Series: Healing for the Wounded

April 14, 2019

Message 3

**Healing for the Vulnerable**

Psalm 147:3

Psalm 147:3 - He heals the brokenhearted and bandages their wounds.

Proverbs 15:13 - A glad heart makes a happy face;

a broken heart crushes the spirit.

Proverbs 25:20 - Singing cheerful songs to a person with a heavy heart is like taking someone’s coat in cold weather or pouring vinegar in a wound.

It is cruel to be flippantly lighthearted around someone who is struggling to find happiness. You don’t go to a funeral where someone is in terrible pain, experiencing terrible loss, and make jokes. You show and express concern.

Psalm 103:8-14 - The Lord is compassionate and merciful, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. He will not constantly accuse us, nor remain angry forever. He does not punish us for all our sins; he does not deal harshly with us, as we deserve.

 For his unfailing love toward those who fear him is as great as the height of the heavens above the earth.

 He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west.

 The Lord is like a father to his children, tender and compassionate to those who fear him. For he knows how weak we are; he remembers we are only dust.

I cannot possibly understand everything that everyone is going through when they are hurting - but the Holy Spirit is our Comforter and He can help us to comfort one another. I pray that the Holy Spirit will speak to us today.

I am not your judge - and no one else is your judge except God. He is the only One who has complete knowledge of our hearts with which to judge us.

We have talked about 3 areas of damage being done to people today - Christians as well as non-Christians -

* Burn out
* Depression
* Wounding

Burnout happens to givers - people who give over and over again - They keep going when they run out of strength, get burned out, and become susceptible to false stimulants and sometimes end up looking for unhealthy relationships.

I want to cut out all the religious garbage. Religion is a trap. Religion is used to make a person not in a relationship with Jesus feel like they are in a relationship with Jesus - and religion makes the person in a relationship with Jesus feel like they are not.

Religion is not grace. Religion is rules and regulations and legalism - Let’s get down to where the rubber meets the road.

Why do men have an affair - because the other woman is prettier? No! I have been shocked at what some men have left their wives for.

Why do women have affairs? Better looking? Nope.

It’s not about the looks and it’s not about the sex. Someone comes along and makes them feel good about themselves. A person gets so burnt out physically and emotionally, they are just going through the motions of life - they have become desensitized - they are not feeling very much - the kids are more on their nerves than giving them joy - and someone comes along, gives a little bit of attention, makes them feel good about themselves for the fist time in a long time - they are feeling again - the devil is setting them up.

It’s got nothing to do with body parts or performance - as the magazines at the checkout counter and the online clicks would like you to believe. It is simply about someone coming along and paying a little bit of attention to someone who has been so busy and giving so much they have become worn out. Life has given them little feeling. The husband goes to work and comes home tired. The wife works, deals with the kids, the house cleaning, the shopping, and they have been together for years - they start to take one another for granted - the Devil puts someone in the way to just give a little attention - just give a little lift - it is the sense of feeling special once again.

Families and abandoned. Homes are destroyed - for a short moment of pleasure.

A.A. Allen was a great evangelist - large meetings in the 1950’s - all over the country - died of alcoholism - Grandad found him - he was stopped while driving in Tennessee - became a great scandal - what happened?

Someone said that he gave of himself so much - he didn’t take time to take care of himself - so in order to have the pep he needed to continue to minister he began taking a little bit of alcohol. - “a little wine for the stomach’s sake.” He most likely never thought he would become an alcoholic. He thought he could control it. But it was there in times of weariness, there in times of spiritual attack, there in times when he felt he needed to numb the heaviness of the burdens he dealt with - soon, he was dependent upon it and it destroyed him, his ministry, and it eventually took his life. He died of alcoholism.

We could condemn and stand in judgment over him - but did anyone come along before the situation got so bad and try to minister to him? Was there anyone around who tried to get him to take a day off - anyone who tried to get him to take a vacation? Anyone to warn him - or was he surrounded constantly by people who always wanted something from him? I don’t know. Maybe there were warnings and he ignored them.

1st Corinthians 10:13 - The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure.

God surely provided a way of escape for him - but did anyone try to minister to him?

Some people get so deep in their troubles they don’t see how badly they are hurting others - their family, their wife and kids - People get to a state of emotional numbness - they know they are doing wrong, they know they are hurting others - they begin to feel guilty and that just adds to their heaviness and takes them deeper into the pit. They don’t muster the strength to turn it around, and so their pain goes deeper as well as the pain of those around them who love them and whom they love.

Jesus pulled away from the crowds - he got alone in the mountains - on the sea -

We need to realize that there are times of rest that are necessary. If some of you don’t start pulling back and adjusting your schedule soon, you may be at the point I am talking about.

For some, their work for God is the first to go. They will coach little league, volunteer at the school, go to board meetings, work overtime and extra hours - and when they pull back, they skip worship and back out of ministry - I think it would be healthier to cut out other items before you cut out that which could give you strength.

