He has established certain principles, and He has never compromised those principles. When we are unfamiliar with His principles, we often find ourselves to have problems. For example, we may hate our father because of his abuse. Hatred is a sin for which we must ask forgiveness. Unless we face this principle of God, and respond to it as He has instructed us to, we are condemning ourselves to receive an equal amount of negative impact from the world around us
6. Words can bring life, or they can bring death. "From the same mouth come both blessing and cursing..." (James 3:10). Words are especially powerful when they are spoken from a parent to a child, or from one spouse to another. Words can destroy a relationship, or they can cement a relationship. Because of the importance of the words we speak, we should exercise as much wisdom as possible when we communicate with others.

Session Three . . . Rejection

Points For Discussion (See pages 28 and 29)

1. Emotional wounds continue to affect us because they have never been given the opportunity to heal. Most of those wounds occurred at an age when we were very vulnerable. Now we avoid vulnerability at all costs. This refusal to make ourselves vulnerable actually prohibits us from experiencing life to the fullest.
2. Self-rejection means we are convinced we don't fit into society. Because we see ourselves as misfits, we see no point in attempting to improve our position in life. Eventually, this will lead us to despair.
3. Because we feel we are unacceptable as we are, we attempt to become someone else. We usually pattern ourselves after someone we admire. We assume that person has no problems because he or she seems to live a well-balanced life, filled with many friendships. Although we try to emulate that person, we always fail because we have failure built into our character.
4. We can sometimes overlook physical abuse when the abuser apologizes, but it is impossible to overlook being ignored. When love is not forthcoming, or when an important person is not there when we need him or her, it is a devastating experience. This is someone we love and respect and need. We can't handle rejection by that person. Such an attitude inflicts a deep emotional wound that has a long-lasting effect.
5. Cults fill a need in the lives of some. When we are rejected, we always seek love and acceptance to fill the void. Cults usually make it a point to accept a new member unconditionally, regardless of background. This makes a rejected person feel worthwhile. Cults seem to give stability and purpose, both of which are lacking in a dysfunctional home.
6. The only way we can be healed from the rejection we received is to bring the memory of that rejection back to the surface to be dealt with. This may be painful for a brief time, but it is worth the temporary pain in order to get rid of the permanent pain that has been riding beneath the surface and affecting our lives and our relationship with others. When we bring the rejection into the presence of God, we discover that no matter how deep the trauma may have been, God is able and willing to impart His healing power into the situation and set us free.

Session Four

....The Fruit of Rejection and Reasons For Rejection

Points For Discussion (See pages 36 and 37)

1. God has created every human being with the necessity to be loved. It is the fuel that generates a healthy, productive life. Rejection cuts off the flow of love, just as a tourniquet cuts off the flow of blood. Without the flow of blood to one of our hands, it will wither and die. It is the same when the flow of love is cut off. A portion of us withers and dies. And there is no way it can be restored without the Divine power of our loving God.
2. If we accept the rejection, it will have a negative effect upon our lives. We must understand that we have every right to be, because God has brought us forth. He breathed His breath in us, and He has a Divine purpose for our lives, regardless of what kind of emotions our parents were going through at our time of birth.
3. God makes no mistakes and God ordained our sex when He created us and gave us life. Our parents may have wanted a child of the opposite sex, but that was simply a selfish desire on their part. Healthy parents desire a healthy child, and should give thanks to God when one is presented to them. We cannot waste our lives trying to please our parents with unnatural behavior.
4. First of all, we can praise God that we were not aborted, but were given an opportunity to live a full and successful life. The time may come when we will want to reconnect the bridge that was broken between our parents and ourselves. If so, there are organizations which function for that purpose. In the meantime, we can make the most of our lives, with Christ as the center.
5. Verbal abuse can sometimes be more damaging than physical abuse. This is especially true when we believe the abusive words. We tend to own what we believe; therefore, when we have been told we were stupid, we may have bought that lie. We must get the right perspective about who we are in Christ. Also, it might help to understand where our parents were, emotionally, when they made such statements to us.
6. The first thing we must understand is that we were not to blame for the abuse, even though the blame may have been put upon us. Shame, anger, and many other emotional reactions accompany this type of abuse. As in all other areas of rejection, the primary healing vehicle will be forgiveness. This will be dealt with, in depth, in another part of this study.

