

# **Path to Inner Healing**

**Jacob Ninan**



*Foreword by*

**Dr. Samson Gandhi & Dr. Veena Easvaradoss**



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## Foreword

God has blessed Jacob Ninan with a sharp mind, a guileless heart and a humble spirit. He brings all of that to bear upon all that he does including this much-needed e-book on *Path to Inner Healing*.

I know him to be a researcher. He will leave no stone unturned till he grasps the truth embedded in a concept. Then, he has the gift of communicating it in a lucid manner. He has seen how wrong teaching and wrong understanding of scriptures inflict pain and suffering. Therefore, he is passionate to teach truth in as simple a manner as possible.

Jacob is a dedicated practitioner of Christian counselling particularly in the areas of marriage, family and inner healing. You will find several of his personal and powerful

experiences shared in this e-book giving hope and encouragement.

He has taught these subjects in many of the training courses offered by Person to Person (PtP) over many years. Hundreds of people listened to his teaching, interacted with him, went away blessed by his insights. He not only taught many of these topics but he has also designed curriculum for some.

His Christ-like attitudes, counselling practice, research and design of curriculum and teaching at different levels give him that rare quality of 'teaching as one with authority'. The pages of this e-book will bear testimony to it.

This e-book will be a great help to anyone who is dealing with past hurts, inexplicable sense of guilt and inadequacy and troubling anxiety about the future. Practitioners of Christian counselling, especially in the area of

inner healing will benefit from it immensely. The author offers this e-book freely so share it widely.

*Dr. Samson Gandhi,  
Founder and Executive Director,  
Person to Person  
Institute for Christian Counselling, Secunderabad.*

The Path to Inner Healing written by Mr. Jacob Ninan addresses the issues of damages to the spirit, soul and body and the path to healing and wholeness. It explains, clearly and concisely, the concept and process of inner healing and it is written by a person who, clearly, has personally experienced the healing touch of the Master and ministered His touch to others.

Statistics reveals that psychological problems have greatly increased and there is a need for compassionate counsellors. Indeed, people at times do not recognise that they are psychologically (and spiritually) wounded.



They are in a state of being calloused and lack insight that they are hurting. Inner healing is, thus, the need of the hour. This book offers focussed guidelines for those interested in the ministry of inner healing.

I met Mr. Ninan at a counselling workshop and as inner healing was being taught, noted the sceptical expression on his face. He had questions and doubts regarding inner healing. Subsequently, he searched and researched the scriptures thoroughly (as directed by God's word) and also read other material on inner healing. He has applied it in his life and has helped other people through prayer counselling as led by the Holy Spirit. I am personally very excited about this booklet in which the basic concepts of inner healing and wholeness are laid out. I also deeply appreciate the central place Mr. Ninan gives to the love and compassion of the Saviour and the Spirit-filled account of the healing process.

I believe that people who are hurting can read through the booklet prayerfully and receive their healing.

I hope and pray that this booklet will fall on good soil, that people will encounter a loving God who wants them to be healed much more than they themselves want to be healed. I believe, as one who has been there, that there are places deep within the person that only God can reach, and bring healing and deliverance. This booklet will take you there.

There could, of course, be people who feel that they do not need this healing for themselves. For such people, this booklet is a succinct guide on how to minister to inner healing to others.

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

If we get a cut on our leg when we play in the field, the first thing we will have to do is to clean the wound thoroughly from dirt, apply medicine and put a bandage. Everyone knows that cleaning the wound may hurt, and so we may think that just applying an ointment and putting a bandage will be enough! But that may lead to the wound becoming septic and even affecting our life on a large scale.

We have that kind of understanding when it comes to physical problems, but are we sure we understand that mental or spiritual wounds can also be serious, perhaps more serious? These type of wounds come when we have been hurt by people's behaviour towards us or

from our circumstances, but the danger is that they may remain unrecognised and therefore not addressed adequately. These inner wounds may cause us to adopt unhealthy strategies for life, supposedly with the intention of avoiding such hurts in the future or for compensating for the pain. But these wounds can also become 'septic' and cause serious damage to us as individuals, in our relationships, in our work, and also in the wrong patterns we pass on to the next generation.

Carrying on with these wounds from the past, without resolving them at the earliest, is like getting into a running race carrying a heavy baggage on our shoulder. Then no amount of pretending that we do not have any problem or asserting to ourselves that we are fine will allow us to run to our full potential.

This kind of damage will affect us more seriously if they happen during our childhood, which is referred to by psychologists as the

formative years of our life. That is the time when we form thought and behaviour patterns, based on conclusions we reach from the experiences we go through. Since we do not have much understanding or maturity at that time, we do not realise that our conclusions may be based on insufficient knowledge of facts or misunderstanding. But from the time of our birth, the experiences that we go through influence our personality, our behaviour patterns, the way we look at life and other people, etc. It may be obvious that if we have been abused, neglected or over-indulged in our childhood by our parents, our way of thinking will have been greatly distorted.

But people, in general, do not recognise the seriousness of the deep wounds that may have been acquired in this way, and they brush them aside by telling themselves, “Oh, we will get over it,” “It’s all in the mind,” “God has given us a sound mind,” “There is nothing

prayer cannot resolve,” “Time will heal,” etc. But these wounds remain inside unresolved, and cause distress to the individual and those around him. Most of the times, when these people face different problems in their life, they do not realise that some of these wounds are partly responsible.

The chapter on inner healing is the guide to receiving healing for these wounds. It would be very helpful to learn and understand how psychological trauma results in inner wounds, and that is the purpose of the intervening chapters. Jesus is the Saviour, and He is the One who can bring healing to the wounds of the inner man that have resulted from the effects of sin. Therapists who exclude this from their worldview are therefore unable to reach deep enough to produce a sufficient level of healing. But on our part, even though we use understanding from psychology, we

will depend on Jesus through prayer to bring inner healing.

The path to recovery involves recognising what caused us to go off in wrong directions, understanding what has gone wrong with our thinking and assumptions, learning the right way, and then replacing our old ways of thinking with godly wisdom. We need to understand how our old way of thinking was affecting us and others negatively, causing more and more problems, and realise that God's wisdom is the best. This transformation has to start at the level of our mind and then sink into our heart and behaviour (Rom.12:2).

Thankfully, God has created our mind in such a way that the wrong things we have learned can be discarded, and we can learn new things. As someone said, it is not as if things written into our brain are like being engraved on stone!

There are also spiritual issues involved. Mental trauma many times causes spiritual deviations. We may get upset with God for what we think at such times is His lack of love and concern for us, and even conclude that He cannot be relied on in the future. We may develop bitterness towards those who have hurt us, and this may even get generalised as a distrust in humanity as a whole.

Yes, it causes pain to revisit the traumatic experiences that have damaged our mind and heart. But surely, once the wounds have been cleaned up and balm applied, it should bring us relief and also a better future. In the medical field, some problems may require surgical interventions, but we go through them because they are what are needed for healing. In a similar way, here too the effort is worth it, and the pain in looking at the past trauma is only for understanding what needs to be



healed, and then going for healing and heading into freedom from the bondage of the past.

In this book, we first look at different types of trauma people go through, especially in their childhood, and then we will go through in detail how we can find healing through Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord.

## **Chapter 2**

### **My personal story**

I was born with a serious congenital heart defect because of which I was very weak and sickly. At that time there was no medical procedure available to deal with it. The result was that I was too weak to play with friends and classmates in the usual way, and I used to fall ill frequently. My parents had no idea whether I would survive whenever I caught any of the passing infections. They tried their best to compensate for my weakness by giving me books to read, board games to play and musical instruments.

At school I looked very thin, and one of my classmates gave me a nickname to make fun of my thin frame. One friend put the blame on

me for some mischief he had done in the class, and the teacher believed him and scolded me. A teacher in charge of a school camp singled me out at camp-fire and ridiculed me publicly in front of everybody else.

What all this taught me was that it was better to keep away from people and avoid getting hurt, and that I was safer by myself. I was doing well in my studies, and the rest of the time I immersed myself in the world of books and music. My natural reserved temperament helped me here, but it got amplified negatively without being balanced by interaction with people. I tried to keep away from people in general, and when anyone came home, I would move away to another room. The overall result was that I did not learn the social skills for dealing with people.

My congenital heart condition was corrected surgically when I became 21. But even at this time, my faith in Christ was only nominal. It

was when I was studying for my post graduate degree in engineering that God met with me and caused me to be born again. Overnight I began to become a student of the Bible, reading it whenever I found free time, devouring Christian books and later listening to cassette tapes of Christian sermons. But I basically continued to be a loner even in the midst of the church.

