

Introduction to Biblical Counseling

How to Gain Emotional Freedom

Key Words: Identify, Forgive, Remove, Replace

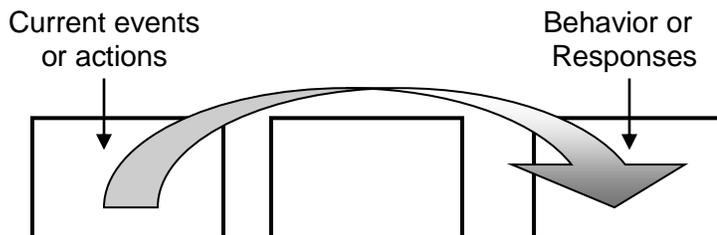
Introduction: On February 1, 2003, the Space Shuttle, Columbia, disintegrated over Texas during re-entry into the earth's atmosphere with the loss of all seven crew members, shortly before it was scheduled to conclude its 28th mission. Of all of Columbia's debris that was scattered over Texas, Louisiana and Arkansas, the one thing officials wanted most to recover was the "black box" or flight recorder. By analyzing it, they hoped to determine what went wrong before it blew up.

God has designed a "flight recorder" called the heart (lit. mind). All of life's events, thoughts, emotions, are recorded there. Our task is to go inside the heart (core belief system) and determine what is working and what is not working and adjust or correct what is not working for us. Usually what is not working well for us is the result of our negative emotions or painful emotions from our past.

CORE BELIEF SYSTEM

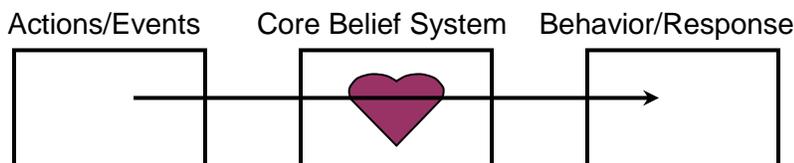
I. **Realize Negative Emotions Can Control the Believer's Behavior even more than the Holy Spirit.**

A. **Most people believe that behavior and responses are direct results of some action of another (offense) or an event (car accident). // We think that the event happens and we respond.**



B. **In reality, present events or actions of others first go through our core belief system that the scripture defines as the heart.**

DRAWING:



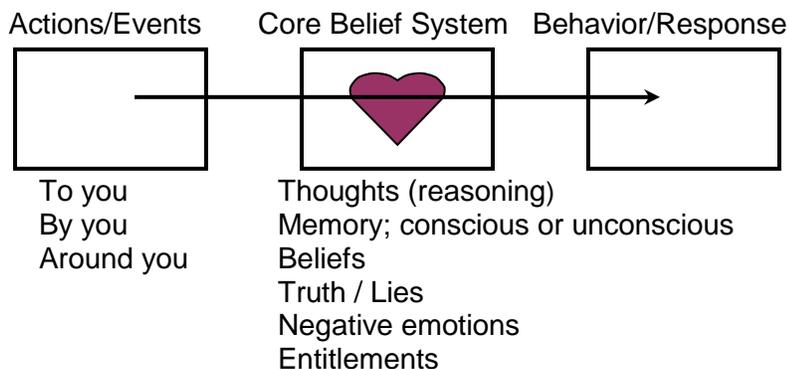
1. Matt. 15:19, "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies."
2. Prov. 4:23, "(Protect) Keep your heart (mind) with all diligence (with all your strength) for out of it spring the issues of life."
 - a. 90% of our belief system is stored in the subconscious library of our mind like that of an ice-burg.



3. Prov. 23:7, "For as he thinks in his heart, so is he."
4. Matt. 12:34, "For out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks."

C. The core belief system (heart) contains our thoughts (reasoning), our memory of things done to us, by us or around us (history), and our memory of the emotions we felt during those events. // These help form our core belief system. Out of this system comes negative emotions which can control our behavior and responses.

DRAWING:



1. Current actions of others or events now pass through the core belief system (heart, processing center and now control how we behave or react to life.
2. True, feelings come from thoughts, not vice versa. "The more I think about this, the angrier I get." The thoughts came before the anger. Yet, the time spent on the thoughts is almost instantaneous. It would seem there were no thoughts and the anger just erupted.
 - a. Guilt, shame, fear and anger accumulate over time. One may have started out with a "0" (being low) and have accumulated stored up emotion to a "7, 8 or 9" on a scale of 1 to 10. Therefore, we think we just over react but in reality it is an accumulated reaction.

Ask the group to make a list of negative emotions. Then ask them to highlight what they see in themselves that may keep them from enjoying a better quality of life with God and others. How have they sought to address these hindrances in the past or present? How has it worked for them?

D. (The sad reality) Negative emotions still tend to manage our life and relationships today more than positive ones. That's why God said, "Protect what you believe about God, others, self (Prov. 4:23).

1. Negative emotions can control our thoughts, goals, behaviors, relationships, spirituality, ministry, finances or careers.
 - a. If you do not deal with your emotions, your emotions will deal with you.
 - b. Your emotional health is probably the main determining factor as to whether or not you are happy in life. You can be dealing with physical pain and still experience inward peace and joy.
2. Many people work hard to disprove the lies they believe about themselves but no amount of achievement changes those lies embedded in their belief system. Another attempted solution is just to work harder to disprove them or go into depression to avoid feeling and thinking.
3. But we can still function in life although we're emotionally handicapped with negative emotions.
 - a. We can have our hands handcuffed in front of us and still be able to perform most functions.
 - b. Emotionally handicapped people can function, but it takes more effort to do so.
 - 1) Negative emotions drain our energy as in depression.
 - c. (Unfortunately) The emotionally handicapped person feels helpless to change these life patterns because they wrongfully believe, "It's just the way I am" or "it's just the way others are." They are resigned to the pain.

E. (Realize) Negative emotions can not only manage your life and relationships but define your sphere of safety, security and comfort. // These spheres of comfort are called "comfort zones."

1. Comfort zones, or spheres of our lives, are usually defined by fear and or lies we believe about ourselves, others and/or God. They are not defined by our faith. The emotions of guilt and shame can also force us to create a comfort zone. But fear is usually the controlling emotion.

Drawing:



2. Your mind will attempt to protect you from any pain possible.
 - a. These are called defense mechanisms (defense against pain).
 - b. Psychologists have identified at least 40 defense mechanisms.
3. Comfort zones defined by negative emotions prevent at least three things:
 - a. They prevent you from enjoying a better quality of life in Christ.
 - 1) Joshua had to step out of his comfort zone of fear to cross the Jordan River in order to enjoy the benefits of the land of Canaan.
 - a) Josh. 3:13, "It shall come about when the soles of the feet of the priests who carry the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth, rest in the waters of the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan will be cut off, and the waters which are flowing down from above will stand in one heap."
 - 2) Peter had to step out of the security of a boat in order to be able to walk on the water.
 - a) Matt. 14:28,29
 - 3) It is difficult to enjoy an abundant, happy life and be exceedingly angry, fearful or guilt ridden at the same time. When you're full of these emotions it is hard, if not impossible, to give or receive love, thus feeling insecure, detached and abandoned.

How do you think your quality of life would be improved if it was not controlled or limited by fear?

