



HEALING THROUGH THE CROSS

-WORKBOOK-

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Author's Note



We would not have been able to put this workbook together apart from the CrossCurrent course from Desert Streams Ministries. We are very grateful to them for being pioneers in the arena of inner healing and freedom from sexual and relational brokenness.

We took the outline of their course, made a few changes, and rewrote sections of it to better serve our church family and friends who would be journeying with us. However, the ideas presented here and the outline are not very original.

There are a few other resources that I would love to recommend:

1. "Bought with Blood" by Derek Prince
2. "Living Waters Workbook" by Desert Streams Ministries
3. "The Transformation of the Inner Man" by John Loren Sandford and Paula Sandford
4. "God's Remedy for Rejection" by Derek Prince

Excited to journey with you!

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Introduction

Healing Through the Cross



One of the most fascinating stories in the Old Testament comes from Numbers 21:4-9, where we are presented with a profound preview of the healing power of the cross.

The Israelites had left Egypt, yet they became ungrateful towards God and disgruntled with Moses. As they were complaining, poisonous snakes were dispatched, and many were attacked and died after they were infected. The outbreak of the venomous serpents awakened a desperation within some of the Israelites, who humbly approached Moses and asked him to intercede for them.

Desperation seems to be a precursor to healing.

Moses was a humble man, and rather than being vindictive, he graciously interceded for them. The Lord instructed him to build a bronze snake and put it on a pole. Through Moses, God issued an edict: whoever was bitten could look at the pole, and they would be healed.

The word for *pole* is the same word used to describe the mast on a sailboat, which looks more like a wooden cross. *Bronze* is a symbol of God's judgment. The *serpent* is a picture of sin and bondage. When the people would get their eyes off their snake bites and unto the cross, they would be healed. When they stopped complaining and started gazing, they were healed.

Jesus made it very clear that as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so would He be lifted up (John 3:14). On the cross, God's judgment came upon the sins of the world. Jesus imported our sin and our wounds, our bondage, and our brokenness.

As we take a good look at what He has done for us, healing can take place. As we believe in the message of the cross, we will see the power of God go to work in our lives, bringing salvation to our spirits, our souls, and our bodies (1 Corinthians 1:18).

When we think of an inner healing class, we may assume it's going to be just a ton of introspection. However, introspection alone is not the answer. Those who were snake bitten did not get healed by looking at their wounds through a magnifying glass. We may need to take our eyes off ourselves.

Our efforts to fix ourselves have been futile. The Israelites were not able to concoct a medicine that successfully treated their deadly infection. The solutions were not in their human effort. It was heaven-sent.

Their healing was a lot less *complicated* than they thought. They just had to stare at what the Lord had done for them. Even for us today, we need to take a good look at what Jesus did for us on the cross. We need to truly tune into what God is saying to us through the cross.

The cross is the ultimate import and export center (or port); therefore, we need to bring our ashes to the cross, so that we can receive beauty from the cross. We need to bring our heaviness to the cross, so that we can receive the garment of praise from the cross. We bring our pain, our regrets, our shame, our anger, our rejection, our victimization, and our false identities to the cross. Jesus will take it from you and eradicate it. *From the cross*, we receive healing, hope, glory, peace, acceptance, redemption, and find our true selves.

The Israelites who looked to the cross in humble and active dependency were no longer disabled and dying, but restored and ready to possess the promised land. That's our prayer for this course. This course is about coming to the cross of our beautiful Savior and finding healing there.

"At the cross, at the cross; Where I first saw the light, And the burden of my heart rolled away, It was there by faith I received my sight, And now I am happy all the day!"

- Isaac Watts and Ralph E. Hudson

Lesson 1

LONGING FOR UNFAILING LOVE



Introduction

We were made *by* love, *for* love, and *to* love. Therefore, the supreme need of the human heart is to be loved. The purpose and calling of every human is to live a life of love. What will fulfill our hearts is when we are loving well because we have been loved well. To be a *whole* human being, means that we can receive and release real love. With that said, human brokenness is marked by the inability to receive and release real love as we should.

What love is not?

- Just like there is real gold and fool's gold, there is real love and false love. Real love is not acting nice or doing someone a favor in hopes to receive something from them. Real love is not giving with strings attached; that's called business.

What is real love?

- Real love is the ability to see beyond yourself. Real love sees another as worthy of love. We love another human being, not because of what we can get from them, but because they are worthy of love.

We were made by and for unfailing love

The love that we were made *by* and made *for* is an *unfailing love*.

- “What a person desires is unfailing love.” (Proverbs 19:22)

The Apostle Paul gives a beautiful description of unfailing love:

- “Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.” (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)

Are we familiar with unfailing love?

