

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

WALKING OUT YOUR HEALING

In many ways this is the most difficult chapter to write. I have taught the principles outlined in the earlier chapters, to many different groups of people. There have been youth groups and seniors, liturgical congregations and non-conformist, Bible colleges and home groups. In almost all of them, there has been an emotional response, with many weeping people coming to me seeking counsel. I am saddened that, usually, I am just passing through and am unable to commit myself to the long process of walking out the healing so many of them require. I am aware that I have often 'opened a wound' - a memory long suppressed - that now needs healing. Sometimes the response has been very unexpected. I remember one Episcopalian congregation made up of mature adults, who broke into applause as the pastor and I embraced as we acted out the reconciliation that follows release. They were very conscious of their need to forgive and release a former pastor of that church, and excitement at their new understanding of how they could be relieved of the pain they bore, caused them to break out into spontaneous applause. We immediately lifted that applause as a praise offering to the Lord.

I hope that this book will awaken many pastors and counsellors to the tremendous responsibility we have to bring reconciliation and healing to the broken relationships and wounded souls, so prevalent in our churches. I further hope that many believers will learn how to operate the keys that open the kingdom of heaven for their loved ones, and bring release to themselves from the wounds that they have carried too

long. It's about time Satan was put in his place and the people of God were able to walk in wholeness and power, instead of limping along as so many have done for too long!

For those who may have recognised themselves as wounded ones, as they have read this book, I am closing with some guidelines that will enable them to 'walk out' their own healing . If it is possible to find a good counsellor who will walk through this with you, such a companion will be invaluable. I would encourage you to urge him or her to become familiar with this book before you start.

Ask the Lord to direct your thoughts

Be assured that the Lord wants to heal your soul wounds. He is aware of them but has given **you** the key to being healed. He wants you to use it! He will not answer prayer in those areas of our lives where He has already won the victory on the cross, and where He has given the authority or mandate to us.

Take your time

Healing often does not come quickly. Most of the stories I can tell, relate to many months of counselling. It takes time to walk again after a bad wound.

Just as physiotherapy is essential if we are to walk again after a bad accident causing leg injuries, so spiritual therapy is essential to walk out our healing after long-standing soul-wounds.

Talk about your past

I usually encourage the counsellee to break their past down into short time periods. For example, preschool, junior school, teenage years, young adult, etc. I prompt them with questions about their home, their school, friends, loves and hates, all the time looking for patterns of attitudes or hurts. “How did the little child inside you feel?” Ask the Lord to touch each wound as it is revealed.

Write down anything you feel is relevant

I always have a pen and paper handy to note any patterns that may be emerging, any thoughts that strike me. During the days when no counsellor or friend is with you, you will become surprised as memories come of things long forgotten. But why should you be surprised when you have already asked the Lord to be actively involved in your healing process? Make a note of these memories.

Recognise if you have been wounded by another's sin

Do not blame another if the sin is your own. If you have taken offence, you must deal with it as in chapter nine. Do not go into denial if the one who has wronged you is someone you love. Do not make excuses for him. God sees him as a sinner, just like you and me, and sinners sin! Call it what it is - ‘sin’. He may be a redeemed sinner but he is still capable of wounding you.

Most often, the wounds were created unintentionally, but they are real wounds, and, if the wounder were not a sinner, they would not have been so injurious to you.

As I came to understand this principle, I saw how I had probably wounded my own daughter through ignorance. Anne was in hospital for a few weeks before the birth of our first daughter, Corinne, so when she began labour, I was at home, unaware of what was happening. Two friends were the first to tell me of her labour as they had called the hospital just before departing on vacation. The nursing staff told them that the baby was born but would not be specific about the birth details, especially the sex of the child. The father would be the first to be so informed. They urged me to phone the hospital so that they could know the details before beginning their vacation. I told them that I would do so after finishing the Agatha Christie novel I was reading! Of course, I was joking, just to keep them in suspense, and we quickly went together to the public call-box to hear the exciting news that I was now the father of a lovely baby girl.

However, that story was repeated many times to visiting friends over the years, and sometimes, in the presence of my daughter. I never thought how she was hearing the story - that daddy didn't real care when she was born. Perhaps, he did not want her?

Just two years ago, I wrote to Corinne asking her forgiveness for the wounds caused by my thoughtlessness.

Write a letter, being specific about your hurts

You do not have to show this letter to anyone though you may choose to confide in your counsellor. However, this should only be if he can be trusted with confidentiality, and you know that he will not allow your information to affect his attitude toward you or the one who wounded you. Try to be comprehensive and objective in the letter, writing down how you felt when wounded - rejected, belittled, embarrassed, etc. Also add any positive things you can say. Being objective may be very difficult as this

letter can raise strong emotions and pain. Its purpose is to enable you to bring to the surface, emotions you have suppressed for years. Bandages that have become bondages have to come off! Take your time!

Choose to forgive

Recognise that the one who wounded you is a sinner walking in darkness. He is blind to what he has done to your soul. Your real adversary is Satan whose army have targeted you from birth, and your wounder is but an agent, ignorant of Satan's devices. Get angry with Satan - and forgive the blind man. Make sure you are prepared to forgive for every item mentioned in the letter you wrote.

Do not expect the Lord to heal where you are not prepared to forgive.

Choose to release

Why not use the prayer of St. Stephen? *“Father, do not lay these sins to his/her charge!” “Today, I choose to release him/her from all guilt.”*

I suggest you make a note of this date, recording it in your memory just as you would a birthday.

Burn the letter!

The matter has been dealt with - why keep it hanging around? This should be recorded in your memory only as the day on which you started to walk out your healing - a day for celebrating!

Pray for the one who wounded you

Commit yourself to pray each day for God to bless the one who wounded you. Are his children far from the Lord? Pray for them. Is his business in difficulty? Pray for its success. As you continue to pray in this way, God will work through the channel between Himself and the wounder, a channel that you opened by your forgiveness and release. You will be delivering yourself from slavery to the emotional bondage of your wounds and becoming the servant Jesus called you to be.

If one wrongs you by taking your shirt, he makes you his slave; by giving him your coat also, you make yourself his servant. If he wrongs you by forcing you to go a mile, he makes you his slave; by going two miles, you make yourself his servant.¹

If he wounds your soul, you become an emotional slave; by praying for him, you become his servant.

The first call of discipleship is to become a SERVANT - even as Jesus was for you.

Be open to reconciliation

Should there be an opportunity to be reconciled to the one who wounded you, do not let apprehension or fear hinder you. The Lord's priority is not just the healing, which blesses you, but the reconciliation which blesses Him!

Walk out your healing

Each day, take upon yourself the 'whole armour' of God as found in Ephesians 6:10-18. Make this a conscious action, even speaking out as you do it. "I take on me the belt of truth so that my 'inner man'

may not be wounded by the lies of the enemy.” “I take on the breastplate of righteousness so that the enemy may never cause my heart to be divided in its commitment and love for the Lord.” etc. (Only the ‘pure in heart’ shall see God - those whose hearts are unalloyed with the dross of this world.)²

Give each wound to the Great Physician

Just as surely as the enemy knows where your wounds are, so does the Lord. He felt your pain when you were hurt and longs for your healing. However, He has given the ‘key’ to you. As you begin to use it, He is very willing to assist in the walking out of the healing. As He has revealed the wounds to you, so He removes the bondages and brings wholeness in their place. He is the “Great Physician”, the healer, who took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows and, by whose stripes we are healed.³

Finally, thank Him for His healing!

¹ Matthew 5:40,41

² Matthew 5:8

³ Isaiah 53:4,5