- b. Negative emotions can hinder you from pleasing God because they are based on fear, not faith. It takes an expression of faith to please God.
 - 1) Heb. 11:6 "And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him." (Those who seek Him outside of their fear zone where He works.)
 - 2) All of the men and women of faith listed in Hebrews 11 had to walk out of a zone of fear into a sphere of faith that had potential loss, risk and pain for them – all "by faith".

In the past, what have you felt God prompting you to do, but because it was out of your comfort zone you chose not to do it? What did it take to get you out of your comfort zone? What were the benefits of this brave step?

- c. Negative emotions can prevent you from further growth, maturity and experiencing life as God intended it by keeping you “safe” in your comfort zone.
- 1) Numbers 1:28, 29, 32, 33, Ten fearful spies brought back a bad report from land of Canaan which prevented that generation from enjoying the benefits of Canaan.
 - 2) Deuteronomy 8:2-3, “And you shall remember that the Lord your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. 3) So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.”
- d. Negative emotions whether stuffed or felt and not dealt with will result in having difficulty understanding other people’s emotions and even cause you to react in a negative way to normal, healthy emotions.
- 1) Spouse, children, friends and extended family feel distant and disconnected. But healthy emotions are relational connectors.

How would your life and spiritual growth be different had you made that step of faith earlier in life?

NEGATIVE EMOTIONS

II. Identify Controlling Emotions // What are some of the most common negative emotions that prevent you from a more meaningful abundant life and spiritual growth?

- A. Fear of failure // which could result in rejection or just feelings of failure. Failure certainly lowers one’s value of oneself. They have to win or they will not try.**
1. It does not mean you have a history of failure, but you just have a fear of it ever happening, or you have had a few failures in life and believe that “proves” you are a failure.

2. Ironically, most people with a fear of failure do not have a legacy of failure, especially in adulthood. There is usually a critical person in the past that instilled that fear.

Ask the group to share their own experiences with the fear of failure and where they trace it back to.

B. □ Fear of rejection // or feelings of “I am rejected.”

1. The meaning of the English word rejection is, “to be cast back.”
 - a. God described Israel’s rejection, “...and you have cast Me behind your back” (I Kings 14:9; CF I Kings 12:28).
2. It means someone has evaluated something you did or something you are doing and devalued it and thrown it behind them.
 - a. ill.: Take a piece of paper and have someone write on it “God loves me.” Then as he shows the paper to the group, rip it out of his hands, wad it up and throw it at the group. Pause a moment, then ask him how he felt. Usually he will be a little angry. Sometimes you have to press them to answer from the heart because it may not have been safe to admit or show emotion. After they acknowledge the hurt, then point out this is the way we feel when someone takes something of value to us and disregards it or outright rejects it.
3. The fear of rejection can result in creating a comfort zone of protection which will greatly limit your potential in life.



4. The fear of rejection can result in a fear of getting close to someone. This fear of closeness could have come from a number of sources.
 - a. If you were beaten as a child for making errors, now you’re afraid of making a mistake so you stand off.
 - b. If you were shamed when you tried to be affectionate, now you distance yourself.
 - c. If you did not view your parents being physically affectionate.
 - d. If you were drawn close for some inappropriate sexual activity as a child.
 - e. If your parents were unpredictable and moody and you never knew what to expect, this will develop a fear of closeness.

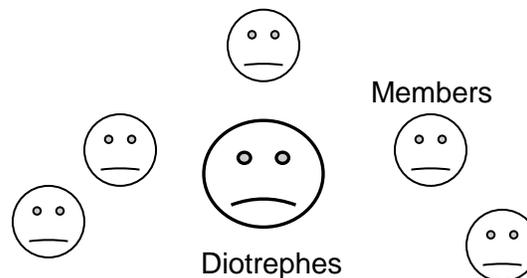
- f. Anger can be used as a distancing emotion.

Ask the group to share their experiences of personal rejection.
How did it happen? What effect has it had on them today?

C. Fear of losing control (source of many panic/anxiety attacks) resulting in the need to control.

1. They need to control people, places and things on the outside because they are controlled by fear on the inside. They must be in control of everything for fear of being vulnerable. Control is a way to ensure that no one could ever hurt them again.
 - a. Controllers try to pull others into their comfort zone for “protection” (i.e., children, spouses).
2. It is important to call it fear, not control, because control is a result, not a cause. God will give grace (help) for truth or reality when you can see fear for what it is (John 1:14). Now you have a handle on the problem, fear. Self, not Christ, is in control of the fear-based person.
3. Types of control:
 - a. Overt – outright controlling
 - b. Covert – subtle controlling
 - c. Manipulation – both kinds combined
4. New Testament example of a controller; Diotrephes:
 - a. Ill John 1:9-10, “I (John) wrote something to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say. For this reason, if I come, I will call attention to his deeds which he does, unjustly accusing us with wicked words; and not satisfied with this, neither does he himself receive the brethren, and he forbids those who desire to do so and puts them out of the church.”

- b. Drawing:



- c. Diotrephes cut off outsiders to isolate his little kingdom and to remove insiders if they did not avoid the outsiders that he rejected. This is a very clear violation of God’s instruction to elders (pastors) not to lord it over the members with their position and authority (I Peter 5:2,3).

5. Opinionated people are information controllers who are both prideful, fear managed, argumentative and critical.
6. What are the reasons for this felt need to control?
 - a. It's a fear of being re-hurt physically or emotionally.
 - b. It can be a fear of re-feeling old physical or emotional pain.
 - c. It can be the fear of feeling powerless because of past hurts where they were powerless to stop them.
7. Anger is usually the emotion controllers use to control others. They also use threats of rejection and abandonment.
8. Fear-based controllers tend to be the submission abusers in relationships.
 - a. They make others lay down their lives for them instead of sacrificing for others. Eph. 5:25
9. God put the emphasis on controlling ourselves, not others.
 - a. Gal. 5:22-23, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, (23) gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."
 - b. It is important to distinguish between managing and controlling.
10. Controllers will twist scripture to reinforce their control, or emphasize one scripture to the exclusion of another.
11. Controllers make others responsible for their own emotional security to avoid their own responsibility to grow up and to trust God.
12. Pride and desire for power are also basis for controlling.

In what ways have you been influenced by a controller?
 How did it make you feel? Would anyone view you as a controller?
 Why? How have you ever addressed it? How did you do it?

D. Fear of being alone or abandoned

1. This is one of the deepest negative managing fears.
2. The concern of being alone was the only negative thing mentioned during the six days of creation.

- a. Gen. 2:18, “Then the Lord God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.’ (22) and the Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man.”
- 3. This fear can be the basis of a powerful force called co-dependency which is an addiction to people, behaviors or things.
- 4. Many people stay in abusive relationship out of fear of being alone.

What impact has the fear of abandonment had on you and/or any of your relationships?
Was it ever addressed and if so, how? What was the result?

E. Fear of not being loved or feelings of not being loveable (unlovable)

- 1. This feeling is totally based on a felt lie and is contrary to what God has declared but if *feels* true.
 - a. Rom. 5:8 “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”
 - b. 1 John 4:10, “In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins.”
- 2. ILL.: A college woman had sex with four different guys in order to attempt to prove to herself she was lovable.