- Would we say that 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 describes our character?
- Would you say that 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 has been your experience with fellow human beings?

Why are we perpetually disappointed by human love?

Most of us know what it is like to be disappointed when it comes to human relationships. To be fair, not only were we *disappointed*, we were *disappointing*. Why is that so common to so many of us?

- No one can fully love us the way that we need them to.
- We aren't able to love people in a way that fully meets their needs.
- Therefore, we are left longing for a love that is “deeper and truer” than what humans can provide.

Have you received unfailing love?

Our ability to truly love others is based on how much of this unfailing love we have received from God.

- Unfailing love does not come *from* people, but *from* God — who is love. He is unfailing love (1 John 4:16, 1 Corinthians 13:7-8).
- Jesus came to give the world this unfailing love that He received from His Father. He did not release what he received from humans. He released what he received from His Father. His love came through a vertical pipe rather than a horizontal one. Jesus demonstrated a life of unfailing love. He prayed that what the

Father gave Him would be given to us (John 17:24). Then, on the cross, He demonstrated this unailing love (Romans 5:8).

Jesus with the Woman at the Well (John 4)

- Jesus initiates a connection with a Samaritan woman at the well. Not because He wanted to take something from her selfishly. Rather, He wanted her to receive *unailing love* that he talked about as “living water.”
- She had five husbands and a new boyfriend. Whether it was because she failed them or they failed her, the passage doesn’t specify. Yet, the passage reveals to us that she had unmet desires and needs, and her “love life” was a string of disappointments.
- While others may have seen an immoral woman with a history of relational failure, Jesus saw in her a deep longing for unailing love. Those who judgmental people will call *dirty*, Jesus will call *thirsty*.
- Jesus spoke to her about how there was a living water that would spring up out of her. Her heart could be so overflowing with this unailing love, that she can become a fountain.
- Jesus makes it clear that this *living water* would not be from another human being. To humanity, Jesus offered a love that is more real, relevant, and satisfying to our hearts than what another human being could provide.
- “Then Jesus declared, ‘I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.’” (John 6:35)

What are you hungering and thirsting for?

- Rather than seeking after this unailing love which satisfies the soul, so often, people pursue a failing love from a selfish heart.

3 consequences for pursuing failing love from our broken selves:

1. It leads to sexual brokenness (which is false intimacy that may have stimulation, but does not have true connection).
2. It leads to a pattern of unsuccessful romantic and other interpersonal relationships.

3. It leads to a giving up on relationships in general and living a very isolated life that is dominated by mistrust.

If we want to love people more purely, we must recognize two things:

1. We have been *damaged* by false love.
2. In order to love more *purely*, we must be loved by the Source that's superior to broken human sources. This experience of God's unfailing love is what Paul the Apostle prayed for:
 - “may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.” (Ephesians 3:18-19)

Prayer Time:

One of the ways we experience this unfailing love from God is by receiving prayer from others. God can release living waters into us as people are extending their hands to pray for us.

“Jesus, I was made for love. I need a love that is beyond what anyone can give me. As You offered the Samaritan woman living water, I ask that You pour Your love into the deepest places of my heart. I have been deceived by false love. I've been wounded by a failing love. I'm so hungry and thirsty for real love. Therefore, I cry out for You, my only Source of unfailing love.”

Lesson 1

LONGING FOR UNFAILING LOVE

Study Guide



Meditations:

- 1 Corinthians 13:4-7
- Ephesians 3:18-19

Reflection Questions:

1. How is God's unfailing love different from the failing love from human beings?
2. When you do things for others, is it because you want something in return or because you truly see them as worthy of love?
3. Are we aware that beneath the surface of our sexual desires and relational longings is a desire for unfailing love?
4. What do you think will happen if we try to meet our deepest needs apart from God?
5. When we feel tempted and lonely, how important is it to call upon the Lord for His unfailing love to meet the deepest and truest longings of our soul?

Lesson 2

THE REAL YOU TO THE REAL JESUS



Introduction:

We spend our lives trying to answer the question, “Who am I?” However, without a relationship with the master designer Himself, our answers will be at best incomplete and at worst, deceptive.

When it comes to our self-portraits, others have damaged them with their own brush strokes. We may have not even invited them to invade our canvas, yet they successfully landed their opinions upon the canvas of our self-perception.

Our self-perceptions are a combination of what we made up and what people said or did to us. However, we need the Creator to define His work. You are His original work, and He reserves the right to define it.

Returned and Restored

Andy Comiskey shares a beautiful parable of a restored painting.

- Suppose someone stole an artist’s original painting and damaged the work.
- Somehow the criminals were busted, and the painting was returned; however, now it needed to be restored.