As an engineer, by God's grace I did well in design, but I essentially worked alone. I was friendly with everyone, but I did not develop a close friendship with anyone.

When I got married, I found out that my wife was an extrovert. It was not God's sense of humour but His provision to balance me. Slowly I found myself compelled to meet with people socially and mix with them. I also became very active in the church in different ways. As a family we also developed the habit of frequently visiting the other families in the

church and building fellowship. I found a few people coming to me for ‘counsel’ and I would usually tell them what the Bible said.

It was when I realised that I was going to have to retire from my work in a few years that I began to wonder what I would do afterwards. My wife suggested to me that I could take up counselling as a ministry because that was what I seemed to like best. She showed me an advertisement for a training programme for counsellors from the Person to Person Institute for Christian Counselling in Secunderabad. That changed the direction of my life in more than one way.

One of the first things I learned from PtP was about the effects of ‘rejection’ from others, how people usually reacted to it, and how to find stable meaning and purpose in life through understanding and enjoying acceptance through our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. I understood what had

happened to me, how I had reacted wrongly, and how I was suffering from my mistakes. I also learned about the process of inner healing. God began to help me to change my thinking and find relief. I also began to understand what other people were going through.

The second thing that happened was an assurance in my mind that counselling others in need was one thing I could do as a service. I began to practice it without charging any fees, deriving my satisfaction from becoming of help to someone. I went on to learn from PtP through the second and third level courses, and I also took up the study of secular psychotherapy and counselling for a master's degree. PtP began to involve me in facilitating classes in their courses. I continued my study of the Bible and also psychology, trying to see what part of psychology was acceptable to God and what was not. I was also able to start

a website to make freely available the things I had learned for myself.

Have I become perfect? Of course not! Is my healing complete? A perfect healing of the consequences of sin in our life is going to happen only when we are finally with the Lord in eternity. But we can experience a start and growth even now. The inner healing programme offers us the start and shows us the path of growth.

## **Chapter 3**

### **What we all long for**

Psychologists recognise that in the depth of our being, we all long for certain experiences, and that when these are lacking, we tend to form our own strategies to compensate. But it is only the Bible that gives us an understanding of how all human beings came to find ourselves in this condition.

We know that when God completed His creation of the universe, and especially after He had created the earth, all the livings on it and finally man, He saw that it was all very good (Gen.1:31). Adam and Eve felt no need at all in any direction as God provided everything they needed, for their spirit, soul (mind) and body. They walked in unbroken and perfect fellowship with God. But then came the Fall. God had warned them that the



day they disobeyed Him and ate the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, they would die (Gen.2:16,17). Their physical death came only hundreds of years later, and so, that death was obviously not what He warned about. When we see that God is the source of life, we can also see that death ultimately means to be disconnected from Him.

That was what happened to Adam and Eve when they sinned. When they lost their relationship with God, they lost all that He had been to them, and also every strength which that relationship had provided them.

It is good to know what psychologists have identified as deep, basic needs that everyone has now, i.e., after the Fall. Actually these can be considered as *spiritual* needs, or needs in our human spirit, that man began to feel after Adam and Eve sinned. When they got spiritually disconnected from God, they began to feel these as *needs* which they had not

recognised earlier since God had been taking care of them. People do not generally recognise these needs until someone tells them. But nevertheless these needs operate in the background, and control a lot of our behaviour even without our realisation. Let us look at what security, significance and self-worth mean.

### **Security**

In simple words, this is a sense of security we feel when we know that there are people who love us, care for us and will be there for us if we get into trouble. It is also a sense of belonging to someone or groups of people such as family, church, school, college, office, etc., with whom we feel a bond.

All of us have experienced a sense of insecurity at different points in our life when we did not feel accepted by others or felt that someone we valued did not care for us. We can see from such experiences how valuable

security is for us. We can see later how insecurity will drive us in wrong directions to somehow try and get this security through wrong means.

### **Significance**

This is another aspect of our life which wants us to feel valued by others and as being important in their sight. We want them to recognise and acknowledge our abilities and achievements. We want others to need us for the things we can do for them. We also want to value ourselves, finding meaning and purpose in our life. The opposite of feeling significant is to feel ignored or looked down upon. Then it is as if our efforts to achieve something really did not matter at all! Knowing this, just see what all we do to impress others in different ways!

The less we feel others recognise our value, the more we try, even taking things to ridiculous levels, to make people notice us.

## **Self-worth**

This is the value we place on ourselves based on our confidence in our abilities, successes, the opinion others have about us, etc. Some psychologists say that if a person has a good sense of security and significance, he will also have a good self-image. We need a healthy level of self-esteem and self-respect to give us confidence to face challenges and to accomplish things in our life. But what is true for many people is that they do not value themselves. There are things they do not like about themselves because of failures, faults, lacks, inability to be like some others they respect, etc. This poor opinion they have about themselves causes them to avoid taking risky steps in relationships, social and work areas where they actually have the ability to succeed. They assume they are unlikely to succeed and withdraw from trying.

It is normally expected that growing up in a family, with loving and caring parents, and sharing life along with siblings will provide us with a stable platform for developing our mind and behaviour. As we get exposed to the greater society in the form of school, church, workplace, etc., our scope for growth expands.

However, the fact of life is that more and more families are becoming dysfunctional, and people, in general, are self-centred and selfish. This affects growing children in many ways, and they grow up with a vacuum in their life that they try to meet with insufficient or wrong kind of resources. As a result, many grow up psychologically and spiritually 'messed-up'. When such people get married, a disaster is just waiting to happen. Sometimes the pressure of the situation helps people to learn to change, but sometimes people go from disaster to disaster.

## **What people do to compensate**

There are these pressing needs in our life, and we are mostly unaware of them. At the same time, they drive us to do anything we can to meet them. Psychologists have observed that there are different approaches people usually adopt to meet these needs.

Sometimes, those who have not experienced security from their parents and the other significant people around them try to compensate for it by going after things that give them pleasure, such as music, drinks, drugs, sex, etc. What they fail to see is that this is not going to solve their real problem, but instead this is going to add other levels of problems to their life. Sometimes the craving for pleasure becomes so unmanageable that people will cross their own sense of morality to meet their need.

When someone feels insignificant, they may try to ‘act’ powerful in ways such as using unusual dress or hair styles, bullying, getting into gangs, writing graffiti, destroying property, etc., even leading to violence and crime. Their goal is to make people to take notice, and to gain power over others.

To avoid self-judgments and self-rejection coming out of poor self-worth, people build ‘walls’ that defend them from pain. Some people find satisfaction from pointing out the faults of others in order to comfort themselves about their faults, or in an attempt to divert the attention from themselves. Sometimes people occupy themselves with work, hoping to receive recognition and fame. Some people brag constantly about their achievements, or keep drawing attention to themselves in conversation. People sometimes expect their spouse to be the one on whom they can entirely rely to meet all their needs. They are

setting themselves up for disappointment and possibly a break up in marriage because no spouse is perfect, and those spouses themselves may be struggling with their needs.

All these attempts that people make unconsciously will not solve the emptiness they feel inside, but since they do not know any other way, they keep going in the same destructive direction.



## **Chapter 4**

### **Rejection**

You would have seen from my story that what I went through was ‘rejection’ from my classmates and teachers. Rejection is the opposite of being ‘accepted’ by others, which is what we all want, by nature. If, as we grow up, we experience acceptance everywhere, beginning with our parents, we get a secure and stable environment in which to grow up. Even when we make mistakes, if our acceptance level is high enough, we learn that everyone makes mistakes, it is OK to make mistakes within limits, etc.

Did you notice the specific way I reacted to rejection? My primary reaction was to withdraw from people. What was behind that

strategy? A hope that by avoiding people, I could avoid the possibility of getting hurt further. I could not possibly succeed with this strategy because I could not avoid people entirely. But whenever I experienced rejection again from people, that reinforced my strategy in my mind.

I did not realise at that time how I was actually hurting myself in a different way. By avoiding people, I was keeping myself away from all the love I could have received from many of them, and also from all that I could have learned from working with others. So, my strategy was not a wise one, after all, but that was all my small mind could see at that time. If we look at it in another way, we can see that my strategy was not a well-thought-out one, but a spontaneous response from my mind which was corrupt because of my fallen sinful nature!

Another thing that happened to me because of my experiences with rejection was that I developed a fear of making mistakes and getting ridiculed because of them. What this made me do was to avoid expressing my opinions or attempting anything new because of the fear of making a mistake. For example, during a discussion, while I was checking and rechecking in my mind if my idea was completely right before sharing it with the others, the discussion would have moved on! You can imagine how this would have limited me in my personal growth as well as in my work till God came into my life and gave me confidence. He also taught me to accept my imperfection and fallibility as a matter of reality, and to become always willing to learn.