Depression comes after burnout - It is the emotional manifestation of the depletion of physical resources. This happens to people who face stress and deal with it inadequately over a period of time. Stress doesn’t happen to just a few folks. Stress is a part of every life.

We are living in a time where we have more to do and people expect us to get more done.

A bank commercial once showed people in a diner - all taking different kinds of antacid. People seep into depression and lose the ability to function as a father, a mother, a student, a worker. They can’t get their initiative going to carry on their life. They try, but they can’t seem to get it together.

Hopelessness kicks in - These people are open to the WOUNDING.

This is an emotional condition that comes about by hurtful acts from other people. You are at point where you are **vulnerable** for them to hurt you, but they have no intent to hurt you - and they don’t even realize what is happening because they have no way of knowing what is going on in your life. Your frame of mind, the stress you are under, and the work of the devil has opened you up to being wounded.

You become cut, pierced, bit and burned by someone’s words or actions toward you. At any other time it wouldn’t bother you a bit. Some people get out of the original state that made them susceptible to wounding, but they carry the hurt with them for years. Others come out of the emotional state, but because they were wounded during that time, they now have thin skin all the time and they have become emotionally healthy to a certain degree, but they walk around always susceptible to wounding because of the way they were hurt during that down time.

Some are here today who may not be wounded right now, and you may have not wounded someone else, or your’ve received forgiveness for it - but right now, you are on the edge.

**Big Idea: Are you vulnerable to an attack?**

Are you on the verge - on the edge of experiencing a terrible wound? How can you protect yourself?

Some of you need to adjust your schedule and move your vacation up - If you can’t afford to go anywhere, stay home - don’t answer the phone - the phone is a tool for you - you aren’t a tool for the phone.

Get off social media for a while - Quit comparing yourself with someone else’s vanity feed of a false life they wish they had. Sleep in late -

I’m not talking about being lazy or irresponsible - I’m talking about taking care of yourself physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

Some people love God so much, and they want to serve for Him, but they have been hurt so bad - and sometimes hurt in the ministry - they have decided they are not going to open themselves up to being hurt again -

**T.S.:** Three people who are vulnerable to being wounded.

**> Tired people**

You have gone to someone for help, but they are just as tired and stressed out as you are.

You barely made it here today. You debated whether or not it would be worth it to get ready and come. Some are trying to decide whether or not they are going to continue to be connected to church at all.

The fact is, what many are experiencing has nothing to do with what may or may not be going on in the church or in any other area of life - you are just worn out and any little thing is going to nudge you over the edge.

If you walk away from the church, you walk away from the loving community that God has set up to help you and heal you. If you walk away from the family of God, healing and strength won’t come. The pain will deepen. Bitterness will follow. Bad mouthing brothers and sisters follows -

**We badmouth others to make ourselves look better when we don’t feel good about ourselves.**

Remember that when you hear someone talk badly about someone else.

God is not the problem - Jesus is not the problem - the church people aren’t the problem - The problem is our minds, spirits and emotional have been under attack. Our attitude and our mental frame of mind is all out of whack.

The easiest way to describe some people is simply that they are tired all the time. Tired mentally - physically - emotionally - even spiritually tired.

Tired people make a lot of mistakes.

A person who gets tired driving can make some fatal mistakes -

A person who is tired has trouble hearing.

When you’re tired you don’t remember things -

* You get home and don’t even remember the drive.
* You prayed over your meal and five minutes later asked, “Did we pray?”
* Your kids talk to you about something and come back to you later and you don’t even remember that they spoke to you.
* You read Scripture, but come to the end of the chapter and have no idea what you just read.

These are indicators - warning lights - you are vulnerable to being wounded.

**> Performance-oriented people**

People who are especially susceptible are performance oriented people.

Perfectionists! Legalists - your sense of self-worth depends on how well you perform. It doesn’t matter what anybody else thinks, you know you can do better - and when you don’t measure up to your own high standards, you beat yourself up in your mind.

You know when this starts? “Oh Look! You went potty! You made poopy!” Everything is wonderful - you didn’t make it to the potty - “Bad! Bad! You’ve got to try harder!”

We have taken our potty training trauma into every area of our lives! Some of us more than others.

The world expects performance. You begin to think only those who perform well and to a high standard are going to be accepted - You begin to worry about your job - then your family - your future - what are you going to do? When you begin to think you can’t perform, the stress gets deeper. You begin to lose your confidence when once you were supremely confident in yourself. Now - you are always expecting something to go wrong.

Your attitude becomes, “Surely something will go wrong with this plan, something always goes wrong. Things never seem to work out for me.” You carry this attitude to work home, church - even on vacation.

Then, when you expect something to go wrong in a certain area, it doesn’t. Something goes wrong in the area you didn’t expect. That makes it all worse -

Galatians 3:1-4 MSG - You crazy Galatians! Did someone put a hex on you? Have you taken leave of your senses? Something crazy has happened, for it’s obvious that you no longer have the crucified Jesus in clear focus in your lives. His sacrifice on the cross was certainly set before you clearly enough.