- With skill and patience, he undoes the damage, and enables the true design to re-emerge.

The point of the parable is that Jesus is the master painter. With skill and patience, he will persist in reclaiming the true self in each of us. Jesus came to 1) reveal our truest identity 2) and call forth the most profound and authentic you. In His love, He resuscitates our truest self, and He calls us out of the shadows of our lesser selves.

Seeing the True Self

- In John 4, we meet a woman in Samaria who had lost her true self. Her drawing water from a well in mid-afternoon provides evidence that she was an outcast and perceived as an unclean woman.
- However, Jesus saw her as someone created for unfailing love. Jesus saw who she was beyond her sin and failure. To Jesus, she was destined for a real relationship with God and a beautiful relationship with fellow humanity.

What's true of all humans

- At the core of all humans is the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26-27). We bear His image, and we are called to reveal God on Earth and shine forth His glory. The image of God is our most profound and authentic self.
- As we respond to Jesus and His loving initiatives in our lives, we discover our true self. C.S. Lewis taught that how we find our true self is not by looking for our true self, but by looking for Jesus. As we get to know Him better, the more our true self is reclaimed.
- Additionally, the more we yield to His work in our hearts and lives, the more of our real self can emerge.

Not good to be alone

- We long for connection because we were made to not be alone (Genesis 2:18).
- We were created not just to know our creator, but to know fellow image-bearers. We weren't just made for union with the Creator. We were also made to be giving and receiving love from fellow humans.

- Healthy relationships can bless and build up the real selves of both parties. We can call each other out of the false and broken ways of being and relating.
- However, this ability to love others well comes from *union* with the One whose image we are called to.

The effect of unfailing love

- As we become secure in God’s unfailing love, we become more free to make peace with how He designed us — and that includes our gender.
- Out of a secure gender base, we accept our need for same-sex friendship. Out of a secure gender base, we accept the calling to bless and honor the opposite gender.
- Jesus did not see people the way others saw them or how they saw themselves. Jesus saw their true self. For the woman at the well, He saw her as someone created for a worshipful relationship with God and a whole relationship with others. However, for her to be empowered to live out that calling, she needed the “living water” of unfailing love. It’s that living water that enables us to re-establish the true self and to live out the purpose of that true self.

We are a work in progress

- God knows that for us to rediscover and restore our true self, it is going to be a work in progress. Therefore, we need other Jesus followers to remind us of who we are.
- We can be discouraged by our own brokenness. We can revert to false identities. We need people to encourage us about who we are becoming.
- This is not to say, we allow people to define us. No, we allow the truth, the word from God to define us. We are to be open to God’s messengers that will bless us and remind us of the truth of our worth and our calling as image-bearers of God. When isolated, I can forget the truth of who I am, in fellowship I am urged to press on into becoming and manifesting my true self.

Prayer Time:

“Jesus, I confess that I am often confused when it comes to my own identity. I have let culture and people define me. However, I acknowledge that You created me, and You alone can reclaim the glory of Your image in me. Help me to accept that I am created to receive love from You and to return that love through worship. Help me to accept in faith you knew what you were doing when you designed me. Thank you that in spite of my brokenness You see me as I really am, and that Your love will help me to live out of my true self.”

Lesson 2

THE REAL YOU TO THE REAL JESUS

Study Guide



Meditations:

John 4:1-26

Reflection Questions:

1. What does it mean to you that Jesus knows you better than you know yourself?
2. Jesus saw beyond the Samaritan woman's brokenness and beheld her real self. What does Jesus see beyond your brokenness? Ask Him.
3. Consider how C.S. Lewis said we find our true self by looking to Jesus. Why do you think that we find our true self in Jesus, not by looking for our true self?
4. Do you accept your gender as a good gift from God?
5. Bearing God's image involves God and human relationships. Have your human relationships blessed the true self? How so? Have your human relationships fortified the false self? If so, how?

Lesson 3

FREEDOM FROM THE FALSE SELF



Introduction:

We come to Jesus when we are desperate. When we cry out to the Savior, we begin to experience His salvation. But what exactly are we saved from? Jesus saves us from the power that separates us from the love of God and the love of others. We will be calling this power, “the false self.”

What is the false self?

- The false self looks to feed off others, not to give to others.
- The false self is not afraid of compromising itself or others, because it is ravenous.
- The false self doesn't want to worship God, but wants to be God.
- The false self does not want to serve another, but to be served.
- The false self is addicted to false love.

The emergence of the false self is from the separation from God, and it perpetuates the separation from God. After Adam and Eve chose the false self through the separation from God, their knee jerk reaction was to hide from God. The false self is essentially shame-ridden. It anxiously tries to

combat shame through: 1) self-centered success, 2) selfishness in relationships, 3) substance abuse, and 4) drowning in distractions.