Session Five . . . Grieving

Points For Discussion (See pages 42 and 43)

1. Unless we learn how to grieve, we will carry the burden of our hurt, anger and fear throughout our lives. These conditions affect every aspect of our lives, including our relationship with others. Our attitudes can become so habitual that we are not even aware we have them.
2. We have a tendency to build a tough shield inside us that protects us from the infiltration of others. We never want to place ourselves in a vulnerable position. We feel it was our vulnerability that exposed us to the hurt, and we do not want to repeat the process. Unfortunately, that tough shield prohibits us from enjoying a deep, personal relationship with anyone, even our spouse. The result is that we are never quite able to live life to the fullest.
3. Our hidden emotions force us to keep our guard up at all times. We even find it hard to receive a sincere compliment without filtering it through our negative programming. We become difficult to get to know; therefore, we have few close friends. We may cover our emotions with clownish behavior, with anger, or with some other conduct. We hide behind these practices because they make us feel safe and comfortable.
4. When we can see only our side of a painful situation, we are inclined to drift toward self-pity. We do not consider the possibility of the pain that may have driven the one who hurt us. Also, it is impossible for us to even consider the possibility that God can use our painful experience in a beneficial way. We are unable to look beyond ourselves, or to look at the incident objectively. When we submit the incident to God, however, He enables us to see it through different eyes. Our understanding is broadened, and our concept is changed. This becomes a giant step toward healing.
5. Grieving is stressful. Initially, it is a wholesome stress, but if we continue grieving it becomes a burden that we carry around like a cross. The purpose of grieving is to obtain a release from the inner pain. However, if we insist upon concentrating upon the pain and grieving about it, the negative product begins to grow until it takes over our personality. When we grieve properly, we allow Jesus to remove whatever is blocking our connection to Him. When the connection is made, the time for grieving has ended.
6. We should never force the Lord in this healing process. As we bring Him into our lives He will show us those areas or incidents that stand between Him and us. He will not overload us with past pain. Instead, He will move us to handle one thing at a time. As we submit that situation to Him, the healing will take place. We will then be ready for the next area of our lives in which He wants to free us.

Session Six . . . Forgiveness

Points For Discussion (See pages 53 and 54)

1. Forgiveness is a key to mental health. Through forgiveness, our emotional wounds are healed and our relationship with others is restored. When we are willing to forgive, this places us in right relationship with God, whose very nature is to forgive. Without forgiveness, there is no harmony with God. His principle is that we must forgive if we are to have sound, healthy lives. Our willingness to submit to that principle proves to God that we are willing to obey His commands.
2. It is difficult to forgive because we don't feel like forgiving. We have been mistreated, and we look upon forgiveness as an act of kindness toward someone who doesn't deserve kindness. We fail to understand that forgiveness can be more beneficial to us than to the person we are forgiving.
3. It is important for us to deal with specifics; therefore, we must face the event and the pain it brought us. Unless we do this, we are dealing in generalities, and there can be no direct forgiveness unless there is a specific incident to be used for reference. We must also look honestly at our reaction to the painful incident. We may be harboring hatred without realizing it. If so, that must be brought to the surface, recognized as sin, and we must receive forgiveness for that sin.
4. The cross is the focal point for all forgiveness. The ability to truly forgive comes from God. It was expressed through the sacrifice of Jesus. Because forgiveness is available to us, we have the ability to pass it on to others. When we see the loving nature of God and His forgiveness, it becomes easier for us to forgive others.
5. If we were to rely solely upon our emotions, we would probably never forgive others. Our hurt and our anger are probably legitimate. We have every right to feel as we do. But, if we relied upon those feelings, we could never bring ourselves to forgive. Forgiveness is based upon our decision, not upon our emotions.
6. Repentance is a decision to turn away from our self-oriented feelings, and to turn toward God. Forgiveness is an act of repentance, because it is an expression of obedience to God's way of doing things, rather than our way. We take God and His Word to be true. He instructs us how to forgive; we lay aside our negative feelings and obey Him. When we forgive, we discover that He has forgiven us and set us free!