People experience rejection in different ways. For some, unfortunately it happens at the time of birth itself, and its results haunt them for the rest of their lives. It could be that their

parents wanted a boy but the baby was a girl, they were not happy with the baby's skin colour or facial features, the pregnancy had been unwanted or at an inconvenient time, etc. In such cases, the parents were not happy with the baby, and the baby could not receive the attention or affection he needed. Some parents actually tell their children as they grow up how they had been unwanted, how they have been a nuisance or burden to them, etc., without realising in the least way how much damage they are causing their children, and how this might have repercussions even down the generations!

Some parents foolishly compare their children with their siblings or someone else's children. They do not realise that every child is unique and incomparable to anyone else. Parents are supposed to nurture a sense of value in each child as he grows up, but what happens in many cases is that parents pounce on their

children at every opportunity to criticise them, exaggerate their faults and make them feel miserable and small about themselves.

Parents also show favouritism among their children, for all kinds of reasons, and make some of the children feel unwanted, inferior, unrecognised, unfairly compared, etc.

Sometimes, well-meaning parents who want their children to do well in life, put unreasonable amounts of pressure on them to outdo the others in their studies as well as other activities. Many times, a comparison is made with siblings or some friend's children, apparently trying to motivate them to do better. At the same time, there is hardly any appreciation for the efforts the children are making, or any recognition of the individual child's achievements or limitations. Many times the children perceive this as a lack of love from the parents because the parents seem to be more interested in their own

reputation in society than in the welfare of the children. In other words, rejection!

It must also be said that many times, children misunderstand the intentions of the parents and come to wrong conclusions. A 34 year old unmarried woman, Amy (not her real name), came to me for counselling, complaining that her father loved only her younger sister and not her. She was the well-loved daughter of the house till she became 7 years old, when she got a baby sister. All attention turned now to the baby, and Amy felt unloved and unwanted. Now at 34, her father was asking her to help her younger sister to find a job, etc. For her, this was a confirmation that it was her sister whom her father loved, and not her.

On further probing it turned out that Amy's sister had some challenges that needed more attention and care from her parents, and now from Amy. That explained why the parents' attention went from Amy to her sister, more

than what happens usually when a younger child is born in a family. The parents' mistake was that they did not recognise the need to explain these things to Amy and reaffirm their love for her.

This was not really rejection, but what Amy imagined as rejection. But the result was the same, just as if it had been real. She was very angry with her father, and also with her sister for taking away her father's love.

Psychologists have observed three common ways in which people respond, who have felt the deep pain of rejection. One way is to withdraw from people and to keep to oneself, hoping to avoid further pain from possible rejection. Another way is to become aggressive, with the hope that people will be forced to take notice. A third reaction is to despise oneself and to foresee no future coming up. As a result, these people choose to waste away their lives without goals or

ambitions, pursuing games, drinks, drugs, and similar things.



## **Chapter 5**

### **Emotional neglect**

Jessy was 5 years old when her parents had a third baby. They were a rather poor family, and the parents felt that their financial limitations would not permit them to take care of three children. So, the plan they figured out was to send Jessy to the care of her grandmother. In narrating this to me, Jessy said that she cried all the way, and even though her grandmother did her best to look after her and educate her, she hated herself thinking that she was not good enough for her parents. She could not move this idea away from her mind even though her parents used to visit her once in two years. Her hope was that once she got married, her husband would compensate for her past by showering love on

her. What brought her to me was a problem in her marriage. She felt that her husband did not love her.

Neglect is the other side of the coin called rejection. In rejection there is a set of acts that push a person away. In neglect, it is the lack of the expression of acceptance, or failing to respond to a child's emotional needs. Neglect also can have serious effects on the child's development and ability to cope with life. Many parents are aware of the need to provide for a child's physical and social needs, but totally unaware that the child has emotional needs too, to feel loved, and to feel valued.

If a child goes to his parents with some emotions that he cannot handle, and his parents brush that aside as something too silly to spend time on, that would be neglect. Some parents have a wrong idea that life is all about practical achievements, and that emotions are a sign of weakness and must not be tolerated!

In some families, there is no place for showing appreciation or admiration for a child's achievements, under the fear that it might go to the child's head! Some families constantly compare their children's achievements with the neighbours, and there is no recognition or acknowledgement of the effort the child is putting into them. In another family, the focus is on the child's faults and failures, and his achievements are just taken for granted.

It happens many times in families where both parents are working, that they tell their children not to trouble them but to occupy themselves with the TV, video games, or videos on the smartphone. Many years after this trend started, we can see children who have now grown up but cannot handle responsibility, work hard for a living, or who are actually not fit to get married.

These children may suffer from a poor self-esteem, or on the contrary, an unrealistically

high self-confidence without having been trained through the realities of life. Many of them find it difficult to understand love in a practical sense, not having experienced it from their parents in their growing years, but wish for an unrealistically romantic or merely functional form of love.

People who have not found healing from wounds of neglect tend to follow that same pattern in their marriage and pass on the example to their children. Many find it difficult to connect emotionally with other people, to get close to anyone fearing abandonment, or to trust anyone.

It is easy to see that these people also need inner healing.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Abuse**

If we have understood how a human child needs a good dose of security, significance and self-worth, it will be obvious how abuse can cause severe damage to him. Yet, abuse of different kinds go on at a very large scale, and large numbers of people get crippled in their psychological and spiritual development. If they do not find healing for their wounds, they can suffer miserably for the rest of their life, and pass on misery to the next generation also.

Abuse varies in its type and intensity. The types we want to consider are physical, verbal, emotional and sexual abuse. Physical, verbal and sexual abuse also result in emotional damage, and it is that part which we want to

look at in our context, even though there are also other dimensions which are addressed by people from other disciplines.

### **Physical abuse**

This is to intentionally cause pain to the body in order to control, show who the boss is, express irritation, teach someone a lesson, take revenge, etc. It can be from parents to the children in the form of excessive physical punishment. Parents who are insecure try to assert their position in this way. Many times parents justify their out-of-control behaviour by telling themselves that they are doing this for the good of the children, or that their own parents brought them up like this. Sometimes parents resort to physical punishment as the only way to deal with indiscipline, without taking the trouble to understand their children or to keep in view the goal of finally training the children to do well rather than just punishing failure.

The modern world is increasingly heading in the direction of lawlessness, and so it tends to call out every form of parental discipline of children as child abuse. But we must be able to recognise when what is intended to be a loving act of discipline meant to correct children or to redirect them to the right way crosses the line and becomes abuse of parental authority. Parents must not merely insist on their children obeying them, and lose sight of the bigger goal of training the children to become godly in every way.

Physical abuse results not only in physical pain or injury, but also in inner wounds of emotional injury. Children may grow up with a poor self-esteem with the consequent behavioural problems, some of them may become aggressive towards the others, and some of them will get the idea that life is not fair. There can be other damages in the emotions such as a constant level of anxiety,

shame, depression, etc. They may hate their parents, but eventually model such behaviour to their own children. Some of them react strongly to what they have experienced and swing to the other side by being totally lenient towards the children.

### **Verbal abuse**

Many people seem to imagine that physical abuse can hurt but words cannot, quoting, “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me”! But we know how deeply words can hurt, sometimes more deeply than physical hurts! Usually, the hurt caused by words can remain hidden for a lifetime but produce ugly reactions on the outside.

Imagine a child who is told by his father or teacher that he is useless and will never amount to anything in his life! The child does not have sufficient experience in life to



analyse things and come to the conclusion that he need not take these words seriously, because they were obviously spoken in an outburst of anger without much thought. But the child believes it as coming from someone who knows so much more than himself, and then for the rest of his life he carries an assumption that he is going to be a failure. He now has an excuse for himself for not trying his best, not taking any risk, giving up easily, etc. Words are powerful. The Bible warns us to be careful about what and how we speak, because while we have the potential to do good, our careless words can even cause lifelong damage (Prov.18:21).

## **Emotional abuse**

As we have seen earlier, every form of abuse results also in emotional trauma. In emotional abuse, the goal is to make the victim feel small, worthless and hopeless, so that he will give in to the control of the abuser.

Many times in family relationships, people use emotional blackmail or cajoling to hold someone for support, as in the case of a mother developing a special attachment to her daughter so as to find support against her husband. This damages the daughter's own development.

It could be a mother unwilling to let go of her married son, often by asking him to visit her, run errands for her, etc., reminding him of the sacrifices she has made for him. In this process, she is causing a strain in his relationship with his wife, which God has warned about (Gen.2:24).