The false self is fiercely independent and consistently self-protective. The false self doesn't just keep us from God, but keeps us from trying to relate to one another in a life-giving way. The false self drowns the true self, preventing it from emerging.

How Jesus saves from false self

Jesus' love is powerful enough to break through the cold, hard shell of the false self, and reclaim the true self. A powerful picture of this is when Jesus told Lazarus to come forth out of the tomb. Jesus came to resurrect the true self and call us out of the tomb of our false self.

“Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?”

(John 11:25-26)

Why Jesus is uniquely qualified to save us from the false self

1. **He is God.** We can't save ourselves, and a human won't be able to save us. God is our only hope. He has the unique authority and power to break the walls that separate us from Him and us from one another.
2. **He is a man.** Jesus shares our humanity and knows our struggles (Hebrews 4:15-16). Unlike us, Jesus was victorious over all temptations of the false self. He lived His life in perfect obedience to the Father. Through Adam's sin, we came under the tyranny of the false self. Through Jesus' obedience, we can overcome the false self, as we rely on Him.
 - “Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.” (John 5:24)
3. **On the cross, Jesus died for us and took our place.** Jesus on the cross, took on everything that separates us from God and one another. He took every sin, every wound, every deception, everything within us that resists love. He took them all into His body and died with them in order to break the power of the false self.

- “For he has made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” (1 Corinthians 5:21)
4. **In His resurrection, Jesus raised up the true self.** The resurrection of Jesus Christ raises up the true self. The Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead raises us up out of the false self and into our true selves. He rose, so we would too. The result is freedom from a loveless, shame filled life. We no longer need to hide from or resist unfailing love.
- “For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his.” (Romans 6:5)

How can I be saved?

Calling out to Jesus is the beginning of freedom. We must ask Him to save us from the power of the false self, so we can move from death to life.

Prayer Time

“Lord Jesus, You are the One who can save me from my false self. I believe Your death and resurrection provided the means by which I can experience this salvation. As I cry out to You and depend on You, would you bring me into a greater union with You that causes my true self to emerge.”

Lesson 3

FREEDOM FROM THE FALSE SELF

Study Guide



Mediations:

John 11:1-44

Reflection questions:

1. How have you seen the false self manifest in your life?
2. Do you believe that Jesus can save you from the false self? How come?
3. How has Jesus' work on the cross secured for you victory over the false self?
4. What is the source of your true self?

Lesson 4

THE POWER OF CONFESSION



Introduction:

When Lazarus came out of the tomb, he came out wrapped in grave clothes. He experienced salvation to an extent, but needed further sanctification.

The grave clothes represent the false self.

1. The grave clothes include the broken and selfish ways of attaining false love.
2. Just like how grave clothes still cover the real Lazarus, the ways of the false self distort the image of God.
3. The grave clothes were unnecessary, but sadly familiar and comfortable.

Let's talk about sexual brokenness and sin

From Scripture, we see that sexual intimacy was designed to be shared from within the boundaries of 1) a committed and 2) complementary relationship.

- Giving access of your body to another, in sexual union, is not something to be given away lightly, especially given the life-creating power of it. There is to be a deep commitment intact before you give away the deepest parts of your spirit, soul, and body.

Otherwise, people will be hurt. Sex was designed to be experienced in a relationship characterized by exclusive commitment.

- When we settle for anything less, it is the illegal invasion of boundaries. Whether sex was consensual or not, it does not change the fact that boundaries were illegally crossed.
- Sex was also designed to be experienced between male and female. God made men and women different so that they would compliment one another, even sexually. A man can bring out the feminine energy out of a woman, and a woman can bring out the masculine energy out of a man. When the masculine and feminine energies converge, it reveals God's image.
- Sex shouldn't replace love. It should be a self-giving act, not a self-centered act. Sex was not designed to be experienced in merely the realm of fantasy, rather awakened within the proper context at the proper time, and experienced in a relationship marked by a lifelong commitment.

When we engage in sex outside of Scriptural guidelines or boundaries, the result is that:

1. Our affections are distorted.
2. Our emotions are wounded.
3. Our consciences are deadened.
4. We have also distorted, wounded, and deadened another human being.
5. It will bring on the conviction of the Holy Spirit.

The Power of the Cross

In His great love for us, Jesus makes a way for us to be free from the effects of sin, including sexual sin. On the cross, He allowed His body to be pierced, and blood and water flowed out (John 19:34). The blood cleanses our conscience, and the water cleanses our bodies and souls from the residue. We must receive the flood of grace that is gushing forth from the cross. When we are cleansed by the water and the blood, we are free to stand before God and others, *“without blemish and free from accusation”* (Colossians 1:22).