Session Seven . . . The Condominium Concept

Points For Discussion (See pages 61 and 62)

1. Unless we get in touch with our true feelings, we will not be able to receive a total healing from the Lord. The only way to get in touch with those feelings is to recall the traumatic incidents in our lives, those incidents we can't shake free from our memories as negative events. When we recall those memories, if the pain is still there, it is a sign that a healing should take place. Those are areas we should relive with Jesus.
2. Inner healing must be specific. Unless we deal with specific details and people in our past lives, there can be no real healing. Having a floor for each year of our lives enables us to focus specifically on every year of our past. As we take the time to allow God to return us to those specific areas, we give Him the opportunity to bring specific events to the surface. Only then can they be dealt with.
3. To vividly recall them with Christ is to watch them heal. If we experience healing of some painful event that happened when we were 10 years old, it doesn't mean we have to revert to a 10 year old. We stay our same age, and observe the incident as an onlooker rather than as a participant. It may still be painful, but not as painful as it was at the time, because we now have Christ to comfort us
4. We should never be in a hurry to get negative incidents out of the way. We want Jesus to have the time to do quality work. We are after a complete healing of each incident. We can't accomplish this if we try to drag a number of incidents into the picture at one time.
5. Jesus reconstructed the circumstances for Peter, and that is what He wants to do with us. It is important that we include as many details of the past event as we can remember. The more specific the recall, the greater the opportunity we are giving Jesus to heal us.
6. Jesus knows more about our lives than we do. He knows which events had a more devastating effect upon us. He is in a better position to know what past events have taken our lives away from the direction He would like for us. When we allow Jesus to bring those areas to the surface, our healing will take place sooner, and it will have a more beneficial effect upon the remainder of our lives.

Session Eight . . . Judgments and Soul Ties

Points For Discussion (See pages 68 and 69)

1. Good soul ties are meant to be established, first through the relationship between parents and children. As the healthy child matures, he can then establish healthy soul ties with a limited number of close friends. Later, he becomes ready to establish his closest soul tie, through marriage. After this, the married couple can establish mutual soul ties with other Christians.
2. Evil soul ties have their roots in lust of one form or another. Sexual lust is the most prevalent and the most dominant. Soul ties with evil companions lead to wickedness, and eventually to death. Homosexuality is a prime example of an evil soul tie.
3. When the soul tie isn't established between the parents and the child, the child is likely to spend the rest of his or her life trying to reconnect the missing tie. Through continual searching, the child becomes vulnerable to substitute soul ties, most of which are evil. As the confusion continues, the soul ties established may become more perverted and evil.
4. The most common type perversion occurs when the parent refuses to cut the soul tie at the time of the child's marriage. The parent uses the soul tie to control the child after marriage. Incest is also a type of perverted family soul tie.
5. To judge is to sow. When we judge, it is like planting a seed. We always judge from an exalted position (notice that judge's benches are always elevated). This is an exercise of our pride. The Bible clearly states that God sets Himself against the proud; therefore, we can expect to receive a dose of our own judgmental medicine every time we judge someone.
6. Soul ties are between specific people; therefore, the breaking of soul ties should be with those specific people. It is the same when we are asking forgiveness for judging someone. If names cannot be brought to mind, descriptions to identify the person or the occasion should be used. Also, the more specific we can be the more specific we are able to repent, either for the soul tie, or for the judging.