Sometimes a wife can try to influence her husband through tears or threats to get her way. Just as Samson fell to Delilah's charms, the husband can lose sight of what he really ought to do.

Another common abuse is through accusations or blaming. Children get the impression that whatever they do is not good enough for their parents, and some of them give up trying after coming to the conclusion that it is not worth the effort any more.

Emotional abuse tends to make people feel ashamed of themselves, and sometimes they try to compensate by treating others in the same way, resulting in passing on the abusive patterns to others.

### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse may be considered as an especially serious source of damage, because of the physical pain and/or pleasure involved, the sense of betrayal and subsequent abandonment at the emotional level, the sense of shame and guilt, the stigma at the social level, the possibility of pregnancy and consequent complications, the pressure on the

victim to hush up and the consequent lack of support.

When sexual abuse occurs in childhood, the damage is more serious and complicated. Unfortunately, this is something that happens more commonly than we would like to assume, because the majority of incidents are hushed up. It is another sad commentary on the sinfulness of humanity that the perpetrators are usually people whom the child trusts, such as close family members, friends or neighbours.

However, things are coming to light more these days, as social taboos are fading and victims are getting some kind of recognition. Nevertheless, it is only exposing the tip of the iceberg, so to speak, rather than reducing or stopping the abuse.

When, say, a five year old is molested or raped, they do not understand the significance of a

sexual relationship, nor are they able to figure out what exactly was happening. However, the impact on their mind is deep and confusing. Research indicates that as they grow into teenage, they could develop one of several approaches towards sex.

Some victims of child sexual abuse seem to develop a deep loathing or hatred for anything to do with sexual relationships. This affects their behaviour even when they get married. Even when they understand that sexual relationship is expected in marriage, they would only consider it as an obligation rather than something to be enjoyed with their spouse.

Some other people get set off with their premature exposure to sexual pleasure, and become unduly occupied with it. They may become promiscuous, seemingly never to be satisfied.

The third group of people who have been confused in their mind due to their experience which they could not figure out at that time, as they grow into their teenage and face hormone changes, physical changes and sexual attraction, come to mistaken ideas about their sexuality. They may turn to consider themselves as homosexual or transgender. Again, research has shown that a large percentage of those who consider themselves as homosexual or transgender have had a history of sexual abuse in their childhood. However, this is not covered by the greater part of the media which looks more for sensation than facts.

The current mood of the world presents the confusion of sex and gender openly, widely and even to children, making claims as if they are scientific facts. This actually leads to more people getting confused.

To illustrate this, let me quote the experience of a boy who thought that he was really a girl caught in a boy's body. He was brought to me when he was in the tenth grade in school. His story was that in the ninth grade he fell in love with a girl in his class, but she rejected him. After some time, he tried to start a relationship with another girl, who also rejected him.

He could not understand why no girl (over-generalisation!) was interested in him. He went to the Internet to find the answer, and he came to the conclusion that he was actually a girl and that was why girls did not feel attracted to him.

He started shaving himself closely, growing his hair long, and he asked his parents for girl's clothes. The parents did not agree, but took him to a psychiatrist. This gentleman was one who kept himself abreast of all the latest trends, and he told the boy that if he thought he was a girl, he could assist him with

hormone therapy and later with sex-change surgery.

The parents did not agree, and brought him to me. What I did essentially was to point out that his mind had been in alignment with his body till he got confusing ideas from the Internet. Thankfully, his parents held their position, and within a couple of years, he had put aside his fancies.



## Chapter 7

### **Demonic oppression**

Jesus dealt frequently with demon possessed people, and sent His disciples with authority from Him to deliver people not only from physical sickness, but also from demonic oppression. Yet, many modern Christians have not personally come across such activities in their experience, and remain ignorant about demons.

Some imagine that Jesus was simply catering to the popular belief of those days. According to this, there are actually no demons, but it was the crowd's way in those days of dealing with psychiatric problems. A second group of Christians believe that there are demons around, but since Jesus has conquered them on

the cross, we do not have to deal with them now. Still another group of Christians see demons everywhere, and they are binding and casting out demons all the time!

God has actually not revealed much in the Bible regarding the origin of demons, or even the way to cast out demons. What we have are some clues spread here and there in the Bible, and as long as we check everything out with what is given in the Bible, we can also learn from experience. Many people have written about their experiences with casting out demons, but what I have noticed is that many of them have formed their teaching mainly from their experience, which is very risky in terms of correctness. I have studied this subject at length mainly from the Bible and also from many authors, and also tuned my understanding from experience. Jesus has given us the authority to cast out demons from oppressed or possessed people in the power of

His name. Knowing that this power is His gives us boldness to exercise it without being put down by the recognition of our own inadequacy. When demons know that it is Jesus who is commanding them through us, they tremble, and they are forced to obey.

Not only did Jesus have to deal with demons on different occasions, He and the apostles have also given us many warnings to be careful not to get deceived by demons and not to let them get any access to our life. For example, we are told that if we continue in anger for long, we are likely to give the devil a foothold in our life (Eph.4:26,27 NIV). Similarly, Paul warns us that if do not forgive someone, we have to be aware of the Devil's schemes (2Cor.2:10,11).

If we fall into any sin, God has made provision for us to receive forgiveness by confessing it to Him (1Jn.1:9). But, as we have seen above, if we continue deliberately in sin,

without repenting or confessing it, we end up keeping the door of our life open to demonic attack, who are always looking out for a prey (1Pet.5:8).

Another obvious way by which we can open our life to Satan's attack is to participate in occult activities, even if we think we are doing it innocently or in ignorance. Playing with *ouija* boards or tarot cards seems to have become popular with young people looking for thrill. We must know that through occult activities of different types, people are actually trying to access demonic powers, hoping to gain some advantage or thrill for themselves. Satan may appear to grant such people some benefit in the beginning. But his real goal is to destroy us, and that is where this will lead to ultimately (Jn.10:10).

Those who worship idols, thinking that they represent gods who can give them what they want, do not realise that in reality, the power

acting through these lifeless idols is demonic (1Cor.10:19,20). These demons slowly begin to take control of these people's lives with the aim of ultimately destroying them. Sometimes when idol worshippers turn to Christ, without deliberately breaking away from their loyalty to these demons, they find that the oppression continues.

Even though demons have supernatural powers compared to us, they are still created beings limited to their own domain. If they want to oppress us, they have to get permission from God, as we see in the case of Job. It is comforting to know that they had to get permission even to get into pigs in the days of Jesus. It is one thing when God gives them permission to test us as in the case of Job, but we must recognise our own responsibility not to give demons access from our side as we have seen above.

Some Christians have the genuine doubt as to how a born again Christian with the Holy Spirit abiding in him can be oppressed or possessed by demons at the same time. When we are born again, the Holy Spirit makes us His home (tabernacle), but it does not mean that we have yielded every part of our life to Him immediately. The result is that demons can hold control of areas in our life which we have yielded to them even when the Holy Spirit is in control of the areas which we have yielded to Him. It also means born again Christians cannot be ‘possessed’ by demons, which would mean that demons are in complete control. But Christians can be oppressed, from temptations to attacks depending on how much access has been given. The warning not to give place to the devil in our life makes sense here.

The word used in the Greek New Testament is *daimonizomai* which was translated as demon

possession by the KJV. But actually that word only means ‘to be troubled or vexed by demons’. This vexing can be at a low level, when we can refer to it as oppression or high when we call it possession. So some scholars have formed a new word, ‘demonisation’, practically transliterating the Greek word. What this refers to is the whole range of trouble demons can give, from the low level of temptations, moving to oppression and finally to possession.

The mark of demons getting access into our life can be seen by our losing control over areas of our life. For example, a man may be seen to be ‘godly’ in many ways, except that when it comes to certain areas such as pornography, drinks, outbursts of temper, etc. It is not that Christians cannot be tempted in any area, but when a Christian has lost control over that area and is under compulsion to

indulge it, then we can suspect the possibility of demonisation.

But then, we must also realise that addictions can also make people lose their control because of the psycho-biological effects on their brain. In such cases, demonisation can be examined by looking at certain 'spiritual' effects, such as inability to acknowledge Jesus as Lord, pray in Jesus' name, read the Bible, a general hostility towards Christian things, etc. This distinction is not so cut and dry, but we need to depend on the Holy Spirit to give us insight.

As the grade of oppression goes up, there may be other symptoms such as seeing moving things in the room, windows or doors closing and opening by themselves, feeling hands on the throat or chest, certain types of dreams, etc. Again, we will have to distinguish these from hallucinations or other psychotic effects.