At the cross there is a holy transfer

The cross is the great import-export center. On the cross, Jesus imports our mess and brokenness, and exports to us beauty and wholeness. Let's unpack that.

- **Jesus assumes the weight of our sin as we confess it to Him.** He bears the sin. We admit our sin, not just for the sake of admitting, but for the sake of forsaking the sin. We want it to be removed from our lives. Confessing sin is not just airing your dirty laundry, it's casting the sin out.
- **Jesus takes the sin from us,** then He floods our hearts with forgiveness in His blood, and He cleanses our hearts and bodies.
- **Jesus fills the empty places left by sin.** He raises us up by the power of His Spirit, so we don't have to stay down and out anymore.
- **Jesus reinforces the internal boundary lines** that were broken by sin. Those are boundary lines of truth. Those are the boundary lines of our conscience.
- The role of the body of Christ:
- We need other Christians to help us remove the grave clothes off. One of the ways that happens is when we confess sin to one another (James 5:16). Jesus gave His followers the authority to declare the forgiveness of sins (John 20:22-23). This is not just for priests, but we are all priests (1 Peter 2:5-9).

How to confess sin:

1. Confess the sin specifically.
2. The priest binds the sin into the cross (Matthew 16:18-19).
3. The priest pronounces forgiveness over the receiver.
4. The priest pours water over the receiver as a symbol of the deep cleansing work that is occurring on unseen levels through Jesus' release of blood and water (Hebrews 10:22/Ezekiel 36:25).
5. The lay priest blesses the forgiven one's true self and affirms the protection and covering that corporate confession has released.

Lesson 4

THE POWER OF CONFESSION

Study Guide



Mediation

“Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.”

Hebrews 10:22-23

Reflection Questions

1. How do you discern between true and false love?
2. Do you think sexual brokenness is the result of people not yet able to love truly from their true selves?
3. Do you believe that sexual activity works best within the confines of a committed, complementary (opposite gender) relationship?
4. How do you feel about others hearing your confession and praying for you?
5. Why do you think God invites us to confess to one another rather than to confess to Him alone?

Lesson 5

OUR WOUNDS INTO HIS WOUNDS



Introduction:

On the cross, Jesus did not just take on our sins, but the sins that were committed against us. John the Baptist said of Jesus that he was the Lamb of God who came to take away the sins of the world (John 1:29). That includes the sins we did and the sins that were done. His grand work on the cross is *that* expansive and inclusive!

Grave Clothes

We talked about grave clothes last week and some pieces of cloth that we added on, but also other pieces were pasted onto us by others. The number of pieces that were pasted on us by others may even outnumber the pieces we have put on ourselves. Just like Saul tried to put on King David an armor that did not belong to him, others put on us what is not conducive to us becoming who we truly are.

How do people put “grave clothes” on us? One of the ways is through wounding.

The effects of a wound

Can you name those who have wounded you? That’s not always fun to do, because it may be painful to dig up the past, and it may also be confusing

that those who were supposed to love us the most actually wounded us the most.

- If we want to be free to love others, we must seek freedom from the wounds we have received from others. We may not be aware, but we wear our wounds, and we take them into every relational context we enter. Our wounds influence the choices we make and the culture we create.
- The more wounds we carry, the more difficult it would be to love others well. Our wounds also tie us to our false self, unable to be who we were meant to be. Our wounds *block* the true love we are to receive. Our wounds can *distort* our view of love.

Three Major Wounds

We will be addressing three wounds in this lesson: neglect, rejection, and abuse. It is not fun to even think about these experiences; however, bear in mind that the cross can easily handle them!

1. NEGLECT

This is often experienced during childhood by our parents. They may have been hustling and working or preoccupied with their own pain to be able to give us the nurture that we needed.

How this wound affects us:

- We may become overly dependent or clingy in relationships. We may try to make the significant other into the mother or father we have always wanted.
- There may be a painful loneliness that leads to addictions that are sexual in nature, serving as coping mechanisms.
- When we aren't loved well, we try to secure love in the wrong ways and possibly from the wrong people.
- We may cause trouble because negative attention feels better than neglect.
- We aren't operating in our relationships out of our true selves, but our false, wounded selves.

2. REJECTION

We can experience rejection, from our families, our schools, our churches, and our peer groups. We can start believing that how people rejected us is revealing of who we are.