F. Fear of inadequacy. // This fear is related to the fear of failure.

- 1. Men seem to demonstrate the fear of inadequacy more than women.
 - a. Prophetess Deborah and Barak. Judges 4:4-8
- 2. There are many scriptural illustrations of this fear of inadequacy and inferiority in the lives of biblical personalities.
 - a. Moses - Exodus 3:11; 4:10
 - b. Gideon - Judges 6:12,13
 - c. Jeremiah - Jeremiah 1:6
 - d. Saul - I Samuel 10:21,22
 - e. Solomon - I Kings 3:7-9
 - f. Paul - I Corinthians 2:3; 4:4; 5:23; II Timothy 1:7
 - g. Timothy - I Timothy

3. People who feel inadequate may have a need for constant affirmation which is a child-like function, not an adult function.
4. The “inadequacy lie” in the core belief system needs to be renounced and replaced with the truth that they can do anything God expects of them through Christ who empowers them to do it (Philippians 4:13).

In what ways have you felt inadequate and how have you faced it?
How have you been affected by someone else who struggled with inadequacy?

G. Feelings of being worthless // (having no worth or value; feeling dirty, defective or “I’m no good”).

1. One of the three major changes that took place after Adam and Eve sinned in the garden of Eden was the loss of identity (who am I?), loss of purpose (what should I do?) and loss of a sense of worth and value (am I any good?).
2. Worthlessness reflects their negative opinion of themselves at the deepest level.
 - a. Prov. 23:7 “For as he thinks in his heart, so is he...”
 - b. Matt. 12:34b “For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart.”
3. Jesus reaffirmed our worth to His disciples.
 - a. Matt. 6:26, “Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?”

How have these feelings of low worth and value played out in your life?
What have you done to face and correct them?
How have you been impacted by someone who has struggled with these negative feelings?

H. Deep feelings of shame, guilt, self condemnation (Fear of exposure)

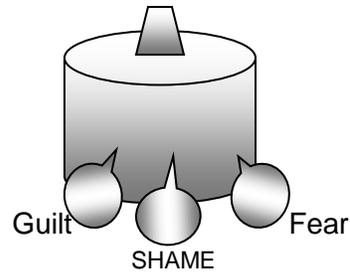
1. Shame can come from things that were done by us or something that was done to us or done around us.

- a. Toxic shame is the controlling attitude that I am flawed and defective as a human being. It becomes our core identity. This can feed feelings of worthlessness, emptiness and loneliness.
- b. A shame based person will work hard to guard against exposing his inner self to others and even guard himself from seeing his shame.
- c. Shame can be a root of rage, criticism, blame, caretaking, codependency, addictive behaviors, pleasers, eating disorders (Mason, p. 42).
 - 1) All addictions tend to be shame based.

Ask the group to share their experience of challenging their own false guilt or shame.

- d. Usually it is false guilt that can lead to depression.
2. Self condemnation
- a. You are bad, worthless, failure, unnecessary, terrible, loser, disappointment, etc.
 - b. This can lead to self abuse (eating disorders, self mutilation, neglect, extreme abstinence and deprivation).
- I. Fear of not being perfect //(which could result in a deep sense of shame and fear of rejection).**
- 1. "Perfectionism is probably the most common and also one of the most damaging characteristics of dysfunctional families" (An Adult Child's Guide, p. 97).
 - 2. Perfectionists are usually black or white, dysfunctional thinkers. They are either totally good or totally bad and they project the same unrealistic standard on to others.
 - a. They feel they never can quite achieve. They are driven with thoughts of , "I ought, I should, I must."
 - 3. Things and the order of things are more important than people and relationships because they tend to be self absorbed in trying to get everything right (perfect).
 - 4. Perfectionism is rooted in guilt, shame and the fear of discovery of a flaw. What follows is the fear of rejection because of that flaw and ends with a fear of abandonment.

a. Drawing



- b. Guilt, shame, fear are like three knobs that control the flames on a gas stove. There is a large pressure cooker on the stove being heated up by these three flames. To release the pressure, the perfectionist selects some parts or areas of their life to be perfect. It is a total outward performance for people to gain their acceptance and approval. The perfectionist lives in fear that others will see what they are hiding in the pressure cooker of their life.
- c. The basic controlling emotion is fear of discovery, then rejection and ultimate fear of abandonment.
5. Perfectionists are present day Pharisees (Matt 23).
6. Perfectionism is a character disorder, not a character quality.

No one has escaped the impact of perfectionism.
 How have you been affected by it?
 How have you seen at least pockets of perfectionism in yourself?
 How has that affected your relationships?

J. Anger

1. Anger comes in various speeds or levels in life from irritation to rage.
2. Anger can be expressed inappropriately in at least three ways.
 - a. Exploders – outbursts
 - b. Imploders - turn the anger inward and act it out in subtle ways.
 - c. Runners - avoid any and all conflict
3. Wrong uses of anger:
 - a. to control (those being controlled walk on eggs)
 - b. to change

- c. to manipulate
 - d. to avoid facing responsibility
 - e. to avoid feeling negative emotions like guilt or fear
 - f. to exact revenge
4. People whose hearts are locked up in anger do not have the ability to either give or receive love.

How has someone else's anger affected you in your developmental years? What have you had to do to deal with it?

DYNAMICS OF NEGATIVE EMOTIONS

III. Understand the Dynamics of Negative Emotions

A. It is a big surprise to believers that all their negative emotions did not vanish at the time they became a Christian. // For some, those negative emotions did change or were altered. For most there was little change.

1. Life experience supports the reality that negative emotions do not automatically disappear at salvation.
2. All the conflicts in New Testament demonstrate the reality of the continuation of negative emotions. Look at all the wrong behavior of believers described in the epistles. The Apostle Paul described one in the church of Corinth.
 - a. Each person was having an identity crisis. They were attempting to get their value by association with someone they thought was valuable. Why? Because they had feelings of inferiority, a lack of worth and value in their personal relationship with Christ.
 - b. I Cor 1:10-13 "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ".

1) Drawing



Paul



Apollos



Needs
Identity



Cephas



Christ

3. The reality that all negative emotions do not change at the point salvation can be a major source of discouragement and bitterness toward God. The feeling is “It (salvation) didn’t work for me.”

Have the group share some of the issues they still struggle with after their salvation experience.