There was a 16 year girl who was brought to me, who had come from an idol worshipping background, become a believer in Christ and had been taking part in Bible study and prayer in a church. The problem was that at a certain time every day she would get into a trance and walk around in a daze. During that time she could not read the Bible or name the name of the Lord Jesus.

In my presence, she promptly went into the trance and was about to walk out, when I commanded her in Jesus' name to come back and sit down. She did that, but when I asked her to pray, she was in a daze. But then I commanded the evil spirit to leave her, claiming that she now belonged to Jesus. Immediately she became normal, and was able to pray.

When I asked her about her history, it turned out that when she was young, her father had taken her to a temple and 'married' her to the

deity. Even though she had come to Jesus and been born again (according to the witness of the person who had brought her to me), she had not broken off that old relationship.

If we have, knowingly or unknowingly, given access to demons in our life, and therefore they are oppressing us in some way, we must hear that Jesus has come to set us free from the dominion of Satan (1Jn.3:8). That is another part of the inner healing programme. We can receive healing in the authority of the name of Jesus Christ which He has passed on to us.

## Chapter 8

### How problems affect us

God is our Creator, Provider, Sustainer, Protector, Lawgiver, Judge and Saviour. He is almighty, all-knowing, ever-present and sovereign. His character has a perfect combination of holiness, righteousness, justice, impartiality, love, mercy, compassion and kindness. When He created us in His image (Gen.1:27), as created beings we have been given a small, limited version of His attributes. We are capable of doing many things even though we are not omnipotent. We can know a lot but we are never going to be omniscient. We can move around but we are not omnipresent. We have a limited version of sovereignty, our free will. It is because we have been made in His image that He can have

fellowship with us. God wants us to partake of His nature, that is, His character, and then we become more and more like Him.

When Adam and Eve ate the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, it was not just a matter of disobeying God. It was a choice to have knowledge within themselves and become independent of God (Gen.3:5). This brought them total separation from God, which was the death God had warned them about. As the result of that death, they lost every benefit of the relationship they used to have with God in the Garden. They also lost the ability to choose good in the different situations of life, because their nature became sinful with an inclination towards sin. Suddenly they felt insecure and insignificant, and lost their self-esteem. They became scared of God and tried to hide from Him because of their guilt and shame. After this, one sin after another produced their consequences,

corrupting their personality and causing problems in their relationships. They would not admit their sins but tried to pass on the blame to others. This is the fallen nature we all have inherited, and the solution is to be restored to God.

At this point we must be clear of one thing. The root cause of all our problems is sin in some way. Any suffering we have may be the consequence of our own sin, someone else's sin against us, or the cumulative result of the sin of mankind over the years. This distinction can be helpful to provide clarity in our situations.

Now we can also observe how sin has affected us in our being. We have already seen how Adam and Eve lost their sense of security, significance and self-worth when they sinned and got separated from God. This is at the spiritual level. At the level of the body, a

degeneration started that would finally lead people to sickness and death.

The other thing that has happened is in our mind. Our mind (referred to as *psuche* in Greek and soul in English) has three different functions. We think, analyse and come to opinions using the ‘rational’ part of our mind, and these opinions generate different feelings in the ‘emotional’ part. Finally we make decisions based on our thoughts and feelings, using the ‘volitional’ part of our mind (our will). Once we decide, we act it out through our body. Sin has affected all three functions.

As a result, many times we believe what is really not true, or what is unreasonable or illogical. But we do not recognise that! Believing that it is true, we make our decisions and that leads us to many more problems.

What we think in our mind produces feelings. If someone or some circumstance hinders us

from getting what we want, we become angry. When we cannot know what is going to happen to us in the future, that makes us fearful or anxious. Another feeling that can cripple us is guilt, either because we know we have done something wrong, or because we are not able to reach up to our own expectations. Other negative feelings of different names can be clubbed under these three 'families'. All these negative feelings cause us psychological pain.

With these kinds of wrong thoughts and negative feelings, it is no wonder that we make wrong choices, believing that we are doing the right thing. When we act according to these wrong choices, we suffer and cause others to suffer too.

This is what the Fall has done to us, and God's plan is to take us to the place where we can think right, and then feel good, and finally do

the right things. Salvation is not just to take us to heaven, but to make us into heavenly people.



## **Chapter 9**

### **Inner healing**

The process of inner healing is going to be addressed in five parts – to examine the trauma and understand what has happened to us, to get right with God, to get the right attitude towards people, to get right with ourselves, and then to declare victory over evil spirits if they are involved. These are multi-faceted psychological and spiritual victories that are interlinked. Those who practise inner healing in the secular world usually address only the psychological aspects, and therefore they are unable to go deep enough to bring healing to the whole person. It is only believing Christians who have a close relationship with God themselves who are able to minister through the help of the Holy Spirit

to touch deep parts of the wounded. In such circles, some people refer to inner healing as prayer healing, because a lot of prayer takes place by the therapist/counsellor as well as the one who wants to be healed.

The procedure of inner healing is best carried out by a Christian counsellor, to whom the counsellee opens up with confidence. Then the counsellor can guide the counsellee to examine himself/herself before God and to seek the help of the Holy Spirit. It will be interactive, and interspersed with prayer.

In this chapter, I am addressing you as an individual who seeks inner healing who is opening yourself to God for this healing. Counsellors who would like to practise inner healing can people through the same steps.

Different people who minister inner healing to others follow somewhat different steps. What I am giving here is what I have found to be a

good balance, depending on God the Holy Spirit to heal, and responding to His moves appropriately from the human side.

## **Preparation**

As you go through the five steps coming up after this, prepare your mind in terms of the attitude and approach you need to have.

a. Begin with prayer, thanking God for salvation through His Son Jesus Christ, and asking Him to guide you step by step into the depths of healing He is bringing you. (If you have not yet begun to experience salvation from the Lord Jesus Christ, please go to the Appendix first and seek God. After that you can return here.) Pray that the Holy Spirit will protect you from deceiving spirits and help you to be honest and open before Him.

b. Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you through the memory of the painful experiences that you have gone through, and help you to

acknowledge how you felt as you went through them and to give you insight into how you reacted to the pain and the decisions which you made that changed your life.

c. Meditate on what God has done for you through Jesus Christ, what He means to you in the various dimensions of your life, and how that can change your thoughts about yourself, and your attitudes to other people. Be subject to the Holy Spirit as He reminds you of the things you have already learned and teaches you the way you can walk from now onwards.

d. As God gives you a new beginning, thank and praise Him for His deliverance and submit yourself to God to walk in His way and follow His paths.

The effects of inner wounds are seen in our ideas – wrong thoughts, perceptions and assumptions – which then affect our feelings and the choices of action we make. It is

therefore very important that we now learn to *understand* things right, as we think of the experiences we have gone through and how they have affected us. The Bible points out that transformation has to begin in our mind (Rom.12:2), and therefore, even if you are tempted to take only guidelines for the actions you need to take, it is important to go through what appears to be the ‘theory’ parts so that you can apply them with understanding!

I want you to be aware, however, that no single experience can lead us to perfect victory thereafter, because sin has had its effects on us for many years, with the roots going deeper and deeper, and therefore there is a progression in victory and lifelong growth involved here. At the same time, by the end of this session you should be able to enjoy a tremendous release in your mind and heart when you see the work God has done, and you respond to Him. Then you will have also

learned how to deal with the things you will face in the future, and experience more of this victory.

## **1. Revisiting the trauma**

Ask yourself this question, “What was the most emotionally painful situation you have gone through?” Your mind will immediately point to one or more incidents in your life. If there is more than one, you decide which of them was the most painful. Now you start thinking about it, how it started, how it went on, what the other people said and did, how you reacted, what you thought and felt as you went through the experience and afterwards, what support or understanding you received from your parents, teachers or other people close to you, and finally what conclusions you reached in your mind and what path you took.

If you are with an empathetic counsellor, narrate to him what you went through, as it is

described above. Let him ask you questions to clarify things. Remember, this is a painful process for you, and your natural wish may be to avoid thinking or talking about it, but you are looking for healing and resolutions at the end. Be as detailed as you can, knowing that the counsellor is going to keep things in confidence.

If you are dealing with yourself without a counsellor, remember that you are seeking God to heal you. He knows every detail of what you have gone through and how you felt, even the things you yourself do not know. He was there by your side. On your side, as you recollect the details of what you went through, perhaps years ago, you can get a clearer understanding of what happened.

It is natural that since you are the one who got hurt, you may have difficulty in understanding things about those who hurt you. Perhaps you have somewhat misunderstood their motives

or actions, or you have never thought of how your own reactions may have been misunderstood by them. As you think over these things, ask the Holy Spirit to guide your thoughts.

