

Lesson 16: Mending the Broken Heart (TRAUMA)

Healing Streams Ministry, Savannah, GA. All scriptures are from the ESV unless otherwise noted.

Introduction

Who broke your heart? When? Where? Is the pain pushed down so you won't feel it? Almost everyone knows what it is like to carry the wounds of unhealed traumas of the past. Like physical cuts and bruises these are the places in our memories that we don't want to touch on in conversation or can only talk about very carefully because so much pain still remains. Some things have happened, large or small, that hurt us and broke our trust with God, self or others. ***As long as there is pain in the memory, our heart is still broken*** by those incidents and the distrust and fears that we feel have reason to remain.¹ Unhealed trauma will always make our world seem unsafe to our emotions. Ironically, the safest life to have is not one that can't be broken by painful events, but one which is quickly restored by releasing full forgiveness to others and steadfastly trusting in God despite the pain God allows. Don't believe me? Then ask Jesus. Every harrowing passage through the cross of unwanted pain, will always carry us into a resurrection of new creation life—if we do not lose hope. God never afflicts us with trauma (He doesn't author evil), but He will use it to ***grow a heart in us like that of Jesus***—if we let Him.



Mending the Broken Heart

What are traumas? Consider these definitions of trauma from *Webster's College Dictionary*:

- 1) A body wound or shock produced by physical injury, as from violence or an accident.
- 2) Psychological shock or severe distress from experiencing a disastrous event outside the range of usual experience, as rape, military combat, or an airplane crash.
- 3) Any wrenching or distressing experience.

For the purposes of this course, trauma is considered to be any event of the past from which we are still carrying pain, broken trust, and/or unresolved negative emotions.

Traumas often become door-points by which the enemy enters to plant distortions of the truth and to bind the heart with bitterness, fear and soul killing messages. These wounded areas can grow into strongholds (see Lesson 11)—areas of our flesh that are well fortified against the life of the Spirit and are hard for us to overcome. Traumatic events of childhood, such as illness, accidents, abuse, may also have been points of entry for evil spirits. Traumas engender a legacy of fears that follow us into adulthood: phobias, dreads, our characteristic set of semi-irrational dislikes and anxieties as well as bitter feelings of regret, resentment and shame. ***Lies the enemy has planted*** hound us throughout life (ex. “you’re not wanted,” “you’re no good,” “you’ll never make it.”) Additionally, we tend to define ourselves by what has happened to us in the past, rather than by the bright future that God sets before us.

Jesus is a mansion builder in our soul, yet many live in the dungeon of what should be their mansion—locked in a dark room with terrible memories, devastated by trauma, bound by bitterness. It's rightly said by AA that we are as sick as our secrets—for darkness is the enemy's domain. Tragically, the very things we hide from God and others are the things He wants to heal us of. If we want to be free, we will have to deal with our traumas, so the root of fear, hurt or bitterness can be removed—and make ourselves trusting and vulnerable to those God would use as instruments of His healing. We will have to risk exposing our wounds to the Light in the presence of people He appoints (discerning whom to trust). But not all at once! Think of issues like tissues in a box and let the Lord pull out one at a time. God wants to mend your broken heart, but ***you have to give Him all of the pieces***...hold nothing back.



www.healingstreamsusa.org
www.forerunners4him.org



We always have a choice how we will respond to each moment or event in life. Our ungodly reactions to trauma are what can bring the curse upon us—if we reacted in a wrong manner to what was done to us. When trauma happened to us we may have carried away fear and unforgiveness (our sin) and this binds the past to us and compounds the pain and spiritual darkness resulting from the trauma. We may have reacted in ignorance of God’s ways, but we are still responsible for decisions we made, attitudes we formed, any acting out we did, or inner vows we made.

Many are the afflictions of the righteous, But the LORD delivers him out of them all.
Psalm 34:19

There is real hope! We have a God who knows how to deliver us out of all our afflictions. His ways really work—if we cooperate.

Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all. Psalm 34:19

It was prophesied of the Messiah that He would mend broken hearts. At the start of His ministry Jesus read this text in the Synagogue in which that promise had been given. This ministry of Jesus has never ended. He still comes to heal the brokenhearted.

And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” Luke 4:17-19

Recognizing the thoughts of trauma. Usually we are aware of the traumatic events of our past, but sometimes we can live in unconscious denial, having lost touch with the reality of how much we were hurt in the past. Because we have been given free will, if we do not freely choose to bring our wounded places to the Lord, He will not be in a position to mend them. Hence, it is important that we keep ourselves sensitive to what the Holy Spirit may want to show us. Traumas may be carried by us in three main ways:

- **Painfully obvious.** Often we are aware of the traumatic events of our past and still carry them with us like raw wounds that throb with pain whenever we think back upon them. We have carried them so long that it seems like we have been permanently damaged by them—but that is a lie of the enemy. God can and does heal even the deepest traumas.
- **Partially buried.** On the other hand, some traumas were so painful that we shoved them down and spend a lot of mental energy keeping them submerged. Some of the worst traumas are forcefully forgotten—until present events bring memories to the surface or trigger the powerful negative emotions they contain.
- **Hidden in plain sight.** There are other events that we have glossed over so thoroughly that they no longer seem to bother us—but it spills out of us in conversation (Mt12:34-35). Or we may feel fine until someone begins to pry and poke into the memories. Then the emotions that come out of us are the best indicators of what is still hidden in our hearts.
For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. Proverbs 23:7

Five ways that God heals trauma.

- 1) **Our tears**—there is a blessing on those who carry their grief to God and give it to Him (Ps 6:8).
“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Matthew 5:4
- 2) **The prayers of others**—help is promised if we bring trauma to others for prayer.
Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. James 5:16
- 3) **Forgiveness**—clears the way for prayers to be answered and life to be restored.
And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. Mark 11:25
- 4) **Believing truth**—actively believing God’s promises of restoration (Zec 9:12; Joel 2:25).



And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. Romans 8:28

- 5) Divine intervention—dreams, visions, healing of memories, visitations, prophetic words.
“I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.” Joel 2:28

Full healing of trauma is possible! No trauma has been fully healed if it still hurts to remember any part of it, or if patterns that began after the trauma happened are still continuing. Yet fully forgiving all who need to be forgiven and fully receiving forgiveness where we need it, brings us to the place where there is no pain attached to any of the memories. Jesus heals the brokenhearted—especially as we forgive!

End notes for Mending the Broken Heart

1. For this definition of a broken heart: Art Mathias, Wellsprings Ministries of Alaska, seminar notes, January 2006.

Notes/Journal



Exercise



Make a **trauma list** (Just write it down on the lines above; it's not for praying through—yet.)

- 1) Ask God to show you one trauma that has impacted your life that He would like to work with you on at this time. Put it on the form below. It will set a pattern for mending the other ones.
- 2) Fill in the names of anyone you may need to forgive (yourself and God included).
- 3) Ask God to show you where any doors may have been opened for the enemy to come in and oppress you through **false messages** (insecurity, rejection, shame) or **ungodly reactions** you may have had (promiscuity, un-forgiveness, rebellion). Write them down.
- 4) Finally, write the truths from God's Word you will need to believe for your heart to mend.
- 5) Now go to work praying with the Holy Spirit's help. Enlist the help of a friend if needed.

Traumatic event _____

Person(s) to forgive _____

Ungodly reaction(s) to repent _____

False message(s) to renounce _____

Truth(s) to believe _____

Discussion Questions



We all know people who have never gotten over the terrible things that have happened to them—and it keeps ruining their lives in the present. The longer anyone carries pain and



www.healingstreamsusa.org
www.forerunners4him.org



damage the harder it is for them to believe that they have a life they could want. And yet our Invincible Savior says with supreme confidence that on that Great Day when we finally meet Him face to face, He will wipe every tear from our eyes (Isa 25:8, Rv 7:17; 21:4)—making everyone glad to have had the life they had, even after their chance to enjoy it down here is over! How will He do that? By the same 5 ways He uses down here with anyone who will let Him. To build hope and faith over this have people share on each of the 5 ways that they have seen God use for healing in their life or that of someone they know.