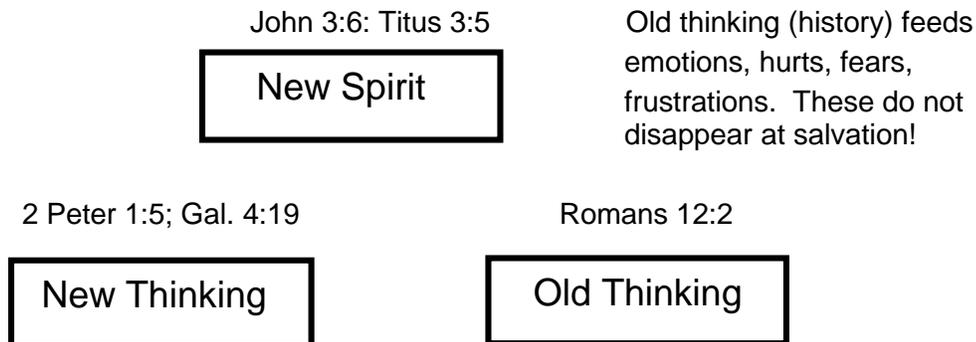
4. But some would argue that the Apostle Paul was able to put his past behind him and move on. They refer to what he told the church at Philippi about his past.
- a. Phil. 3:13-14, “Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, 14) I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”
5. But you may ask, how do you know Paul didn’t focus on forgetting his past failures and sins? Paul explained to Timothy how he views his past abusive behavior and what benefit his past is to Paul’s present ministry.
- a. (Paul to Timothy), “I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service (ministry) even though I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a violent aggressor . . . (violent, arrogant) man. . . . Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all” (I Tim. 1:12-15).
- b. (Paul to the church at Corinth) “For I am the least of the apostles, who am not fit to be called an apostle, (why) because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am...,” (I Cor. 15:9, 10a).
6. It is a Christian myth that everything changed at the point of salvation. True, for some there are drastic changes. For most that is not their experience.
- a. This myth aided our denial of negative emotions that we feel are not supposed to be there. Denial is one way to cope with negative painful emotions.
- b. Everything changing at the point of salvation is more of a goal than reality. We have to grow into Christ-likeness.
- 1) Rom 12:2, “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”
- 2) Galatians 4:19, “ My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you,”

- 3) Philippians 2:12b-13, "...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³ for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure."

B. Emotions (negative or positive) greatly influence our memory.

1. The more you care or are concerned with an event and the more you focus on it, it becomes deeply embedded in your memory.
2. But memories are not stored or filed in just one part of your brain. But they are stored in various areas of your senses that experienced that event.
 - a. What you heard, saw, smelled, tasted – all get filed in various parts of the brain. Why is this important?
 - b. A sight, smell, taste or sound can trigger the memory of the actual event. Those are called "triggers."
 - c. You can have triggers to pleasure as well as pain.
 - d. The gaps (synopses) between all those nerves that filled all that information get strengthened and create a memory "trace" (path). So if one part of a memory trace gets triggered, all the other parts get triggered also.

C. Understand that being born again only made your spirit alive, it did not automatically change your thinking or heal your damaged emotions (John 3:6, Rom. 12:2; 2 Peter 1:5).



1. Your mind must be reprogrammed (change the original "factory" setting) like with computers.
 - a. Rom. 12:2, "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing (reprogramming) of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

- b. It will take a special kind of understanding plus an unlearning of past wrong programming and a relearning and reprogramming transformation of the mind (Seamans, p. 14)
- 2. As valuable as the new birth is now and for eternity, it is not a short cut to ending the control of negative and damaged emotions.
- 3. Question: Doesn't scripture indicate "old things" have passed away?
 - a. 2 Cor. 5:17, "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come."
 - b. Dr. David K. Lowery, assistant professor of New Testament, D.T.S., (B. K. C., N. T., p. 568) "The 'old' life of slavery to self and to sin 'has gone' (II Cor 5:16). The 'new' life of devotion to Christ means that one has new attitudes and actions. (CF. 2 Cor. 5:14-15)."
 - c. In Christ we are part of a new creation. We are right now part of that new creation. It is true of course, that for the time being the old still persists and the new (full) has not yet fully come (CF Rom. 8:18-25)... it is the newness of life in Christ now that is being stressed, rather than the limitations and the tension involved in participation in the new creation while still living as part of the old (Tyndale N.T. Commentaries, II Cor. Pp. 125, 126).
- 4. Your memory of your past history (or culture) can still feed your present emotions. // which can control your behavior, responses and relationships.
 - a. 80% of the reservoir of the mind including your thoughts, feelings and motives usually cannot be recalled back to the conscious mind at any present moment unless God brings them back for the purpose of healing, although sight, sound, taste, events, etc can trigger them or people can trigger them.
- 5. If you are going to make a lasting change how you behave, you must first change how you think (Prov. 23:7; Rom. 12:2; II Pet. 1:5).

Ask the group to make a four box chart and have them see if they can identify an event from the past, a meaning they put on the event and an emotion they struggle with today as a result of that event. Then see if they can identify the truth about that emotion.

D. Realize negative emotions are not logical (reasonable).

- 1. In your mind you know the truth but the negative emotions can be an embarrassment to you. There is a conflict between what you know and what you feel which results in anxiety.

2. Feelings are not usually managed by facts or reality. Why?
3. Feelings are not subject to truth or they are not responding to truth as it is.
 - a. They are responding to facts or reality as they see it in their core belief system.
 - b. Present events can activate childhood emotions.
 - c. One can accumulate painful emotions and be triggered by a present event that causes one to over react. In reality, they are acting out an accumulated emotion.
 - 1) With "10" being high and "0" being low, one could be stuck at a level "8" and experience a current event of a level "2" and react as if it were a "10."
 - 2) 10 High
8 Fear
0 Low

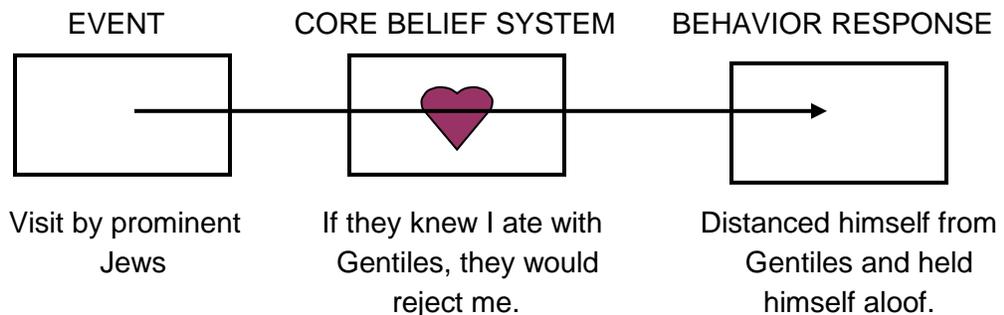
Group project: Ask the group to go around a circle and introduce themselves by their first name but precede it with the word "Saint" (Hi, my name is Saint Bob). Then ask how they really felt about calling themselves "saints." Some will say, "It felt strange." "It felt weird." "It felt uncomfortable." "It was hard because I know I'm not a saint." In reality if they are believers, they are saints, whether they act like it or not. All the Apostle Paul's letters were addressed to the "saints" even though they had personal problems. We are referred to as saints" 60 times in the New Testament.

4. Negative feelings are usually past event-based (whether actual or perceived). This is a clue how to correct them. The heart was programmed to be lie-based from birth because of our sin nature.
 - a. Jer. 17:9 "The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it?"
 - b. Extensive research data on defense mechanisms shows that all human beings are basically self-deceiving. (Jerks p.123)
 - 1) The one we lie to the most is ourselves.

E. (In fact) negative emotions seem to have more power in our lives than even correct theology // (or biblical truth).

Why is this not good news for preachers and Bible teachers who work so hard at preaching and teaching?

1. Great biblical personalities were frequently controlled by negative emotions in spite of their vast exposure to biblical truth.
 - a. The Apostle Peter's fear of rejection by representatives of prominent Jewish leaders had more power than all that Jesus taught Peter and all that he had experienced with Jesus (i.e., three years of ministry with Jesus) God used Peter at Pentecost where 3,000 were saved (Acts 2:41) and 5,000 later (Acts 4:4). Later Peter was used to open the door of the gospel for Gentiles with the conversion of Cornelius (Acts 10). Yet, look what happened when he faced possible exposure and rejection from his Jewish peers visiting from Jerusalem.
 - 1) Gal. 2:11-13 But when Cephas (Peter) came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face because he stood condemned. For prior to the coming of certain men (emissaries) from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing (the rejection of) the party of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy.
 - b. The Jewish representatives from Jerusalem did not cause Peter to sin, they revealed his need of acceptance and his fear of rejection that caused him to sin.