It is only natural that when you think of the incident(s) and the people who have hurt you, you get flooded with feelings of anger, hatred, revenge, bitterness, malice, self-pity, etc. You may feel that life has been very unjust towards you, people have not understood you rightly, and God Himself seems to have been negligent in taking care of you. Identify such feelings. Perhaps you may have acted out from such feelings in the past, but now you want to recognise and understand them in the safety of being alone before God or in the counselling room, and then resolve them, so that they may not continue to cause you pain in the future.

Learn to 'own' your feelings, thoughts and actions. As fallen human beings, we feel a



need to feel good about ourselves, and tend to reject things that put us in a negative light. But here, honesty is of paramount importance in identifying and admitting the truth about ourselves, because only then can we find healing. Imagine going to a medical doctor and saying there is no problem and everything is just fine!

Now we can proceed to the steps of finding healing for our inner wounds.

## **2. Getting right with God**

I assume at this point that you are a born again child of God. I also know that many assume they are born again, even though, because of the faulty preaching that is very common these days, they have not clearly understood what it means. There are many others who have received some level of 'faith' in Jesus and so assume that everything is fine with them. Both these groups of people may not have really

experienced the supernatural work which God does when we repent from our sins and put our trust in Jesus as our Saviour. I would therefore suggest that you skip over to the Appendix where I have described God's way of salvation, and then return here.

One common thing that happens when we have been hurt in life is to get upset with God for causing that to happen to us, or permitting it. Some Christians have been taught that since God is in control of everything, He is the One who is responsible for everything that happens to us. Certainly God is in total control of everything in the universe in the sense that He can do whatever He wants. But it does not follow that therefore He is responsible for everything that happens! If we do not get this clarified, it is only natural that we blame God for whatever goes wrong!

God is almighty, He is present everywhere at the same time and He knows everything that

goes on. He is also sovereign in that He can do whatever He wants, and no one can question or hinder Him (Psa.115:3). But, of course, there are many things He will never do, or in that sense *can* never do, when they contradict His nature or character. For example, He can never lie or go back on His promises saying He did not really mean them. So then who is responsible for all the evil that happens in this world?

What we need to remember is that when God created us people, He made us ‘in His image’ (Gen.1:27). This does not mean that we look like Him, because He is Spirit and has no form, or that there is some divinity in all of us. We have body, soul (mind) and spirit with which we can communicate with God who is Spirit. We are a special creation compared to animals who have only body and mind, without spirit. When man sinned, the spirit became ‘dead’ – disconnected from God, and now we have to

be born again through the work of the Holy Spirit who regenerates our spirit and gives us access to communicating with God. Only born-again Christians have ‘God’ dwelling in them, but even they do not become God but remain as created beings.

Another thing is that we have been created with abilities similar to God but in a much smaller and limited way – we are mighty, but not almighty; we can know many things, but we are not omniscient; we are able to move around and be at different places at different times, but we are not omnipresent. Another important thing to note in the context of our subject is that God has created us as ‘sovereign’ people with the ability to choose what we want to do. We usually call this our free will. Here also, we are not ‘omni-sovereign’, because God has given us only a limited scope or domain to exercise our

sovereignty. He rarely intervenes in our life to override our will, but He can if He wants to.

God is good, all the time. There is no evil in Him (1Jn.1:5). So, all the evil we see and experience in this world is from us people, or from Satan and his demons. Once we understand this, we can see how blasphemous it is for us to blame God for the evil that we have experienced!

If you have already read the Appendix and ensured your status as a child of God, what you have to do at this point is to confess your sin of blaming God and ask for forgiveness. He will forgive you and cleanse you of this sin (1Jn.1:9).

Take the opportunity at this time to confess any other sin in your life that you have not confessed so far to God. The goal is that there should be nothing in your heart that hinders your fellowship with God from now onwards.

There are some practical aspects you need to understand about God's forgiveness that can help you at different points in your life. When we ask God for forgiveness, it is not just that we are sorry for what we have done, but God should also be able to notice in our heart a strong desire not to sin again. If, while we ask for forgiveness, we imagine that it is always going to be available merely for the asking, it will show that we do not truly fear God or hate sin. Then God is not so foolish as to give us forgiveness (Psa.130:4). God does not merely want to save us from the punishment for sins, but He also wants to set us free from the power of sin over our life (Rom.6:14).

Some people confess their sins to God but they continue to feel guilty afterwards. The way to overcome this is to believe what God says in 1Jn.1:9. What God wants us to do is to confess our sins, and what He promises to do then is to forgive and cleanse us. We can hold

to that and believe that if we have done our part, God would certainly have done His part. So, the next time Satan accuses us about our sins, we have to just remind ourselves that they have already been dealt with and forgiven. We must also avoid the habit of thinking again and again about our sins and giving Satan an opportunity to accuse us and make us feel guilty again. Let us not be like a cow chewing the cud over and over in its mouth.

See how God describes how He forgives us. “As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us” (Psa.103.12). “He will again have compassion on us; He will tread our iniquities under foot. Yes, You will cast all their sins Into the depths of the sea” (Mic.7:19). When God forgives us, then there is no more condemnation for us (Rom.8:1), and we can learn not to entertain any condemnation in our heart once we know

we have confessed our sins and received forgiveness.

Another marvellous thing God tells us is that once He has forgiven us, He will not remember them any more (Heb.8:12). Of course, God is aware of our past, and in that sense He cannot delete it from His memory. But what He means is that He will not hold those sins against us any more, and He will not keep looking at us thinking of what all we have done!

“How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered!” (Psa.32:1). Once our conscience has been washed clean, it is as if a load has been taken off from our shoulder and we can move forward without being drawn back again to guilt, shame, etc.

Knowing that all our sins have been forgiven and that now we have an open access to God can give us such boldness that we can enjoy



the privilege of relating to God as our Father, talking to Him openly and freely about everything that is on our mind, and walking with Him with unhindered fellowship (1Jn.3:21,22).

We can now develop the habit of constantly being in touch with our heavenly Father, praying for our needs, thanking Him for His help, asking for forgiveness when we fall, learning how to be more careful as we walk on life's journey, enjoying His teaching, correction, guidance, protection, provision, etc. Is this life only for some rare saints of God? No, this is what He wants for all of us, from the least to the greatest (Heb.8:11).

### **3. Getting right towards people**

Now that everything is right between you and God, you can move in the next dimension of your life, dealing with other people. We cannot change the people we do not like,

because just like us they have their own free will, and they also have their sinful nature. What can happen when we have to deal with people who cause us trouble – knowingly or even unknowingly – is that we can get worked up in our mind. We may become so angry that we are tempted to take revenge, teach them a lesson, do evil in return to them, or at the end even kill them. Even if we do not do such things, we may store up the memory of what they have done to us and become bitter towards them or hold a grudge against them. Then what happens is that every time we think of them, all these bitter memories rise up in our mind, and we chew over them like a cow chews the cud, and then our bitterness grows stronger. We begin to become unable to get good sleep, because these memories haunt us. Satan also takes great pleasure in reminding us again and again, even when we decide to leave them in the past and move on. These memories remain as a strong source of stress

in our mind because they have not been resolved and brought to a closure. In the long run, this accumulating stress in our mind produces ‘psychosomatic’ symptoms in our body whose origin is in our mind and not our body. Many people get migraine headaches, mouth and stomach ulcers, joint pains, sleeplessness, etc., starting from stress.

This is especially true when it comes to our memory of how certain people in our life, such as parents, school teachers, or others have rejected, neglected or abused us, who have caused us trauma which have either changed the course of our life or caused us painful inner wounds from which we are suffering even now.

The tragicomedy here is that the victims are continuing to suffer while the abusers may be going around unrecognised by others, and many times being unaware themselves of the damage they have caused to others. Just think

of it, they have done wrong and caused harm, but the ones who got hurt are continually suffering the pain since the inner wounds have not been healed!

God wants to save you from this inner turmoil and give you peace towards your abusers, in your attitude towards them, even if they never acknowledge their wrong or repent towards you.

“If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord” (Rom.12:18,19). God recognises that how other people respond to us can be out of our hands. He would like us to restore peace between us and them, but if that is out of our hands, He wants us at least to be at peace in our mind and heart *towards* them. So He wants to help us first to

experience this peace in our heart and mind towards them.

What you need to do to get healed from these wounds is to first forgive them. To forgive others is to release them from the hold you have over them because of what they have done to you. You let them go free from your hands, and you hand them over to God for Him to deal with them.

