

OCTOBER 2008 Week 3 TEACHING

TURNING PAIN INTO POWER- PART 3: Understand the Process

God designed everything in the universe to be in perfect balance, including you. He did it so brilliantly in fact, that we have no cause to even give it considerable thought. Take for instance the growth process of a healthy human being. Our minds, organs, and extremities all grow in relationship to each other pretty smoothly. You don't see too many 8 year olds walking around with a left foot as large as a 200-pound man, and a right one as small as an infant. As long as it has an environment that is conducive to growth, every thing grows proportionately, according to God's design.

Romans 8:29 NLT

For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn, with many brothers and sisters.

His eyes are upon us, for we belong to Him. We are not inconsequential. We are apart of eminent holiness. We are chosen, handpicked, and singled out for a purpose. Our realization of our spiritual nature is an awakening, a remembrance of who and who's we are. Jesus Christ was the most loving, wonderful human being that ever graced the face of this earth. When we accept the reality that he is in truth our big brother, we are declaring that we are as he was when he walked upon the earth, as he demonstrated love in its greatest capacity. We rewrite the chapter of our existence by affirming that we are spirit beings having an earth experience, not the other way around.

Once we are born into our earthly families, with a biological mother and father, try as we might, we can never undo our biological origin. Our parents will always be our parents. When we allow the reality of Christ to resonate deep within our knowing, we are ushered into an eternal spiritual and unbreakable bond with God. His connection to us is more permanent than our biological relationships. He will always be our Heavenly Father. The King James Version of Ephesians 1:13 says it this way, we are *"sealed with that holy Spirit of promise"*.

Our spiritual journey did not begin in our mother's womb. Our destiny as spirit beings was singled out long before any living being had knowledge of it. So even though God does not cause us to walk around like robots or make us follow His Word against our free-will, He knows us intimately, because He has birthed us out of what he himself is.

Ephesians 1:13 NLT

And now you also have heard the truth, the Good News that God saves you. And when you believed in Christ, he identified you as his own by giving you the Holy Spirit, whom he promised long ago.

We have been identified by God as members of His family. Our destination is the Father's house. How we end up there absolutely matters. Your spiritual fate is sealed. Your destination is set, but the path you choose to get there is left to your own devices. There are only two paths we can choose in life: 1) the path of love, and 2) the path of pain. Although most of us vacillate back and forth from one to the other, the path we travel at any given time is completely up to us.

Most of us say that we haven't the faintest clue how we ended up on a painful path. It's as if we were standing by the sidelines of our consciousness, watching someone who looks and sounds like us live out our lives. That's because sometimes there's a disconnect between our experiences, our understanding, and our faith. We need to comprehend in the most profound way that life is a cycle that revolves without our permission. Too many of us have not garnered the spiritual strength and maturity to handle what life throws our way. That has no bearing at all on whether or not it hits us in the face. If you are not prepared through the faith, love, and power of Jesus Christ, you will not have what you need to dodge the dart or to stop it dead in its tracks. You will experience its pain...all of us do at one time or another.

The thing of which we must be convinced is that God does not cause our pain. He knew we would have it, but He never intended us to stay in it. He desires that we work our way through it, and He has given us everything we need in order to do that. But before we *get ta' working it out*, we have to understand something, pain is very much like a tree. Once you pull back the bark of a tree you will expose what looks to be its inner surface, but in truth another outer layer is revealed. It has many layers and every time you whittle down another layer the tree is more vulnerable to the extremities of its environment, like disease and pestilent attacks. The layers must be skillfully pulled back to allow the tree an opportunity to receive nutrients in places that were perhaps cut off from sustenance in the past. This also allows it greater room to grow and flourish.

Like the tree, peeling back layers of deeply imbedded pain must be patiently and masterfully done. If professionals with several years of study have difficulty mastering this process, you and I should certainly have a healthy respect for its complexity. We need an expert whose credentials are exemplary and whose skill is incomparable, and God has provided us with an internal one through Jesus Christ.

The Holy Spirit that dwells within us is more perfect than anything that dwells in this earth. It is love in its purest form. It harbors no darkness, no ill-will or evil intent and it is supremely intelligent. It is a good and perfect gift from God that will not only lead, guide, and direct us through life; it will preserve our lives and help us to heal. In as much as we will allow, it will marry our consciousness with everything it has to give so that we become the very essence of God. Upon salvation, it doesn't instantaneously fill our minds with God's Word, heal all the wounds of our souls, or cause us to feel in our hearts only emotions of joy, peace, and love; although it is perfectly within its power to do so. Its purpose is to increase our consciousness so that we walk in these gifts as we put them on bit by bit.

God didn't allow the horrendous torture and sacrifice of His only begotten son, our lord and savior, Jesus Christ, only to afford us a marginal existence. No! We are more than conquerors! (Romans 8:37) Our Heavenly Father never intended that we should remain in a painful state, on that we can depend. Through the indwelling Holy Spirit He has provided a way for you to be better than you were before.

Remember, life revolves continuously. Whether it brings negativity or the sheer delight of the opposite, it will roll right on by us if we are not careful. So the process is not to stop the negative cycle, but to reverse it through spiritual growth. The methodology to do so is revealed in God's Word and it works! This is not to say that we will not need the assistance of skilled physicians and therapists, quite the contrary. They are often instrumental towards our restoration, but it is paramount to any healing process that we recognize the authority of Jesus Christ, and the delivering power of his love through the indwelling Holy Spirit.

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