2. Negative emotions can have the power to distort our theological beliefs of God.
 - a. "If I fail God will not love me."
 - b. "I have to perform to gain God's approval."

F. Usually we are more aware of our negative emotions than we are of the historical source of these emotions. // Why?

1. The source of these feelings may have originated early in life through events or actions of others. // There are at least two kinds of trauma (hurts) that we can experience.

- a. Type A trauma (active). These are hurtful things that deeply affected you (physical / emotional abuse) growing up or in adulthood.
 - b. Type B trauma (passive) is the absence of good things that we all need (to be loved, affirmed, validated, kept safe, nurtured) (Friesen, p. 8).
2. Negative emotions can be likened to a boxcar that was left on a siding. The main train (our body) has gone on into adulthood but the emotions (box car) are still stuck on a siding in the past.
 3. The historical source of our negative emotions may have been suppressed, repressed, denied, blocked out, numbed out, overridden, stuffed, but the feelings continue managing our life today.
 - a. One psychiatrist believes that what Christians call progressive sanctification is actually the Holy Spirit pushing up these stuffed thoughts and emotions from below while our brain keeps pushing them back down into the unconscious in order to avoid facing the painful truth. The tension between God's Spirit and our self protective minds is what causes anxiety. (Jerks, p. 102).
 4. Usually these long-term emotions have been present most of our lives and we feel that they are just us, therefore, they do not need to be addressed or we just try to manipulate them.

Have you ever heard someone say you are just like your father or mother? What did they mean by that assertion? How did it feel when you heard it? What did you do as a result of it being said to you?

G. Most of these negative managing emotions are a result of long-held lies we believe about ourselves, others or God and were instilled in us as kids by events, actions of others or culture.

H. What is our usual reaction to these negative feelings?

1. We blame the devil for these feelings.
 - a. He can falsely accuse us (Rev. 12:10).
2. We blame ourselves for just having poor attitudes or our reluctance to admit our hurt because we think it is a sign of weakness or Spiritual immaturity.
3. We blame someone else and may project unpleasant traits, behaviors, feelings by attributing them (in an accusing way) to someone else.

4. We even pray that those emotions would be taken away. // without first discovering where those emotions are coming from – events, actions of others (offenses) and core belief lies (“I’m no good”, “I can’t do anything right”).
 - a. But emotions are God designed notifiers of hurts that He wants us to work through biblically and discover who instilled them, forgive them, then, renounce the lies that were injected at the time of the emotional wounds.
 - b. Failure to forgive and to remove the negative emotions can cause our faith to dwindle.
5. We go into denial. // It is a coping mechanism that enables one to keep fear and pain under control.
 - a. Denial is one of 40 ways the brain protects us from feeling pain.
 - b. Christian definition of denial, “Denying God access to a hurt that He wants to heal for your benefit and His glory.”
 - c. When we discount even the smallest hurt, we then miss the opportunity to get that hurt healed biblically. Ignoring hurts never makes them go away.
6. We shut down or suppress those emotions.
 - a. Unhealed hurt and pain is another possible cause of emotional numbness.
 - b. Remember, no emotion is ever buried dead, but alive and they accumulate. As a result you end up trying to “manage” the symptoms and experience frustration in an endless and futile effort to do so.
 - c. God does not deal with anger management but anger reduction (Eph 4:26,27; Gal. 5:20).
7. We numb out the negative feelings with addictive behaviors: drugs, alcohol, sex, work, kids, T.V., computer, social media, religious activity, hobbies, relationships, shopping, gambling, pornography, hide behind a veneer of Scripture verses, theological terms or high sounding platitudes.
8. The good news is that you can change, you are not doomed to live controlled by negative powerful emotions. But the freedom and healing will not come by pat, oversimplified answers. It will be a biblical process.

Of the five usual reactions to negative emotions; blame the devil, blame ourselves, removal of the emotion, denial and numb out, which ones have you used? How has it worked for you?

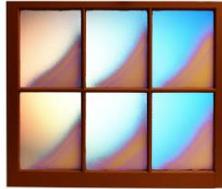
PURPOSE FOR NEGATIVE EMOTIONS

- IV. (Realize) Negative emotions can serve at least two positive purposes. Negative emotions can serve as a window into life's storeroom of pain, hurts, losses, thoughts and lies. // See their value to yourself and to others. The past is our friend, not our enemy.

How do you guess negative emotions would be of value for you or for anyone else?

A. The first benefit of negative emotions is to reveal how you really look at life.

1. We look at our world through the window of our emotions whether they are clear or distorted. Jesus called the eye the lamp of the body.



EMOTIONS

- a. Matt. 6:22-23, "The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. 23) But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!"
 - b. Luke 11:35-36, "Then watch out that the light in you is not darkness. 36) If therefore your whole body is full of light, with no dark part in it, it will be wholly illumined, as when the lamp illumines you with its rays."
 - 1) Your darkness can feel like light to you because you may have nothing to compare it to.
 - 2) CF I John 1:5-10
2. Emotions are the windows through which our eyes view the world.

3. Negative emotions can notify us of the needs in our own core belief system that God wants to heal for our benefit and His glory (Matt. 5:16). // These are things that we need to process, to work out. “If you cannot feel it, you cannot heal it” or “Feel it and heal it.” They can alert us to the fact that we have been hurt.

B. The second benefit of negative emotions is to reveal how others may view life. This is a major key to people helping. Use their emotions to reveal the needs that God may help you to meet.

1. If you do not know how to deal with others’ negative emotions they will deal with you. This could lead to emotional abuse.

Ask the group to share a personal experience where they were able to observe an emotion in someone and discover with them where it was coming from. Has someone done that for you? How did it happen and what was the result?

STEPS TO FREEDOM

V. Use Negative Emotions to Gain Emotional Freedom // There are eleven basic keys to this process. We would suggest you do not go through these alone. God encourages us to allow others to help carry our burdens (Gal. 6:1,2).

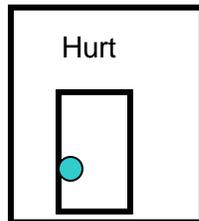
- Identify the negative emotion
- Identify the wounds or events that caused these emotions
- Forgive those who hurt you
- Identify the lies that were instilled in you
- Renounce the lies
- Replace the lies with the truth
- Receive forgiveness
- Take back surrendered ground
- Cut the control of history
- Accept consequences
- Prepare to minister

A. Identify the managing negative emotions

1. (In prayer) Give yourself permission to honestly re-feel the negative emotions (fear/anger) while you are praying.
 - a. Remember God Himself experiences emotional pain. After God saw the wickedness of man, Moses recorded that “The Lord was sorrowful that He had made man on the earth and He was grieved in His heart” (Gen 6:6).