Session Nine . . . Identifying With Jesus

Points For Discussion (See pages 79 and 80)

1. Philippians 2:5-8 tells us that although Jesus existed in the form of God, equal to God (the 2nd Person of the Trinity), He emptied Himself of His Godly nature and came to earth as a human being. Because He felt everything that a human being can feel, He can identify with our feelings; therefore, He can understand what we are going through as we face the trials of life.
2. When we look at the genealogy of Jesus, we see all sorts of imperfections, people He could easily have been ashamed of. But Jesus didn't give His genealogy a second thought. Since He is our example, we can see that we should not permit a faulty family tree to hinder us. There is no reason we should walk in shame because of something done by one of our ancestors. We should also never use that as an excuse for our own dysfunctional behavior.
3. Very often, negative habit patterns will repeat themselves down through the generations, but rarely is it because they have been inherited. More often, the child receives the brunt of mistreatment from a parent who, let us say, is an alcoholic. The child hates alcohol and what it does to people, so he vows never to touch a drop. Unfortunately, what we focus upon in life always enlarges, whether it is positive or negative. Through hatred (which is almost as strong as love), the child has focused upon alcohol. It has been incubating within him. Inevitably, it will eventually surface, and the child will find himself in bondage to the very thing he hates the most. To avoid this scenario, we are to take our hatred, or fear, or resentment to Jesus, our High Priest. He alone can break that generational chain.
4. We simply turn our focus upon Jesus. If we have been hurt by rejection, we give that hurt to Jesus. We may write in our journals that we are giving it to Him. When He gives us His reply, we will be relieved to discover that He has taken it from us. We should do this with every problem we face. When we bring Jesus into the picture, we step immediately out of bondage and into freedom.
5. If we are in the habit of coming to Jesus before our time of need, it will be easy for us to come to Him when we are in a time of need. Unless we have developed the habit of taking everything to Jesus, we are apt to try to fight our way out of a situation on our own. This will cause us to suffer unnecessarily until we come to our senses and call upon Jesus to deliver us.
6. The real key to inner healing is the application of the Gospel to our lives. Jesus came to give us abundant life. Only He can accomplish this in our lives. Until we have the step of faith to involve Jesus in our entire lives, we will not experience total inner healing.

Session Ten . . . Scabs, Scars, Success

Points For Discussion (See pages 86 and 87)

1. Forgiveness and the need to forget are not connected in any way. Forgiveness is rarely supported by our emotions. We don't forgive because we feel like forgiving. When we remember a hurtful experience it doesn't generate within us a desire to forgive the person who inflicted the hurt upon us. Usually, the opposite occurs. We remember the hurt, and resentment or hatred boils up inside us. Forgiveness can only take place when we decide to forgive, out of obedience to our Lord's command. When we do forgive, we discover that a healing takes place within us. We experience such an inner change that we become able to recall the negative incident without experiencing the hurt or the hatred.
2. Unforgiveness places us in bondage to the person we are unwilling to forgive. This becomes a burden we carry with us every day. It is as if we are shackled to a negative incident, and we filter all our daily experiences through that negativity. This causes disharmony within our physical and mental functions. Sometimes the disharmony becomes so great it causes physical or mental sickness. Forgiveness releases all that disharmony and allows our systems to function in a positive fashion. This brings about healing.
3. Scars are positive because they indicate a healing has taken place. If there is no scar, there is no healing; therefore, the wound is still active. It is either bleeding, or it has scabbed over. The problem with scabs is that the wound is still sensitive. It is easy to dislodge a scab so the bleeding can begin anew, as if the wound was fresh. This can't happen after a wound has been healed and covered by a scar. Scars are usually stronger than the original skin.
4. Refusing God's healing is saying "No!" to God. That is obvious rebellion. God is always ready to take us in His arms and cover us with His healing love. He wants healthy human beings who are willing to serve Him. If we are not healthy, we may try to serve Him, but we will always be influenced by the negativity of the unforgiveness in our hearts. We are so influenced by the bitterness, that it is impossible to reflect God's unconditional love to others. It is very difficult for God to use a rebellious person in a positive way.
5. It is in His role as High Priest that Jesus can take our negative sacrifices from us and replace them with His love. As High Priest, He intercedes for us. He represents us to the Father. He wants to wash us with the water of His Word, and remove the blemishes from us. He is willing to purify us. Our part is to have the faith to take all our negative experiences and attitudes to Him, and let Him consume them with His holy fire.
6. True success is to fulfill the call God has placed on our lives. We can be successful in the eyes of men, but that is worldly success, temporal, with no eternal value. When we are willing to lay down our lives and submit ourselves to His kingship, Jesus will lead us. He will direct our steps according to His plan. The result will be true success in life, because the things we do will have eternal value. Along with that kind of success will come all the fruit of the Spirit and our lives will be completely fulfilled.

