

Prayer Ministry

Small Group Study Guide

Lesson 6. Reconciliation

Healing is defined as a process by which a person is reconciled to their true identity in Christ. The world is subject to futility because of sin, but we are divinely designed for healing. When we suffer an accident or are overcome by the consequences of sin, our body goes into repair and restore mode. However, there can be barriers to the healing process when we are not reconciled to that design. Romans 12:2 says that we are not to conform to this world but to be transformed by the renewal of our mind. As we pray for healing the Holy Spirit convicts us of the error that needs to be transformed, and guides us into all truth.

Instruction

A simple prayer for healing is offered in agreement with the will of God, who declares Himself to be our Healer. We can have confidence that if we ask anything according to His will He hears us. If we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of Him. We can quickly agree with Him when we ask for recovery from injury, sickness, and the like.

We can also pray for healing or transformation through mind renewal. We are what we believe, and when we believe a deception it acts as if it is true to us. We must reconcile our belief system with God's truth in order to live in the fullness of His design.

This healing prayer model is different than exhortation, talk therapy, doctrinal statements, religious rules, or plain godly advice. Though there is nothing wrong with those things, the unreconciled belief system misinterprets them. For instance, a well-meaning pastor, counselor or friend could assure a young lady that she is beautiful, but if she believes she is not then she will interpret his words as polite patronization rather than truth. No matter how often it is spoken it will not change the way her mind has already been set.

What is spoken into your ear will be treated by the brain with suspicion and is easily disregarded. However, God speaks the truth into a person's heart. What our soul (mind, will and emotions) hears from the Spirit is recognized as truth. This is the truth that renews the mind and sets a person free.

We use a prayer model for teaching because it helps people develop a prayer strategy. As you learn to hear the Holy Spirit and recognize His voice you will be able to intercede without thought to steps and process. Meanwhile, use this plan to gain experience and confidence.

Pray for a starting point.

Sometimes the Holy Spirit brings us to a completely unexpected beginning place for a prayer appointment. Check with Him first, and go with what He reveals. In general we expect the starting point to be consistent with the person's current pain. There is conflict where the mind needs to be renewed, and in most cases that conflict is expressed as pain.

The greatest pain the person is currently experiencing is what we call the "presenting symptom." It is often the reason they initiated or agreed to prayer. However, sometimes the greatest pain is masking a deeper one. The person may have experience discussing

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physical pain and not have language for emotional or spiritual pain. Be sure to let the Holy Spirit guide the person to discover the place He wants to heal.

Focus on the pain to find the conflict. Many people, particularly men, are more likely to suppress pain than express it. Similarly, some people have developed effective coping methods to reduce or transfer pain. It is more compassionate at this point to help them discover the pain than it is to avoid it. Resist the urge to comfort them because you may be in the way of the Comforter doing His job.

It can be helpful to investigate a recent event or circumstance that triggered the pain or caused it to increase. The pain points to a conflict in one or more of the realms, and this is where we are ultimately trying to go.

Identify the primary emotion or behavior.

There are two important questions that help people identify their response to the pain. You can ask how that pain makes them feel, which requires them to shift from the physical realm (pain scale) to the emotional realm (emotional response). For instance, they may say that when the conflict arises they feel rejected. Alternatively ask what that pain makes them do. This will disclose a coping strategy or behavioral response. For instance, they may say that when the conflict arises they withdraw or isolate.

Affirm the answer by repeating it in your own words. This helps clarify and can keep you from jumping to a wrong conclusion. When they confirm what you have said make a note of the feeling or action.

Pray a simple prayer using the pain and affirmation you have noted so far by saying something like this: *Lord, when (name) goes through this (conflict) he or she feels or acts this way (emotion or behavior). Would You please reveal to him or her the source of this conflict, and where he or she first began to (feel or act) this way?*

Discover the belief.

When the Spirit has revealed the source you are ready to interrogate the belief. The Spirit may not call the very first incident to their mind, nor the most egregious one, but may use a representative memory or occasion through which to bring truth.