- b. Yet for years you may have held back negative emotions, pushed them down or outright denied them because of the fear of the unknown. This is just like the lid placed on a trash can to hold down the strong smell or duct tape placed over a red light on the dashboard of your car. Various efforts have been used to silence or ignore those emotions. Why? Emotional pain can be intense, overwhelming and feel like it's going to last forever.
 - 1) The strategies we use to hold them down are called self defense mechanisms. Ways we react by deceiving ourselves about our real needs, desires and goals are efforts to protect our pride and avoid anxiety. (Jerks p. 103)
 - 2) Repression is the primary defense mechanism on which other defense mechanisms are based. (IBID)
- c. Sometimes we remember the emotion of a memory better than specific events, words, etc.
- d. Remember, God is going to give you the strength, energy and hope as you feel the emotions and hear and understand where those emotions are coming from.
 - 1) 2 Cor. 1:4, "Who comforts us in all our affliction (hurts) so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God."
 - 2) Phil. 4:13, "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me."
- e. But one of Satan's biggest lies is that you can experience an emotion so painful that God cannot comfort you in it. Therefore, you may first have to deal with the fear of feeling it. Dr. Ed Smith calls this a fear that comes from a guardian lie. This lie stands guard at the door of a hurt to prevent entrance to the hurt for healing and praise to God for the healing. Three other fears are the fear of acknowledging a reality, a responsibility one does not want to face or a motive one would not like to admit.

1) Drawing:



Lie guarding the door

- 2. (Optional) Determine the intensity of the negative emotion on a 1-10 scale. // One being low and 10 being high. In prayer ask the counselee to feel the negative emotion and tell you how intense it is. After you complete the biblical process, the high numbers should be very low or at a "0."

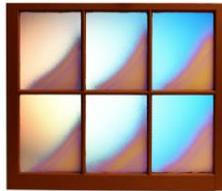
- a. Only the counselee can determine the intensity of his negative emotions.
- b. It is important to be very honest with your emotions at this point.
- c. Yes, it may be a little subjective in determining the emotional intensity.
- d. This scale gives you a barometer to gauge the decrease of intensity after the process.

B. Identify the wounds (actions of others) that caused the emotional pain

1. In prayer allow God's Spirit to take you back to those historical events while feeling the managing negative emotion. // He has promised to guide you into all truth (John 16:13). The emotions are only a window to peer through and see the events and persons behind those events.

- a. Drawing:

Emotions reveal
painful events and
hurtful actions.



- b. You may start to replay in your mind historical events that produced these emotions. There may be just a glimpse or partial picture. Ask God what this glimpse or partial picture is all about.
 - 1) Usually the more abuse, the less you will be able to remember.
 - 2) Remember, memory is like an iceberg. Most of it is beneath the surface.
- c. Don't be surprised if you have not thought of these events for years because they may have been suppressed or repressed for years.
- d. Do not minimize to yourself or others the events as they come to mind.
 - 1) "This is stupid." "I'm embarrassed." "What's the big deal?"
 - 2) This minimizing is an adult's perspective evaluating a child's pain. It was a big deal to the kid at the time of the events.
- e. It is important to remember these events may have happened to a child. They may seem silly or insignificant to us now as adults. It could be the childhood memories of the pain/hurt are feeding the emotions that are managing you today.

- 1) Remember, it is our goal to identify the hurts, deal with them and to put away the childish things and grow up to adulthood. You cannot put away what you do not acknowledge. People refer to these past events as baggage.
 - a) I Cor. 13:11, "When I was a child, I used to speak as a child, think as a child, reason as a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things."
 - (1) "Did away with" is a perfect tense verb. It is something you have done once and the results continue into the future.
 - (2) It is like releasing a rubber ball under water. Once you let go it springs to the surface and is free.

2. Remember, only you are going back. God is already there, not "was" there. // How do we know?
 - a. God does not live in a sphere of time — we do. God created time for man but He is an eternal Person.
 - 1) Gen. 1:1 "In the beginning God created..."
 - 2) Deut. 33:27 "The eternal God is your refuge..."

 - b. There is no past, present or future to God. He is timeless and eternal. He exists outside of time.
 - 1) Rev. 1:8 "I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end says the Lord, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

 - c. God views time differently than we do: This has implications for how we and God sometimes view memories differently.
 - 1) 2 Pet. 3:8, "But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day *is* as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

 - d. God's eternal existence answers some very practical questions.
 - 1) Can God heal today? Yes!
 - 2) Can God heal tomorrow? Yes!

3) Can God heal yesterday? Yes, He can heal the pain of the events of history and thus end the control of history. Yet, He will not change the history itself. He will end the control of the emotional pain of history.

a) He did this in the life of Joseph as recorded in Genesis 37-50.

3. Start listing the actual hurtful events as God brings them to mind and the persons who caused them. // You can also journal them out or just list them. There is an important reason for listing the person or persons who hurt you and what they specifically did.

a. If you do not acknowledge the emotion (anger), you will not acknowledge the offense.

b. If you do not acknowledge (list) the offense, you will not acknowledge the offender.

c. If you do not acknowledge the offender, you will not forgive the offender.

d. If you do not forgive the offender(s) you will remain stuck, enslaved, even tormented and controlled by the negative emotions the rest of your life.

1) Matt. 18:34-35, "And his lord, moved with anger, handed him over to the torturers until he should repay all that was owed him. So shall My heavenly Father also do to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart."

e. Summary: List the hurts and people who hurt you.

C. Forgive the offender

1. Picture yourself standing before the Lord Jesus or just sensing His presence with you. Then picture the offender(s) standing next to you. // They can only listen, not touch or speak to you.

a. Why picture Jesus? Because He invited us to come to Him personally.

1) Matt. 11:28-30, "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your soul. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

b. Why picture Jesus in our mind? It lays down new memory traces in the brain next to (parallel to) the hurtful ones.

- 1) We are laying down new memory traces next to (parallel to) past hurts.
Memory traces are the normal electronic and chemical function of the brain.
 - a) It is like the old single blade garden plow. You plow one furrow the length of the garden. Then turn around and plow a second furrow right next to it.
 - b) The first furrow is the memory of the hurt/offense.
 - c) The second furrow is a reminder of the forgiveness that was either given or received.

 - 2) The Apostle Paul did this with Alexander the coppersmith.
 - a) II Tim. 4:14 “Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm (first memory trace); the Lord will repay him according to his deeds (second memory trace).”
2. While picturing the offender(s) standing next to you before the Lord, confess or acknowledge out loud to the Lord Jesus the specific sins they committed against you. // Name them but you don’t have to describe them, especially if they are of a sexual nature.
- a. Do not plea bargain their sin away. “I’ve done some bad stuff, too.”
 - b. Do not minimize their sin. “It really wasn’t that bad.”
 - c. Do not excuse their sin. “They did the best they could.”
 - 1) Excusing or rationalizing is the same. It is justifying unacceptable attitudes, beliefs or behaviors by inventing false reasons or excuses for the behavior. (Jerks p. 108)
 - d. Do not defend them. “Well, my dad’s parents were hurtful to him, too.”
 - 1) That is expressing understanding, not forgiveness. You were wounded by their woundedness. It still is a wound that needs to be healed.
 - e. Do not explain away their behavior. “They had a hard life.”
 - 1) This is probably true. They may not have intended to hurt you. But whether you are shot in the shoulder intentionally or accidentally, your body does not know the difference and you treat it the same way. You have to treat emotional wounds the same way. You use the same biblical tools whether you were hurt intentionally or accidentally.

