

## **Healing for Damaged Emotions 7**

### **“The Wounded Healer & Becoming Wounded Healers”**

*That Sunday evening the disciples were meeting behind locked doors because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Suddenly, Jesus was standing there among them! “Peace be with you,” he said. As he spoke, he showed them the wounds in his hands and his side. John 20:19-20*

Do you find it a bit curious that Jesus suddenly appeared inside their locked fortress, spoke one word of blessing...then prominently showed them his wounds?

It has been quite a week in their lives. From the triumphal entry just one week ago, to the Upper Room last supper and the accusations of betrayal; from the Garden of Gethsemane where he was arrested, to the mock trial that saw Pilate condemn him to the cross. The sun went dark. Friday passed...Saturday passed.

Now, earlier today some of their women came running with the news that his body had been moved, and...that they had seen the Lord...alive! No wonder they were hiding behind locked doors. Certainly the Roman soldiers charged with watching his dead body would be on the look out for them. Certainly the rumors would drive the world to seek answers from them. Definitely they would need to get their stories straight before the pending press conference. Locked doors seemed the least they could do protect and hide themselves.

And then...there he stood in the midst of them. He didn't knock, he didn't come in through the door, or the window, or the roof...he was just there! And his first words were familiar: *“Peace be with you.”* But his next action was a bit of a shock: *As he spoke, he showed them the wounds in his hands and his side.* Why? Did he want to drive home the point that they had all abandoned him just like he predicted? Did he want to assure them that indeed he had died, and was now raised to life? Did he want them to see his wounds and remember...that because of them they need not fear anything; or anyone...anymore!

Because of them, because of his wounds...they were forgiven, they were restored, they were saved, they were healed and they were about to be sent forth!

This morning I conclude this series on Healing for Damaged emotions. We've covered some tough subjects ranging from depression to addiction to forgiveness to perfectionism – and today I wish to end by considering that Jesus is the wounded healer...and that we are to become wounded healers. Consider these two thoughts:

### **1. HE WAS WOUNDED SO WE COULD BE HEALED.**

*He was despised and rejected – a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief. We turned our backs on him and looked the other way. He was despised, and we did not care. Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins! But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. **He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed.** All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all. Isaiah 53:3-6*

From this description of his death 2000 years before his birth; to our lives 2000 years following his resurrection; the reality must be remembered. We are healed because he was wounded. We can be healed because He is our wounded healer.

In the face of the many damaged emotions we discussed in recent weeks, and the repeated reminder I've given you in those same weeks; that healing is not an easy 3-step process; I must also be honest and state that in Christ there is ultimate healing. In Christ there is intermediate healing, and in Christ there is immediate healing; from what ever damaged emotions plague us. Not that God can't and won't use doctors, and therapists, and counselors and occasionally drugs to be the agents of that healing, but ultimately all healing rests and resides in the person of Jesus. Most doctors worth their salt know that they don't heal anyone. They simply use their God-given gifts, skills and wisdom to allow the body to do its natural healing. Who made those bodies? Who made them to want and know how to heal themselves? A wounded healer named Jesus.

The concept of a “Wounded – Healer” is not new. From Greek mythology the god Chiron became known as the first “Wounded Healer.” This centaur god was known as a wise teacher, a prophet and a healer. He was early in life emotionally wounded at the abandonment of his Greek father- god Kronus, who raped his mother Philyra. The sight of this son, reminded her of her trauma, so she left Chiron for dead.

Later in his life he suffered a mortal wound from a poisoned arrow, accidentally fired from the bow of his friend and mentee; Hercules. This wound plagued the god Chiron for years until finally a deal was made for Chiron to exchange his status as divine, in order to be healed. As a now defunct god; Chiron spent the rest of his life offering help, hope and healing to other mortals just like himself. He was called the Wounded Healer.

It was some years later before the great psychotherapist Carl Jung resurrected the legend of “Wounded Healers” and used it to develop significant theories of behavior that offered and extended healing; from one human being to another. And it was some more years later when theologian, pastor, and humble servant to the mentally ill; Dr. Henri Nouwen wrote a popular book by this title: The Wounded Healer. Whether the thought came from a Greek legend, or was developed as a psychoanalytic theory, or is a Christian call to action: the original and only actual Wounded Healer is and was Jesus Christ. From the pen of Isaiah, written approximately 2000 years before Jesus was born: ***He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed.*** Jesus was wounded, so we could be healed. Now to the second point:

## **2. WE’VE BEEN HEALED SO WE COULD BECOME WOUNDED - HEALERS.**

Last week I introduced you to a passage from the Message that I want to borrow and apply again. Paul is writing about an infirmity in his flesh, some speculate it was poor eyesight, some have other opinions. We don’t know for sure, but we do know it caused him some trauma. Here is how he describes the situation:

*So to keep me from becoming proud, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from Satan to torment me and keep me from becoming proud. Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. Each time he said, "My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness." So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, **so that the power of Christ can work through me.** That's why I take pleasure in my weaknesses and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong. 2 Cor. 12:7-10*

So that the power of Christ can work through me...so that the power of Christ can work through me. I'm not sure any of us will ever achieve the state of "taking pleasure" in whatever damaged emotions we've endured or suffered; but we cannot miss the simple lesson here. At some point in the process of our recovery, God is going to use you and me to take what we've learned and experienced from the painful parts of our past; to help someone else who is struggling with similar situations in their life. I know that this is dangerous if it happens prematurely or too quickly in our own recovery. I caution you to neither be negligent in processing your own healing to make it full and complete; nor to be negligent when the time is right to offer what you've learned to someone else on the journey.

I have always had two contentions in this regard. You've probably heard me say: "God never wastes a hurt." If you have been hurt by some event or tragedy or trauma in your life; whether from your own hand or the hand of someone else, or even from God; God is not going to allow that hurt to define you, and God is not going to waste that hurt just on you. I've seen time and again how God uses people who've been through what you're going through, to minister and heal another hurting person. I saw it in action between services last week Sunday.

The second contention is that; "God doesn't comfort us to make us comfortable; but to make us comforters." Another way of saying it: God doesn't heal us just to make us whole, but to make us compassionate, wounded, healers. God does not heal the wounds of our life to be just for our benefit alone.

And with each of these contentions I remind US; we don't offer our help out of our "perfect" lives, but out of our own "brokenness." We don't offer human healing from our "expertise" but from the fact that we share "experiences" common to human life. We don't offer healing from just the best we've learned in "ourselves" but from the wisdom we've developed by learning to survive...even before our own healing is complete. We've been healed partially, so we might become wounded – healers.

My friends, only you and God know where you are at this moment. Some of you are here this morning celebrating the greatest day in human history: Resurrection Sunday, period. I just want to remind you that it's not about bunnies and hats and eggs and baskets – it's about Jesus, who was wounded before he was resurrected...so we might be healed.

Some of you may be in the throes of emotional damage, and you're just now brought to the realization that there is help for your situation.

Some of you have been along for this 7 week ride, and have seen yourself at several places, like I have. We may need to begin again with our recovery, today.

And there are many of you here this morning who are healthily living through your own junk...who need to accept the challenge to become a wounded-healer to someone whom God will lead in your path.

As we sing this final song of celebration and contemplation today; may it be your prayer of commitment to God. AMEN

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