 Let me put this question to you: How did your new life begin? Was it by working your heads off to please God? Or was it by responding to God’s Message to you? Are you going to continue this craziness? For only crazy people would think they could complete by their own efforts what was begun by God. If you weren’t smart enough or strong enough to begin it, how do you suppose you could perfect it? Did you go through this whole painful learning process for nothing? It is not yet a total loss, but it certainly will be if you keep this up!

Sometimes we are simply trying way too hard instead of just trusting in Jesus.

Is it by our effort, or by the work of the Holy Spirit that we are going to achieve the goals Jesus has set for us? After we have begun by the Spirit are we going to resort to human effort and human reasoning?

Think of a time when God did something great for you - in your family -

Think of a time when God changed everything -

Now - we are under attack - we’ve forgotten about those times. Or we think God has forgotten about us. We feel as if we are in a hole and WE have to dig our own way out. We can’t see God bringing us out - we will have to work and scratch to pull ourselves out - but we know we can’t.

Remember when Joseph was thrown into the well…

He didn’t pull himself out - God got him out.

“Yeah - but he because a slave!” - yes - but as he was faithful through all the difficulty God got him out and put him in a position to influence thousands - and save his family.

He was in the well with no way out.

You started your journey with God believing in His grace - now you are worn out - you are tired - you are not doing everything you would like to do - not seeing the results you would like to see - you are susceptible to being wounded - you think the only way to healing to work harder - achieve more -

Paul says - it’s still by God’s grace - go back to God’s grace -

Receive God’s grace for you and give God’s grace to those you have wronged - to those you think have wronged you - to those you think have done wrong.

 Tired People - Performance Oriented People -

**> Hypocritical people**

Hypocritical people have been wounded - so now they are trying to guard themselves from being wounded again. But in the hypocritical mode, you will be wounded again.

A child at the dinner table has had something go wrong during the day - he has a bad face on - “Straighten up! Go back to your room and don’t come out until you have a smile on your face!”

He comes back with a smile - but he doesn’t feel any better on the inside. We’ve just taught them how to be a hypocrite.

The church is full of them. We won’t let our guard down. Some come in here and won’t be yourself because you are afraid that no one will accept you for who you are.

We compliment kids on their appearance - on their performance - they made determinations based on that - kids are always wondering if they are truly loved.

Sharon never let me see her with her glasses before we got married - much less without makeup -

Darla ..

We base how we feel about ourselves based on appearance and performance - and our whole culture is geared this way.

Don’t judge people based on appearance. I’m glad we don’t feel like we all have to dress up for church anymore - too much judgment in that. Too much hypocrisy in that -

And don’t take this as an excuse to judge people who still do dress up - that is a part of who they are - just leave the judgment at the door so we can be healed of the hypocrisy.

We accept people here no matter what - and we don’t desire to make judgments on appearance.

No matter how we are dressed - everyone of us is broken and has experienced brokenness, sin and wounding. Every one of us is in need of healing.

Psalm 103:14 - For he knows how weak we are;

he remembers we are only dust.

Psalm 103:10 - He does not punish us for all our sins;

he does not deal harshly with us, as we deserve.

From the richest to the poorest among us - we are dust - from the most spiritual to the most sinful - we are dust.

When we are burnt out and depressed and we don’t have the strength to pull ourselves out - we start faking it.

Pastors are the worst offenders. We feel like we have to be wonderful - we have to lift others up - we can never be down - we can never miss -

And so often grace is extended to others, but perfection is expected from the pastor.

Some say, “The church is full of hypocrites.” Of course it is! Where do you expect them to be?

The bar is also full of hypocrites - the factory - the office - the school - everywhere you go people are faking it and lying about what is really going on in their lives.

Some have never felt totally accepted and unconditionally loved. For some, love has always been tied to condition and performance. They feel they have to do something to gain love - from family - from God.

There is nothing we can ever do to deserve God’s love - but He loves us anyway - that is the kind of love we are to have for one another - and it is the kind of love we need to receive.

Romans 5:8 - But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.

He accepts us in our sin. He accepts us with all our mistakes.

If God was out to get you, He would have gotten you by now! God loves you with an everlasting, undying, never-ending love.

**Concl:** Some are on the edge today. Some are simply tired. Some are so performance oriented the stress is too much to bear and you are on the verge of cracking. Some have been putting on a hypocritical face.

Some are on the edge of a breakdown - on the edge of an immoral situation - on the edge of giving up at work, not knowing where you are going to next - on the edge of giving upon the the church.

Matthew 11:28-30 - “Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.”

He is here for you today.

Isaiah 53:5 - But he was pierced for our transgressions;

he was crushed for our iniquities;

upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,

and with his wounds we are healed.