Session Eleven . . . Low Self Esteem And The Importance Of A Goal

Points For Discussion (See pages 97 and 98)

1. If we allow low self-esteem to continue to have a dominant influence over our lives, we will never reach the full potential that God planned for us. We will always filter everything in our lives through our low self-esteem. That means we will be diluting whatever opportunity is placed before us. We must learn to trust God and His wisdom as He directs our paths. God does not make mistakes. When He presents us with an opportunity, He equips us to handle it.
2. We continue to sin simply because we don't understand our new nature. We believe that because we have sinned in the past, we will continue to sin. This is because we have our eyes upon ourselves rather than upon Jesus. It is true that our flesh is incapable of making any permanent change. But as we release control of our lives to Jesus, He makes the necessary changes in us.
3. If we try to decrease, we will be fighting a losing battle. The key lies in our willingness to bring Jesus into our lives on an ever-increasing basis. The greater His influence in us, the less influence our flesh will have. The increase must precede the decrease; it is not the other way around. As Jesus increases, we will decrease.
4. Any fear inhibits us. This is especially true when we are overly sensitive about the opinions of others. We adjust our behavior to conform to the acceptance of society. This forces us to compromise. A disciplined follower of Christ can never compromise his relationship with his Lord in order to please people. If so, he is placing people before God in his priorities. That means he is worshipping false idols.
5. The primary character of the "E" Factor is impatience. When we are impatient, we almost always miss God. God is never in a hurry, but He is always perfect. On the other hand, we are always in a hurry, and we are never perfect. We should be able to see this clearly, but the desires of the flesh are strong, and they demand to be satisfied expediently.
6. One reason for consulting Christ when establishing our goals is to prove to Him that He is God in our lives. We can call Him "Lord," but our actions will reveal our hearts. Unless we bring Him into our goal making, we will be totally under the influence of the selfishness of our flesh. We may reach such a goal, but we will never be satisfied. When we allow Jesus to be involved in our goals, our lives will become filled with His blessings.

Session Twelve . . . The Purpose Of Life

Points For Discussion (See pages 102 and 103)

1. It will be difficult for me to establish a purpose for my life unless I am willing to examine my past life and how I have reacted to it. Although it is painful to look at the past, it is necessary, in order for me to understand my own past behavior. As I release control over my life to Jesus, I can also release my future to Him. One of the by-products of building a relationship with Jesus is that He will show me the direction He wants my life to take.
2. We have not been called by God to live a selfish life. There is nothing wrong with money; it is the love for money that is evil. If we concentrate upon accumulating wealth, it will occupy all our productive time. This means we will be working for something that has no eternal value. No matter how much wealth we accumulate, we will not be able to take any with us when we move into the life after death. It is much better if we concentrate upon laying up treasures in heaven. We do this through obedience to the Word.
3. Our problem is that we have been living our lives on our feelings, and it has gotten us nowhere. If we do only those things that feel good, they will eventually lead us to an early death, because our feelings are in our flesh, and our flesh can never really be satisfied. It is the nature of flesh to always want more, because the flesh is self indulgent.
4. God has made us in such a way that we can only concentrate upon one thing at a time. This means if we concentrate upon serving the world, we cannot serve God at the same time. The world has a way of infiltrating our lives and making great demands on us. When we yield to it, it distracts us from the time we would have to serve God.
5. The major characteristic of the man who has a right purpose is that he has a close personal relationship with God. This enables God to work emotional healing and restoration of relationships in his life. As he develops his relationship with God, his purpose in life materializes and he becomes a functional human being.
6. The way for me to live God's purpose for my life is to stay in a close relationship with God at all times. I maintain that close relationship by establishing a daily quiet time in which I pray to God and journal His answers to me. As I continue that relationship, God guides me in a way that will fulfill His purpose for my life.