- 2) It is important to remember that in the Old Testament, Israelites who sinned unintentionally still had to offer a sacrifice.
 - a) Leviticus 5:17,18, “Speak to the children of Israel saying, ‘If a person sins unintentionally against any of the commandments of the Lord in anything which ought not to be done, and does any of them ...’”
- 3) Some will say “I don’t want to blame my parents for my behavior.” At this point you have to distinguish between excusing your behavior and explaining your behavior. Once you explain what they have done to you, then you are obligated to forgive them. Now purpose to change your behavior. If you fail to assign responsibility to people for their sin, you will not forgive and you will remain wounded.
- f. Be as detailed as you feel necessary, but avoid details of sexual sins.
 - 1) It is important to name the sin (i.e. “He raped me”) but it does not need to be described or details given for healing to take place.
 - 2) If there is a legitimate need to express the details, we suggest they be written in a private journal. This procedure has been helpful to many. Or it should be shared with a counselor of the same sex.
- g. Why should you confess aloud others’ sins before the Lord? Verbal confession seems to be one of the ways of God.
 - 1) Salvation: Rom. 10:9, “...if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.”
 - 2) Healing: James 5:16, “Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.”
 - 3) Forgiveness: Lev. 16:21, “Then Aaron shall lay both of his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the sons of Israel, and all their transgressions in regard to all their sins; and he shall lay them on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who stands in readiness.
 - 4) I John 1:9, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”
3. Acknowledge aloud that you understand that it is our Lord’s responsibility to punish them for their sins. // This acknowledges that revenge is biblical, but it clarifies who is to do it, if it is necessary.

- a. Rom. 12:19, “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.’”
- 4. Request that the Lord now grant your offender: grace, mercy, pardon, just like He has granted it to you.
 - a. This is the basis of the Lord’s Prayer in Matt. 6:9-13.
- 5. Now face your offender in the prayer and tell him anything you want him to know, feel, or understand, especially what he did to you.
 - a. This is like closure at a funeral when you speak to a loved one that has died. It is for your benefit, not theirs.
- 6. Tell him you have acknowledged the Lord’s responsibility to punish him but only because of Christ’s death on the cross you have asked Him to grant him grace, mercy, and pardon, just like He has granted to you.
- 7. Now send him and his sin over to the Lord Jesus and say, “good-bye.”
 - a. The New Testament Greek word forgiveness means “to send away.” You have a place to send them, namely to the Lord Jesus. Non-believers do not have a person or place to send their offender or their sin where they were nailed to the cross with Him (Col. 2:14).
 - b. You now choose to be a “sender” to the Lord Jesus, not a “keeper” (of them in the prison of your own heart).
 - 1) Keepers are also collectors who want to collect the “bill” the offender has incurred by offending them. This is very dangerous because the Righteous Judge warns “collectors” what He will do to them because of the sin bill they owe Him (Matt. 18:34-35).
 - c. The word “goodbye” is a word that indicates we are done. It is over.
 - 1) It is often spoken at a funeral while standing next to the casket of a loved one who cannot hear.

D. Identify the lies that were instilled at the time of the physical or emotional hurt.

- 1. Traumatic events are like a double edged sword. They wounded the heart emotionally and they instilled a lie. Typically, the hurt needs to be identified and healed before the power of the lie can be broken.
- 2. Most of the lies that were instilled into our hearts were instilled at the time of the physical or emotional hurt or trauma.

- a. If you lived with criticism growing up, a lie can be instilled that you can't do anything right.
 - b. If you were sexually violated, a lie could be instilled that you are dirty, damaged goods or no one would want you.
3. It is not always the offenses/hurts that are so damaging as it is the lies that are instilled in the child's emotional memory.
- a. When you continue to live from a heart that is hurt, that indicates the lies from those wounds are still embedded and controlling your life.
4. Human hurts can be Satan's opportunity to instill the lies.
- a. The lies are like barnacles on a ship. They can slow it down and in some cases, can actually sink the ship.
5. Most offenders are clueless as to the lies their hurtful behavior instills.
- a. If a parent abandons his child out of selfishness, he may be unaware that it can convey lies to the child that he is bad, defective, worthless, unwanted, a mistake or unlovable.
6. Behind most negative emotions is a lie.
- a. The lies often endure long after effects of the wound.
 - b. Renouncing the lies is a vital part of healing that is to last.
7. Your task is to discover and list the lies that have become part of your core belief system.

Ask your group to look at the following list of lies and to check the ones they have experienced or someone else they know well has experienced.

List of Lies

- 1) "I can't do anything right."

- 2) "I am a failure."
- 3) "I'm not loved."
- 4) "My parents' problems were my fault."
- 5) "I was not wanted."
- 6) "I feel I have to do everything perfectly or right."
- 7) "If I don't do things right I can be abandoned."
- 8) "I caused my mother's or father's problem."
- 9) "The sexual abuse was my fault." Hebrew word for incest is "confusion."
- 10) "If people really knew who I am or what I did they would not like me."
- 11) "I had to be the mother/father of the family."
- 12) "I am responsible for my parents' emotional happiness."
- 13) "I have to fix my family's problems."
- 14) "God does not like me, let alone love me."
- 15) "God does not care."
- 16) "If I was good enough people would like me."
- 17) "I will never get better."
- 18) "God may help others but He will not help me."
- 19) "I'm just too bad."
- 20) "I deserve to suffer the rest of my life."
- 21) "I can't help myself. This is just the way I am."
- 22) "I'll never be as good as other people."

23) "I'm not worthy of receiving love."

Share how these lies have impacted your life
or the lives of those who believed these lies.

8. The lies usually surface when you are confessing or acknowledging to God out loud the offender's sin against you.

E. Renounce the lies

1. Renounce (reject, repudiate, disown) the lies you were led to believe as a result of hurts that were inflicted by people or the events of life (car accident, premature death of a parent, debilitating disease, etc).
 - a. We must bring God's truth to the wound and the lies that are infecting the wound.
2. Once the lies have been identified as lies, and not the "truth" we may have believed them to be, they then must be renounced as lies.
3. When Satan, the father of lies, (Jn. 8:44) is driven from heaven at the beginning of the millennial kingdom of Christ, he is overcome and cast out of heaven by the blood of the Lamb and the word of believer's testimony. That gives us a pattern to renounce the lies from the evil one today (Rev. 12:10, 11).
 - a. Affirm aloud that Christ is both your Lord and Savior.
 - 1) Romans 10:9,10, "That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10) For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."
 - b. Hold up the blood of Christ and come against the lies.
 - 1) Revelation 12:11, "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony, // and they did not love their lives to the death."
 - c. Sample" "I affirm that Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior (testimony) and I now hold up the blood of Christ and come against the lie (name it). If there is any demonic influence behind it, I command it to leave. This body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 6:19) and the lie has no right to be there.