Imagine someone who has hurt you as one you have got a hold over. He is in your custody and subject to the punishment you decide for him. But then you make this decision to let him go free from your hands. You give up your desire to punish him, teach him a lesson, make him suffer for the suffering he has caused you, etc. You let him walk away from you free.

One thought that usually comes up on such occasions is that he does not deserve to be set

free! That is right! The only problem is that you do not have any right to punish him. You remember at this time that you are one of those whom God has forgiven, not because you earned your forgiveness or because you deserved it, but just because God forgave you graciously! He could have punished you justly, but because of His love for you, He took your punishment on Himself, and now He is offering you forgiveness freely. When you receive that forgiveness from God on the basis of the unmerited favour He is showing you, you lose your right to demand justice from other people.

If, after you receive forgiveness from God on the basis of grace, you refuse to forgive anyone else saying they do not deserve it, what happens is that you disqualify yourself from the grace of God (Matt.6:14,15). Jesus went on to say that the heavenly Father would even take back the forgiveness He once gave

you if you refuse to forgive anyone else (Matt.18:32-35).

On the other hand, when you forgive someone from your heart, remembering how God has forgiven you, you begin to enjoy peace in your heart towards him. God knows how this can be a struggle, especially if the other person has hurt you deeply and you are still suffering from the damage he has caused you, and He reminds you to think of the way you yourself have received forgiveness from God (Eph.4:32).

What usually happens after you have forgiven someone is that you still feel angry towards him afterwards, and then you begin to doubt if you have really forgiven him. This is because of the lag in our memory where old memories still have power, and new experiences take time to become stronger than the old memories. Satan also likes to remind us about what others have done to us, again and again,

in order to try and make us angry and unforgiving towards them again. When this old memory comes up again in your mind, and you find your anger rising up again, what you need to do is to remind yourself that this matter has already been dealt with, this person has been forgiven, and that you are not going to waste any more time chewing the cud again! After that, turn your mind to some other matter, for example, to give God thanks for the work He is doing in your life. After several repeated exercises like this concerning the same person, you will find that the old memory troubles you less and less, and finally it stops bothering you. Now you are free!

There is a popular saying, “Forgive and forget.” But when we have finally managed to forgive others, we may get troubled with our inability to forget! Here we must understand the distinction. We cannot actually delete any part of our memory. After we forgive someone,



whenever the memory of what he has done comes up in our mind, we remind ourselves that we have already forgiven him and that the subject is closed. After we repeat this process several times, we will see that we will remember those incidents less and less, and, this is the most important thing, their memory will not get us worked up any more! The ultimate mark of our forgiving them is that now we even pray for those people for their good.

Some people think that they will forgive another person only if he comes and asks for forgiveness. Remember, we have no right to take that position; only God has. As a Man, when the Lord Jesus was hanging on the cross, He asked the Father to forgive those who had crucified Him (Lk.23:34). There He was giving us an example as a Man. This was His way of expressing His forgiveness towards those people. But it is also clear from history

that the Father did not forgive them, neither then or afterwards, because He forgives only people who repent.

When you forgive others, they do not get forgiveness from God, because God is just in the matter of forgiveness. He forgives only when someone repents and confesses their sins, because He is the authority; He made the law, and He is also the Judge and the Executive.

It may be, for some people, that there is a long list of people in their memory who have been troubling them whenever they thought about them. In such cases, it will be good to take paper, and write down all their names, go over each one remembering what they did to you, and then deliberately forgive them one by one. Score out each name after you have forgiven them. If their memory keeps coming up again, do what I just described above. You now also have a record to show on which day

you forgave each of them! Just imagine the healing you can have in your mind after that!

There is another practical matter which we must realise here. We cannot really have peace between us and others until both sides find peace with the other. So, even though we can have peace and rest in our heart towards others, if those others refuse to reciprocate, we cannot have peace between us. In cases where the others are still inimical towards us and likely to hurt us again, it is wisdom to avoid meeting them as far as possible.

#### **4. Getting right with yourself**

Once you have become right with God and towards others, you get to the place where you can become right in what you think about yourself. If we are not right with God and towards other people, that also affects what we think about ourselves and how we behave. A low self-esteem or a lack of self-respect is a

major problem for many people in this world. As we saw earlier, some people who suffer from low self-esteem hate themselves and live without any hope of anything better, some others seek to withdraw from people in order to avoid getting hurt, some try to catch the attention of others or to impress them, some try to drown their pain in seeking pleasure of various forms, some pour all their energy into getting above others in power, some others cling to others with the expectation that those others will make them feel good, etc. All these propagate the pain of their inner wounds lifelong. God wants to set us free, and heal us.

The first thing that God offers us is forgive us of our sins. That brings a huge blessing to those who are bound down by feelings or guilt. “How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered! How blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity” (Psa.32:1,2). Forgiveness is

what means eternal death or life for us. We cannot earn it by working for it, and the USP of the Christian Gospel is that God offers it free for us.

This is such a foundation for our life that, even though we have looked at it earlier in this book, I am repeating some of it again here since it is worth meditating over it slowly and meaningfully so that you can actually enjoy its blessings. If you have honestly acknowledged your sins before God and turned away from that way of life, you can believe that He has done what He has promised, and forgiven all your sins (1Jn.1:9). He has washed you with the blood of Jesus and made you white like snow (1Jn.1:7;Isa.1:18). He uses great figures of speech to tell us how He puts away the record of our sins, saying how He removes our sins from His mind as far as the east is from the west and buries them in the depth of the ocean (Psa.103:12;Mic.7:19).

There is an extremely precious promise God gives us once He forgives us, which is almost too difficult to believe. “For I will be merciful to their iniquities, And I will remember their sins no more” (Heb.8:12). Of course, in a technical sense, God cannot really forget anything because knowing everything including the past is a part of His attributes. But there is one analogy by which we can understand what this means.

In a computer, there is a processor and there is a memory where information is stored. To do any processing, the computer fetches the information from the memory, processes it and stores the result in the memory. So what God is promising here is that He is not going to fetch the record of our sins from His memory for processing any more. The implication is that He is not going to hold us guilty or to continue to treat us as guilty.

Meditate on this. It may take time for this truth to sink in and increasingly free us from our sense of guilt. Remember how this forgiveness is not something we can earn, but given to us by God as a pure gift of grace.

People who know about our sins may not be gracious like God even after they see our transformation, and some of them may keep talking about them or calling us guilty. We can take these as reminders of how gracious God has been to us and be thankful about it, but we need to reject all these attempts by Satan or people to bring us back into the bondage of guilt again.

Another blessing that God gives us is justification, which means to declare us righteous. Having taken away from us the record of our sins, He goes on to treat us righteous people (saints!). He looks at us as if we have never sinned (“just-as-if-I’d” never sinned!). He does this by crediting the perfect

righteousness of Jesus to our account after having debited our sins to Him (1Cor.1:30). This transfer enables God to meet the requirements of His justice and show His love to us at the same time. Another way of describing this is to say that we have been clothed with the robe of righteousness from Jesus (Isa.61:10).

What this means for us is that God has completely accepted us, without any of our sins hindering that. When God Himself has accepted us in a perfect manner, we must learn to live in that security of having been accepted. Then we can stop craving for acceptance from people, and we can rejoice even when someone rejects us (Rom.8:31). When we begin to experience this freedom, we can understand that our inner wounds are being healed.

God has not only washed us and made us clean and accepted us to Himself, but He has



also adopted us as His sons and daughters (Rom.8:15). We have been given the privilege of calling God, our Creator, as Abba, Father. Now you can enjoy your relationship with your heavenly Father, not as a Judge or a Lawgiver, but as One who knows your limitations, failures and weaknesses and sympathises with you (Psa.103:13,14).

Now the Lord Jesus Christ has not only become our Saviour and Lord, but also our Elder Brother (Heb.2:11). Now that He has faced all our temptations in the same way that we are tempted now, He demonstrates that now He understands what we go through (Heb.4:15). He intercedes for us before the Father as our High Priest. By overcoming every temptation He became our Forerunner and our Example, and He offers not only to forgive us when we fail but also to help us overcome in our time of temptation (Heb.4:16). He has given us the Holy Spirit to help,

comfort, teach, correct and guide us through the path of victory and closer relationship with Him (Jn.16:13,14).

“I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you” (Heb.13:5). This is one of the most encouraging promises for the Christian who has started his journey with God and encounters many challenges along the way and also failures. One fear that comes our way is wondering if some failure on our part may have caused God to turn away from us in disappointment or anger. But then God tells us that He will never forsake us, and that becomes especially encouraging when we have fallen. God always waits for us to repent and get back to Him, as in the parable of the prodigal son, and welcomes us with shouts of joy when we return. Even our failures do not have to cause us to fear rejection because our Father has made a way back to Him (1Jn.2:1).