- 1) **Tears**—even tears alone can do the mending. Whose tears has He already wiped?
- 2) **Full release of forgiveness.** If no one has this testimony, go back and redo Lesson 15!
- 3) **The prayers of others** (or confession of sin) that God has used to do His mending.
- 4) **Believing with a full heart of faith** the hope giving promises of God (Ro 8:28).
- 5) **Supernatural interventions**, especially revelations of His glory (2Co 4:16-18).

Main Points



- Traumatic events are often door points for the enemy to enter and oppress.
- Unhealed traumas generate bitterness and fears held in place by ungodly beliefs.
- If we want to mend, the issue has to be letting God mend us on His terms.
- There are 5 main ways God heals trauma—time alone is not one of them.
- God uses tears, forgiveness, prayers of others, active believing and the supernatural.
- As long as there is still pain in the memory forgiveness is not complete.
- As long as there is a sense of loss and regret, believing His promise is not complete.
- We can be fully mended from emotional trauma! Restoration is real. Go for it!

Digging Deeper



This list may help you recognize and remember traumatic events that have happened to you. Pray as you go over it to see if the Holy Spirit desires to bring anything to remembrance. Pray over what He reveals. Go back to the earliest memories and work up to the present—early memories often carry the root issues. Not all of these are for dealing with now—just for understanding them better in light of the teaching you have received.*

Conception: born out of wedlock, unwanted child, genetic problems

In the womb: rejection (due to gender, etc.); illness, pain or emotions of mother

Trauma of birth process: breech birth, isolette, cord around neck

Early illnesses or dental trauma, nightmares, night terrors

Separations: hospitalization, given up for adoption, parent absent (war, job, neglect), moving to new area, divorce, death

Accidents: injuries, trauma from near drowning, choking, fire, medical procedures, in a traffic accident or witness to it

Rejection due to physical, emotional, social differences; coarse jesting, teasing

Conflicts with parents, siblings, peers, school teachers, bosses, pastors, doctors, mates, children

Abuse of authority: in home, churches, schools, workplace, legal system

Broken dreams or broken heart

Rejection by girlfriends/boyfriends
Loss of spouses/friends/parent/children
Financial loss/poverty and/or fear of it
Sickness and disease throughout life

Dysfunctional family or marriage

Parents speaking fear of God/devil
Lies from parents/siblings (“you’re adopted”)
Victimization, family scapegoating
Keeping family secrets
Tense, chaotic home environment
Divorce of parents or by spouses
Being childless/having abortions



www.healingstreamsusa.org
www.forerunners4him.org



Witnessing violence: home, juvenile homes, foster homes, orphanages, boarding schools, in TV/videos/movies, in the community, in military service

Experiencing violence: bullies, robbery, mugging, incest, molestation, rape, Satanic ritual abuse and programming

Any near death experience

* Renunciation list modified from Be In Health® teaching and materials, Dr. Henry W. Wright, Thomaston, Georgia, seminar notes, October 2000.

Sword and Shield



The Lord completely understands the depth of our woundedness from trauma and doesn't want it to be just glossed over—He wants His peace restored into every hurting heart!

Let my prayer come before you; incline your ear to my cry! For my soul is full of troubles, and my life draws near to Sheol. I am counted among those who go down to the pit; I am a man who has no strength. Psalm 88:2-4 [Be very honest with him in prayer about your pain.]

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. Psalm 51:17 [He is drawing near to you when you are hurting.]

But this is a people plundered and looted; they are all of them trapped in holes and hidden in prisons; they have become plunder with none to rescue, spoil with none to say, "Restore!" Isaiah 42:22 [But God does!]