F. Replace the lie with the truth

1. It is very important that after you have renounced the lie that you put in its place Biblical truth.
 - a. Jesus illustrated this principle from the world of demonic spirits. He explained to the scribes and Pharisees of His day that when a demon (unclean spirit) is removed from a person, if he does not replace the void with God's Word and the filling of the Holy Spirit, that unclean spirit will return and bring with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself (Matt. 12:43-45). That is the reason renouncing a lie (Satan is the father of lies, John 8:44) must be replaced by the truth of Scripture.
2. Now affirm the truth which is the first weapon in our armor for spiritual warfare.
 - a. Eph. 6:13-14, "Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness."
 - b. Remember, Jesus answered Satan with the truth of the Word of God when He was being tempted (Luke 4).
3. Only applied Biblical truth breaks the power of a lie.
4. Purpose in your heart that you are now, from this point on, going to live out the truth and no longer live out or practice the lie.
 - a. I John 1:6-7, "If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; (7) but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin."
 - b. Rom. 6:13, "And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God."
 - c. Eph. 4:21-24, "...if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: (22) that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, (23) and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, (24) and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness."

G. Receive forgiveness

1. (Address the Heavenly Father) Now, confess your anger, bitterness to God the Father and ask Him to forgive you for your sinful response to the offender's sin.

- a. I John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

H. Take back surrendered ground given to Satan

1. Take back all the ground you may have given over to Satan through your anger and bitterness.
 - a. When you were angry you may have given up ground (space, place) in your life to Satan.
 - 1) Eph. 4:27, "And do not give the devil an opportunity.
 - 2) "Opportunity" lit. place, foothold, ground, stronghold.
 - 3) Remember, he's talking to believers.
 - b. He could use this as an opportunity to kill, steal and destroy.
 - 1) John 10:10, "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they might have life and that they may have it more abundantly."
 - c. Sample Prayer: "Heavenly Father, I confess my own anger and bitterness to You. (I John 1:9) I now take back any ground I have given to the evil one by my anger or bitterness."
2. Declare now to God that you are going to use all of your new energy and freedom in at least three ways:
 - a. For His honor and glory
 - b. For your family and friends
 - c. For a better quality of life for yourself
 - d. Example: "I now purpose in my heart to use all the new energy I've received by taking ground back to use it for Your honor and glory, for my family and friends and for a better quality of life for myself."

I. Cut the control of history

1. State aloud that you cannot change history, but today in the name of the Lord Jesus you end (cut) the control the history has had on you.

- a. You can't change history but you have the power to end the control of history.
 - 1) "Lord, I acknowledge in my heart I cannot undo history, but I, now, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, break the power and control that the history has had on me. I am a new person in Christ" (II Cor 5:17).
- b. I John 3:8 "...For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil."

J. Accept the consequences

1. It is my opinion that the hardest part of forgiveness is the next step. Affirm that you now accept upon yourself all the consequences (losses) of the offender's sin against you. Then ask God to take all the losses and turn them into a benefit for yourself and others. Failure to do this could result in bitterness toward God.
2. The enemy may have meant the pain and loss for your hurt, but God allowed it for His purpose and glory and for your benefit to prepare you to help others.
 - a. (Joseph speaking to his brothers who sold him into slavery) Gen. 50:20, "But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people."
3. Praise God for what He is going to do in your life and the lives of others as a result of His working in your life.
 - a. Phil. 2:13, "For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure."
 - b. I Thess. 5:18 "...in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."
4. Picture yourself as a trophy or pattern of God's healing in your life. // Be a living example of the healing God can do in a life that has been so deeply hurt by others.
 - a. Matt. 5:16 "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."
 - b. I Tim. 1:16, "However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life."

K. Use your corrected, healed past as an opportunity to minister in the future.

1. Look for opportunities to help others through the tools you have learned through this experience.
 - a. 2 Cor. 1:4 “Who comforts us (gives hope and strength) in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.”
 - 1) “Able” ability and resources
2. By helping others work through their problems in living from scripture, you will be fulfilling all that the Law intended to do, that is the principle of love.
 - a. Galatians 6:2, “Bear one another’s burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.”
 - b. John 13:34, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another as I have loved you, that you also love one another.”
3. Great leaders and authors of our time were once in deep personal failure.
 - a. Max Lucado - former alcoholic
 - b. Franklin Graham – former alcoholic

A Healing Prayer

“Lord, I come and stand before you personally because you have told me to do so. This is my dad. I realize he can’t say anything or do anything but stand there.”

“I have come to realize my dad hurt me by yelling at me and screaming at the top of his voice, “You’ll never amount to anything.”

“He instilled the lie that ‘I can’t do anything right.’ I affirm you are my Lord and Savior and I hold up the blood of Christ and I come against that lie and renounce it in the name of the Lord Jesus.”

“I acknowledge in my heart that it is your responsibility to punish him, but I pray that you grant him grace, mercy, and pardon just like you granted to me.”

(Turn and face your dad.) “Dad when I was a kid you lost your temper with me and yelled at me and told me I would never amount to anything. I realize it is the Lord’s responsibility to punish you. Only because of His death on the cross, I have asked Him to grant you grace, mercy and pardon just like He has granted to me. I now send you and your sin over to the Lord Jesus Christ and I say ‘goodbye.’”

(Now address the Heavenly Father) “Heavenly Father, I acknowledge my own anger, bitterness and even hatred for my father. I now take back all the ground I have given to Satan. I now purpose in my heart to use that new energy and freedom for Your honor and glory, for my family and friends, and for a better quality of life for myself.”

“I recognize I cannot change history, but I now in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ break (end, cut) the control the history has had on me. I now accept upon myself all the consequences of Dad’s sin against me. I ask you to convert all those losses into a benefit in my life. I now thank You and praise You for all that You are going to do in my life and those You bring into my life.”

“I now picture myself as a trophy of Your healing and an example of what You can do for others who turn to You with their pain. I purpose in my heart to look for opportunities to help others with the tools that I have learned through my own pain.”

VI. Keys for Success

- A. Identify managing negative emotions.**
- B. Realize that your negative emotions did not disappear at salvation.**
- C. Welcome your negative emotions.**
- D. Ask God to show you the historical source of those emotions.**
- E. List the events and people behind those emotions.**
- F. Forgive those who caused the hurts.**
- G. Identify and Renounce the lies that were injected through those hurts.**
- H. Purpose to live out the truth, not the lies.**
- I. Test future negative emotions with truth and then act on the truth.**
- J. Share with others the truths you've learned.**

VII. Props

- A. Four pairs of different colored sunglasses to see things from a new perspective.**
- B. Yellow 2" caution tape to create a comfort zone.**
- C. Flashing red light as a notifier of the hurts.**
- D. Picture frame to use as a window to see into the emotions.**
- E. Large sponge finger with the index finger pointing out to identify the offenses and the offender.**

VIII. Bibliography

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Emotional Freedom

Small Group Questions

1. What did you believe in the past that the “heart” represented in Scripture? How significant do you believe it is now?
2. What are some controlling, negative emotions you have experienced? How have they affected your life and relationships?
3. How do you think the negative emotions were developed in you?
4. How would your life be different if you were not controlled by these negative emotions and the lies behind them?
5. How have you dealt with your negative emotions? How effective have you been?
6. In the past, what have you feared in dealing with these negative emotions?
7. What lies have you realized were behind these negative emotions? How did you discover the lies? In the past, how have you attempted to deal with these lies?
8. How do you think these negative emotions can benefit or be useful to you now?
9. How can this group help you go through this process to end the control of both the negative emotions and the lies?