How this wound affects us:

- The rejection we experienced is deadly when we start believing the lies that came with it. We start believing that who we are is unacceptable, and we settle for way less.
- We receive the love we believe we deserve, and if we believe we are unlovable, we will have a hard time receiving. When people find it difficult to love you, they may stop trying.
- We may compromise our values in efforts to secure any kind of love (even if it's not real love). We act in dishonorable ways to receive attention; however, this can lead to further self-rejection. Self-rejection leads to more societal rejection.

3. ABUSE

Abuse is the combination of two words: abnormal use. You can't keep abnormally using a product without damaging it. Abuse can be experiences that are emotional, physical, or sexual.

How this wound affects us:

- A child's view of sex and intimacy can become warped.
- There can be a perception that all members of a particular gender are threats.
- This can lead to the total shutdown of one's sexuality.
- There can be an over-sexualization and blowing up sex to unhealthy proportions.
- They can operate seductively, in efforts to keep getting more unhealthy, false love.
- The abused can be abusive. If their protective walls have been violated, they may act in ways that are disrespectful of personal boundaries and personal dignity.

How Jesus takes our wounds

Jesus knew neglect, rejection, and abuse. *“He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering “ (Isaiah 53:5).* He was deserted by His own friends. Betrayed by His disciple. Misunderstood by His siblings. Tortured. Utterly abused on the cross. He knows human suffering.

Now, He not only came to empathize with our pain, but He also came to extract our pain. On the cross, Jesus *“took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows” (Isaiah 53:4).*

He took on the full weight of the sins that were committed against us. Yes, we are wounded, but He was wounded with our wounds, so that we can tie our wounds to the cross, and receive healing. *“By His wounds we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5, 1 Peter 2:24).*

We can send our grave clothes to the cross. We may need assistance in doing this. Just like we confess our personal sins, we may need help from the body of Christ to help us be released from our wounds.

The 5 Step Process:

1. **Name the sin that was committed against you.** Name the person and the sin they committed against you.
2. **Release the pain.** This will not be a pleasant process as we talk about the uncomfortable emotions that we have felt like: sorrow, anger, shame, hatred, and fear. However, we can't leave these emotions buried and ignored. You may start feeling these hidden feelings again. We must come to the cross, see Him there, and apply your wounds to His wounds. Allow Him to grieve with you. Allow Him to grieve for you and with you. Allow Him to receive it, so that the cross can take care of it.
3. **Binding the sin to Christ.** This is helpful to have a prayer minister help you with the process, and pray for you to lose your wound and to bind it into Christ. They pray for the transfer of our wounds to the wounds of Jesus. They pray that the weight of the sins you have been carrying would be casted off you and unto the cross.
4. **Forgiveness.** In order to be free from our wounds, we must not just tie the sins that were committed against us to the cross, but also we must forgive those who have wounded us. This means a few things: 1) we release our right to stay offended, 2) we release our right to be

vindictive, 3) we speak forgiveness for our offender, and 4) we ask Jesus to release them from their sin as Jesus released us from our sins.

5. **Cleansing from the effects of the wounding.** So we can walk through the four steps very intentionally; however, there can still be residual effects. We need to ask Jesus to cleanse our hearts from the effects of those wounds. There is a healing stream that flows from the side of Jesus, and we have to allow it to cleanse you.

Prayer Time:

“Jesus help me to deal with my wounds. Reveal to me how my wounds distort my perception of reality. I come to the cross now. I believe you took on my suffering and provided a place where my suffering can be one with Yours at the cross.”

Lesson 5

OUR WOUNDS INTO HIS WOUNDS

Study Guide



Mediation

Isaiah 53

Reflection Questions

1. What makes it challenging to name our wounds and those who wounded us?
2. How have you experienced neglect, rejection, or abuse? And how do you think your past experiences affected your relationships?
3. Do you see how your wounds have compelled you to secure false love and be set in the ways of the false self?
4. Do you believe Jesus can take your wounds from you?

Lesson 6

THE FATHER'S LOVE



Introduction:

As we continue to behold the act of love on the cross, the power of the cross transforms our hearts. The cross proves God's unconditional love (Romans 5:8), and establishes the truth that all of our failures and victimizations do not disqualify us from His love.

"This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins." (1 John 4:10)

Jesus leads us to the Father's love

Jesus said that He is the way to the Father (John 14:6). Many struggle with God as our Father because of the failure of our earthly fathers or father figures. Needless to say, our fathers, in their brokenness, have not accurately represented our Heavenly Father to us.

Becoming secure in the Father's love

- The Father in Heaven wants us to be secure in His love. That is the greatest compliment we can give Him. He wants us to know in our heart of hearts that we are accepted by Him.

- This is what Jesus came to lead us into and what the Spirit has been and is still helping us with (Romans 8:15-16). The Holy Spirit of truth fights against the lies that we are damaged goods.