"They have healed the wound of my people lightly, saying, 'Peace, peace,' when there is no peace." Jeremiah 6:14

"I have seen his ways, but I will heal him; I will lead him and restore comfort to him and his mourners, creating the fruit of the lips. Peace, peace, to the far and to the near," says the Lord, "and I will heal him." Isaiah 57:18-19

Meanwhile there is a brighter side to affliction and it is the good work that the Lord is doing to help us gain and grow through all of our unwanted pain (Jas 5:11).

Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep your word. Psalm 119:67

It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn your statutes. Psalm 119:71

Establishing *and* strengthening the souls *and* the hearts of the disciples, urging *and* warning *and* encouraging them to stand firm in the faith, and [telling them] that it is through many hardships *and* tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God. Acts 14:22 AMP

More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. Romans 5:3-5

So we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Prayer Focus



Pray through the list you made in the Exercise section.

1) **Forgive God, self and others** using the ten steps in the previous lesson if needed—and remember the five motivations! They will help you get over the hurdle.



www.healingstreamsusa.org
www.forerunners4him.org



2) **Repent for any acting out you did.** God is full of grace and mercy, so don't hold anything back—and don't make excuses for it either! The fuller the confession (which includes taking full responsibility for your sins), the greater the victory.



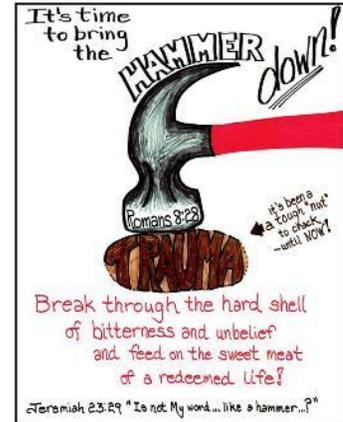
Renunciations and Affirmations

Confess/renounce previous agreements with untruth; confess/believe Truth as your new Way of life.

The enemy uses trauma to sow strongholds of hurt and loss built upon lies. Remember: some wounds need to be washed repeatedly to get infection out. Keep at it!

1) **Renounce any false messages.** Fall totally out of agreement with the enemy's perspective on your life that he tried to feed you. Yes, the world is unsafe, but your universe is incredibly secure: you have a God who loves you and who is always with you (it was a lie no One was there and no One cared) and He has promised to overturn every evil done to you and make it work for your ultimate good (we are not permanently damaged). Choose to refuse to carry shame and blame over anything that you have put under the Blood. Break any inner vows you may have made.

2) **Ask the Lord to forgive any unbelief** you may have over the truths from His Word you need to believe (especially Romans 8:28) and confess the Truth until you actually begin to believe it from the heart. Leave no room for self-pity—believe His promises! ***It is time to bring the hammer of His Word down*** on the trauma. (See the enlarged “Hammer” sketch on page 8.)



Putting Feet to Your Prayers/Stretch Yourself!

It is hard to go forward carrying the past with us. The Lord really wants to give us release over issues of the past. One of the hardest things to let go of are broken dreams. Because the dream gave us hope and vision for our future, we can't imagine how our life can work out now that it is broken beyond our ability to repair it. But the Father is the giver of every good gift and He is never at a loss for new dreams to give us—dreams of a restored life, a fresh start. It could go like this:

Plan A. The dreams God gave led us out into life with hope-filled hearts.

Plan B. Somehow the dream became broken—by someone's sin or events beyond control. This blocks the path forward. We become sodden with regrets and spend a lot of time trying to redeem things ourselves. But there is no going back because the dream can't be mended—certainly not by us. How can our life ever recover?

Plan C. Great news: The Lord is willing to meet you right where you are with a new path and new dreams to go with it. All you need to do is forgive anyone who needs to be forgiven (yourself included!), give the broken dream(s) back to the Lord, and then ask Him for the new dream(s), believing that you will receive them. What will the new life be like? You will have to trust Him and follow Him to find out! Sweet dreams will come as you rest your heart on His planning ability. (See the enlarged “Plan A, B, C” sketch on page 8.)