Then we can walk towards the goal of becoming more and more like Him in His character. More than all the earthly needs for which a Christian depends on the Father, this goal is what drives him towards God. From God's side, this is the ultimate reward He has prepared for His children, and He causes all things to work together towards this goal (2Pet.1:3,4;Rom.8:28,29).

Another thing that God has done for us is to make us individually a part of the body of Christ where the Lord Jesus is the Head, and each of us has a specific role to fulfil. With this in view, He has already created us with different talents that make us suitable for our role, and He also equips us with spiritual gifts to enable us with supernatural anointing from the Holy Spirit to a part of building the body of Christ (1Cor.12:7). This equips us to serve or 'minister' to the others, as others also serve us according to their roles. Each one of us may

have some work in the world that earns us our living, but also a spiritual responsibility towards others as God helps us. All this leads to a sense of value, a meaning and purpose in life, replacing the sense of insecurity, insignificance and poor self-worth.

One part of this great freedom is that we no longer need to compare ourselves with others! The way God has created us and placed us in this world is unique for each of us. We were born in a particular family in a particular culture, speaking a particular language. We have a particular temperament, and we had a unique experience growing up. Our skills and abilities are different. Etc. In other words, we are unique; we are not like anyone else, and there is no one else who is like us. God has a specific plan for each of us, and we cannot keep other people as our points of comparison or model. How foolish it is to compare an

orange with a tomato! Each one has a unique purpose which the other cannot fulfil.

This will take away a lot of pressure from you, as you learn to live before God's face, stop competing with others, and stop making others as your benchmark. When God told Abraham to walk before Him and be 'perfect' (Gen.17:1), here is a clue for us. God has an expectation of 'perfection' from us which is unique to us. We can go towards that goal only as we leave people aside and focus on what God thinks about us.

Another thing that follows is that we do not have to be disturbed too much by what others think about us, as long as our heart is right before God (1Jn.3:21). Not everyone can understand us completely, and so it is inevitable that some will misunderstand us. If we are bound to the goal of impressing everyone, we will get disturbed so much in trying to please them, wondering about what

they think about us, and losing our sleep over it. But God wants to give us peace.

Recalling and meditating on what God has done for us and remembering and holding on to His promises, we can now learn to move forward on the way of healing. Having been made right with God, and having made ourselves right towards all people from our side, we can now grow in every way and fulfil the purpose for which God created us and placed us on the earth.

## **5. Declaring our victory over Satan**

When God has forgiven us, cleansed us, accepted us, and given us the Holy Spirit to us, we can have boldness before Satan and all his demons. When Jesus died on the cross and rose up from the dead, He demonstrated publicly that sin, and therefore death, could not hold Him. He now offers us forgiveness from our sins, and takes away all the grounds

for accusation that we had given Satan (Col.2:13,14). He also disarmed all the powers of darkness (v.15), and He has authorised us to exercise His power over Satan and the demons (Lk.10:19).

Now we can declare this deliverance and victory to Satan, and claim that he cannot have any more control over our life. We ask God specifically for forgiveness for the access we may have given earlier to Satan and declare to Satan that now we belong to the Lord Jesus Christ and that he can no longer touch us or anything that belongs to us without specific permission from God.

We do not have to shout or scream about this as some people do, but speak out in the confidence of our heart in God. However, we need to remember that as created beings, demons cannot 'hear' what we think in our mind, and so we need to speak these declarations out with our mouth. Remember

also, that Satan has been studying human beings for thousands of years and that he is able to pick up our body language and observe the things we actually say and do.

When you stand in the authority of the name of Jesus, Satan and demons have to obey. You must know that it is not your piety, Bible knowledge, prayer time or experience that Satan is afraid of, but he is scared to death of Jesus who has publicly defeated him on the cross.



## **Chapter 10**

### **Conclusion**

Salvation in its fulness is a restoration. Sin has damaged us in our spirit, mind and body, and God's plan is to restore us and make us whole in every way. This work will only be completed in eternity after we have left this earthly body and our sinful nature behind, received a new, glorified body like that of the risen Lord Jesus and start living on the new earth under the new heaven. But God begins that process of healing and restoration in our life right here, for those who seek Him and respond to Him. Let us not get misled with a focus only on our earthly life in an earthly sense, but let us all go forward and receive the fulness of life God has sent Jesus to give us. "The thief comes only to steal and kill and

destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly” (Jn.10:10). And then, when He sets us free, we will be really and wholly free (Jn.8:36).

## **Appendix**

### **God's way of salvation**

There are three phases that are involved in the salvation that God brings to man. Justification is the part where God makes us right with Him. He forgives us our sins and considers us righteous because of our faith in Him. Then comes sanctification through which He transforms us little by little into His character. Finally there will be glorification where we are freed even from the presence of sin altogether.

Our sins have separated us from fellowship with God (Isa.59:1,2). The justice of the holy and righteous God demands that sin must be punished. If we look at how it is against God

that we have sinned against in the ultimate analysis, we can begin to understand the enormity of the punishment we deserve. Then we can also see that no matter what religious rituals we carry out, how much penance we do or how much we inflict pain on ourselves, as many people have tried to do, there is no way we can manage to get our punishment cancelled. But God's love for us found a way to satisfy His justice as well His love for us, by taking on the punishment for our sins on Himself. This was why Jesus took the role of the Lamb of God and died in our place.

God loves all of us so much that He did not want any of us to suffer punishment or miss all the good things He has prepared for us (Jn.3:16). In order to offer this restoration for us, the Father and the Son went through all the rejection by people and the suffering of death on the cross. Now He invites everyone to

return to Him and receive this salvation as a free gift from Him.

While on the one hand there is nothing we need to do, or can do, in order to *earn* our salvation, there are things we need to do to *receive* this salvation. I hope you understand the difference. “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God” (Eph.2:8). God offers this salvation to us through an unmerited favour towards us. We can receive it, not through ‘works’ (which are meant to earn salvation) but through faith.

We must understand what this faith is. It is not just a mental agreement about certain facts, such as Jesus is the Son of God, He died on the cross and rose again, etc. But when we have true faith, it grips our heart and we are willing to take action based on that faith. What prepares us to take action, and what action will it prompt us to?

The first thing is to recognise that we are sinners in the eyes of God, and that if Jesus had not come and died in our place, we would have had no chance for salvation. We realise how much we have offended God by our sins, and we feel a deep remorse in our heart, and we also feel a great desire not to sin again. It is then that Jesus becomes precious to us as our Saviour, and in turn we become willing to do whatever He wants us to.

This change in our heart is called repentance, and if there is no repentance, our faith is only superficial, and in that case, no real change will take place in our life.

When God offers us this salvation through faith and we respond to it in repentance and faith, God sends His Holy Spirit into our heart and causes us to be 'born again', giving us the seed of a new nature. This nature wants to stop sinning and start pleasing God. The food for this seed to grow is from the word of God. We

find in us a deep desire to know God more through the Bible, and also to seek His help for everything in our life through prayer. If such changes do not take place in someone's life, he cannot assume that he has become a child of God.

If you have not experienced this new birth in your life, humble yourself before God, acknowledge your sins to Him, and ask Him to forgive you, give you a new life through Jesus Christ as your Saviour. Afterwards, seek to walk close to God through the study of the Bible, prayer and fellowship with other children of God. It will be lifelong growth. May the Lord bless you.

I have to add a few warnings here. On the whole, the preaching of the Gospel has been watered down much in these days, hoping to make the way easier and simpler for people! There is no sufficient effort to point out to people how we stand before God as hopeless

sinners, which can bring out a sense of desperation for salvation. People are generally invited to look for the benefits of having Jesus as Saviour, such as escape from hell and a place in heaven, blessings on earth, answers to prayer, etc. Again, this does not result in repentance or turning away from sin.

A wrong way Jesus is presented to people is almost as if He is waiting for their approval and acceptance. Another is to present Him almost as a genie who will be there to run to their help whenever they pray for whatever they want.

As a result, my observation is that many who consider themselves as believers in Jesus have not been born again. This includes those who have experienced miracles from Him in the way of healing, answer to prayer, etc., because many of them have not seen themselves as sinners, repented, or seen the need of a Saviour.



No inner healing can come from God until we get right with God through His Son.



**Many people do not realise that painful experiences they have gone through may have affected their life strategies, and in this way they may be still suffering from inner wounds years later. But Jesus has come to set us free and give us an abundant life.**

**This book can help individuals receive healing, and counsellors get guidance to minister to others.**



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