When we come to know the love of the Father

Paul's prayer for the church was that they would be secure in the Father's love (Ephesians 3:17-18). When we are, we are able to live out our true selves.

- When we feel the Father's love and hear the Father's blessing over our personhood, it makes me not want to be anyone else. It helps me to accept who I am. Jesus heard the Father say over Him, "This is my son, who I love; with him I am well-pleased" (Matthew 3:17). There will be many other voices that we hear, but we must connect and reconnect with the Father's voice.
- When we know that He is our Father and He loves us and blesses us, we are able to live honorable lives. We will not want to compromise in our relationships. The Father loves and honors us, and therefore we want to love and honor Him in return. It's not the feeling of "I have to...", but rather, "I want to..." Loving and honoring Him is called worship. One of the ways we worship is by singing love songs to God, and He loves to hear His children adoring Him, pouring out their hearts to Him in songs and melodies.

We were created to worship.

- We are always going to look for something to worship. Everyone worships something. Yet sadly, we are so devoted to and worshipful towards things that do not deserve it. We must break free from the inferior things we attach to, so that we can worship God.
- We become more like what we worship. Who and what we worship takes mastery of our lives, and we are to be mastered by God, not creation, for that is the way to living free. Submission to God is the freest life we can ever know. As we worship the Father and the Son, we break free from lesser attachments. We were made to worship Him alone. Extended times of worship allows us to break

free from inferior gods and truly connect with the Source of our souls.

- As we worship, we experience the Father's love for us. We receive His love, acceptance, blessing, and honor, and His voice becomes louder and clearer. We then become more and more reflective of His image and likeness, and we can reveal Him to our world with greater accuracy.

Prayer Time:

“Father, I long to secure in Your love for me. I know that on the cross, You settled the issue of your love for me. Your love is truly unconditional. Yet, I need help feeling it and believing it. By Your Spirit, impart the truth to my soul that I am Your beloved child. That You made me the way You wanted me to be. May I live today in a way that honors you. I declare You and You alone are worthy of my worship. Reveal and root out the lesser gods in my life. I long to be deeply devoted to You.”

Lesson 6

THE FATHER'S LOVE

Study Guide



Mediation

Romans 8:15-16

Reflection Questions

1. What does the cross convince you of?
2. Do you think that your earthly father helps or hinders your ability to become secure in the Father's love?
3. Have you struggled with security in your identity as a man or a woman?
4. How might becoming secure in the Father's love impact your everyday life?
5. How does worshiping the Father free you up to be who you were meant to be?

Lesson 7

LOVING WELL



As we become secure in the Father’s love, we are free to love others in a way that reveals God’s love. We can love the people around us, not with a fallen and human love, but with God’s love. When we are loved well, we can love well.

“Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another...if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.”

(1 John 4:11-12)

How to approach relationships

We are built for connection (Genesis 2:18), so we were made to be loved. We do have real needs to be loved. However, we are to approach our relationships with a heart to give rather than to take. This is a much healthier and happier way to live.

If we are expecting people to love us well, we will be perpetually disappointed. We will blame others and fall back into sin and bondage, as each offense saps our joy and strength.

When it comes to the different fellowships and communities we step into, the goal should not be to be loved well by them, but to love them well. Not in

a romantic or sexual way, which can lead to self-centeredness (even a covert self-centeredness through secret lust and fantasy). Just in a pure way. We are called to enter into fellowship with other believers and grow together in our love for Jesus and each other.

How shame keeps us from relationships

We may be ashamed of our struggles. We may not feel we are not good enough. However, we must remember that what qualifies us for fellowship is the cross. Jesus came to take away our shame, so we can boldly connect not just with God, but with one another. We must keep reminding ourselves of what we are in Christ and through the cross.

The cross reminds us how much we need the Lord and how much others need the Lord. The cross levels the playing field. We have so much in common, more than we think.

Living in the victory of the cross

We must assert the victory of the cross in the areas where sin and shame have had a stronghold over us. How do we do this? We must continue to send our shameful thoughts, sinful desires, and evil fantasies over to the cross.

Now, when we fail, the cross reminds us that we have an advocate with the Father: Jesus Christ. We can approach Him even when we fail. We don't need to run from Him, but we can run to Him. As we come to Him with humble confidence, we will be embraced by His love, and He will take our sin and shame, cleansing us with His blood and His love.

We must remind ourselves that Jesus busted out of the tomb, so that we can bust out of our false selves and our false ways of securing false love. So that by the resurrection power of His Spirit, we can be raised up to be able to love truly from our true selves.

What fellowship can be

Fellowship with other believers can be a beautiful thing. God can work through people, brothers and sisters in Christ, to extend His love to us. His grace can be extended to us through a human face. They can remind us of who we are in Him and to Him.