Begin with a question such as: *What did you believe to be true about yourself in that occasion?* You can expect them to answer in a memory-age appropriate way. If the event occurred in childhood the belief would not be an adult-like or mature conclusion.

Confess their belief to God and ask Him for truth.

Ask for Truth

This is a simple prayer with powerful results. *Lord, (name) came to believe (belief) about himself when that happened. Would You please reveal truth to him to renew his mind?*

Depending on the situation you have encountered, a more specific request may be called for. For instance, you may ask God to show him truth about the event. You may ask God to show him what He thought about him during that time. You may ask God to reveal Himself to resolve the event. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide your prayer because He is interceding on your behalf.

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Hear from God

Allow the person to hear from God. If the Holy Spirit reveals something to you, just hold it for the time being. It is most effective for the person to hear directly from God, and what you heard may be used to confirm what God said to them.

If necessary remind them that they may hear an auditory message from God, through words spoken or remembered. God might reveal truth visually in the form of a picture, vision or memory. You may ask them if they are getting a feeling, sensation or strong emotion. You may remind them that God can inspire. Each of these reminders are to help them recognize the message from God.

Confirmation

Whatever God reveals to them should be confirmed. I like to repeat back what they have shared and then ask them what that message means to them. For example, if they report a vision or mental picture I will say something like: "God showed you that scene with that much detail. Why do you think God would answer with that picture?"

At this point the intercessor becomes a witness. First, you are a witness to the transaction between God and that person. You may be called to give testimony to the fact that it occurred as well as your best recollection of it. Second, you are a witness for God. If you hear a conclusion about what God says that has been hijacked by the father of lies, it is your role to testify to the character of God. For instance, if a person says something about how angry God is with them, you can stand up for His mercifulness and refute the lie. Third, you are a witness for the defense. The accuser of the brethren acts as a prosecutor, but your testimony is on behalf of the defense.

Acts of Obedience

When God reveals truth and it renews a person's mind the next step is repentance. In most prayer situations that means the person repents from the old way of thinking to the new. There may be "deeds appropriate to repentance" that God would ask the person to do, such as offering forgiveness or making amends. There may also be acts God is inviting the person to do, acts that will result in a blessing.

As intercessor it may help the person you are praying with if you ask about their plan or strategy to accomplish any act of repentance. Sometimes confessing it is emboldening, and sometimes a brainstorming session can bring confidence. However, an intercessor does not take responsibility for the person to accomplish what they have set out to do. That responsibility is above your paygrade.

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Exercise: Reconciliation

Break into groups of three and work through this healing prayer model. There are three roles: Intercessor, prayer receiver, and witness. Rotate the roles until each person has filled each role. Allow 20 minutes per round.

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| _____ | 1. The Pain |
| | a. Pray for a starting point |
| | b. Spiritual, emotional, physical |
| | c. Connect with the pain |
| _____ | 2. The Primary Emotion / Behavior |
| | a. Identify |
| | b. Affirm |
| | c. Pray: Root or source |
| _____ | 3. The Belief |
| | a. Discover |
| | b. Confess (to God) |
| _____ | 4. Ask for Truth |
| _____ | 5. Hear from God |
| | a. Auditory |
| | b. Visual |
| | c. Kinesthetic |
| | d. Inspiration |
| _____ | 6. Confirmation |
| | a. What does that mean to you? |
| | b. Witness |
| _____ | 7. Acts of Obedience |
| | a. Deed: What did God ask you to do? |
| | b. Commit: When will you obey? |
| | c. Plan: How will you go about it? |

Notes:

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Sharing: Reconciliation

Discuss these questions or points with your small group:

- What was your most exciting revelation in the role of intercessor?
- In which realm do you work most confidently?
- Which realm is the most difficult for you?
- What can you do to increase your effectiveness in that realm?
- How did you overcome barriers to hearing from God or recognizing truth?
- What recommendations would you give to the next person with whom you will pray?
- How will this experience change the way you pray with people?

Caring: Reconciliation

Share a testimony with your small group about what God revealed to you and the results you already see or expect to see. Follow each testimony with a time of worship and praise.