In a real fellowship, the goal is to deepen our commitment to Jesus Christ and encourage one another towards Him. The goal is to draw near to Him,

personally and collectively. The goal is not to have our needs and desires met. The goal of pursuing relationships is to build one another up in Christ. The goal is to be built up in Christ and build each other up in Christ.

As we give ourselves to build up others, rather than to use them to meet our needs, we are continually changed into the image and likeness of Jesus Christ. Ironically, as we no longer prioritize our needs, our needs are met. We can't out-give God. So to water others in the name of Jesus means you will be abundantly watered (Proverbs 11:25).

We are to bless the true self in others. We don't try to use people to meet our needs; we seek to build people up in the Lord.

- We look for what is good and true in them, and we speak it forth.
- We speak the truth in love when someone stumbles.
- We see them with eyes of faith, to behold what they can be in Christ, and we love them into realizing their potential. We see beyond their brokenness.

Same sex friendships

It is important to have same sex friendship and connect with those of our own gender. As Jesus becomes the center of our same-sex friendships, we grow in confidence as a man or a woman. We must be confident and secure in our gender, in order to be free to bless the opposite sex. As you are secure as a man or a woman, who is loved by Jesus and blessed by the Father, we are free to honor the opposite gender.

Relationships with the opposite gender

Perhaps we need healing from the wounds we collected from the opposite gender. Perhaps there are barriers still there. We are called to love the opposite sex, and as we continue to obey the call of Jesus to love, we will find that our old fears that built walls will come down. The Lord will honor your desire to love others. The more we love out of our true selves, the more we will grow in God, and God will shine through us.

How God transforms us to love well

We were created to be like God and to love like God. Sadly, through the fall, we became more familiar with and experienced in shame, fear, control, and lust, than unflinching love.

However, Jesus came to restore true love and to restore us as image bearers of God who can be like God and love like God. Through His power, we can live above shame, fear, control, and lust. For us to be who we were originally made to be, a healing process is necessary.

- We come to God broken and ashamed.
- His love will continue to break the strongholds of shame, fear, control, and lust. The Lord will love us well, in light of all the things we feel disqualify us from His love.
- As we experience His love in our brokenness and weakness, He expands our compassion. As that happens, grace flows more freely from our lives to others. This is not a one time event. His love frees us over and over again.

Prayer Time

“Secure me in Your love, so that I can help others establish security in those around me. Deliver me from selfishness in my relationships. Teach me how to love without strings attached. Make my only motive be to build others up. Heal me of my past wounds that are infecting my present relationships and preventing future ones. Thank you for the beauty of fellowship. May you be the center of my relationships.”

Lesson 7

LOVING WELL

Study Guide



Mediation

1 John 4:11,12

2 Corinthians 1:3-5

John 17:26

Reflection Questions

1. What does it mean for you to approach relationships out of a posture of giving? Why does the “victim” approach to making friends not work?
2. How do you cope with the social shame of feeling different? How do you cope with the sexual feelings towards others that you know shouldn't be expressed? How can the cross make a difference in those two areas?
3. Have you discovered relationships that have Christ at their center? How are they different from relationships based solely on mutual need?

4. As an image-bearer, you need friendship with both the same and the opposite sex. Of the two, which seems more challenging? Why?
5. Are you more aware of what's right or wrong about you?

Conclusion

What's Next?



By His unfailing love, Jesus will overthrow lust, fear, shame, hatred, and insecurity in our lives, and transform us into becoming a more loving presence in our world. However, we must be committed to our healing journey in Christ, and here is how:

1. **Be committed to a community that can help secure us in love.** As we experience this beautiful love of God in community, we can be more free to love those outside the community. *As you continue your healing journey, where can you continue to fellowship with a healing community?*
2. **Keep giving away what we are receiving from the Lord.** Tell others about your breakthrough and your progress. *If this course has blessed your life, how can you share with others what you have received from this course?*
3. **Keep seeking Jesus and coming to the cross through communion.** Jesus Christ is the Lord of love. One of the ways we receive from Jesus is to receive communion. As we take communion bread, we receive the greatest act of love in human history into our bodies. His broken body does a work of renewal and revival in us. As we take the cup, we receive the cleaning and healing that is made available through His blood. The blood breaks

the walls that separate us from God's love and melts the chains that bind us to our past failures and wounds. As we drink in forgiveness, we can forgive. We are drinking in unfailing love in liquid form, so that we can be secure in love. Let's keep making exchanges at the cross, release what you need to release, and receive what you need to receive. *How do you think communion contributes to your capacity to love God and others?*