

Session 1: Mending the broken heart

The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion - to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendour.

Isaiah 61:1-3 NIVUK

There is more than sufficient evidence that every human has a broken heart, each to a varying degree, in this world that is malfunctioning because of rebellion against our loving Creator. Broken-hearted people break hearts, intentionally and unintentionally. It is a universal problem.

It is the Lord's intention that broken hearts should be healed.
That's great news indeed.

To receive this healing, one must first transition from the general state of brokenness to the brokenness that comes from recognising the problem, leading to "mourning" and "grieving". Such people would be ready to turn to God for healing, on His terms. They will receive comfort, "beauty instead of ashes", "the oil of joy" and a "garment of praise".

Reflection/discussion

What is unconditional love?

Matthew 5:43-48

1 John 4:7-12

God demonstrates unconditional love by giving and sustaining physical life for all humanity irrespective of their performance. He places intrinsic value in humans even when they are sinful and rebellious.

God also demonstrated unconditional love when He made provision for the salvation of willing people before they were even aware of their need to be saved.

Unconditional love does not mean that sin and rebellion will be condoned. People will still have to be punished for unrepented of sin, despite being loved.

What causes a broken heart?

God made human beings in such a way that they have a deep need to be loved unconditionally; people have a need to be valued because of who they are, not for what they represent, or their performance. This deep need can only be realised through affirming relationships with God and with other people.

Any form of rejection by significant people in a person's life results in a broken heart because it strikes at the heart of this human need for unconditional love.

Reflection/discussion

Passive and aggressive rejection

Examples of passive rejection:

- Shaming
- Abandonment
- Exclusion
- Neglect
- Lack of nurture/training
- Unfair and unjust treatment

Examples of aggressive rejection:

- Verbal abuse
- Bullying
- False accusation
- Emotional abuse
- Mental abuse
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse



All forms of rejection pass on a devastating message –

“.... you are not loved, you are not valued, you are not worth it”

Different types of rejection inflict varying levels of trauma to the human soul. Sometimes the trauma is acute, as in one catastrophic, life altering event. More commonly the trauma is chronic, as in a series of apparently small but on-going events that reinforce to the victim that they are not worth it: that they don't matter.

Some symptoms of a broken heart

Shame
Low self-esteem
Self-doubt
Self-centeredness
Insecurity
Victim mentality - powerlessness
Passivity: Inability or unwillingness to take responsibility
Aggression
Attention-seeking
Unhealthy perfectionism
Envy/jealousy
Fear of intimacy; isolation - hiding of true self
Denial
Deception
Negativity
Addictions
Persistent anger/rage
Resentment that could deepen into bitterness
Irrational fears
Anxiety
Depression
And so on ...

Take time to pray and ask God to search your heart and help you to identify the symptoms you may be experiencing.

Search me, God, and know my heart;
test me and know my anxious thoughts.
See if there is any offensive way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting.
Psalm 139:23-24 NIVUK

Pray that you would recognise the acts of rejection that gave rise to them. Each one needs to be dealt with as it is revealed, and you become aware of it.

Healing the broken heart

Please note that you may need the support of someone you can trust. If you are not sure whom to approach for help, speak to your Church-in-the-home leader.

Healing comes through understanding and receiving **grace** and **truth**, in the context of love and acceptance.

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1:14_{NIVUK}

Jesus was described as being full of grace and truth. He is more than able to heal your broken heart.

Jesus meets our deepest need for unconditional love and complete acceptance through His grace.

The first step is therefore to turn to Jesus, whole heartedly. Ensure that you are now resolved to be a faithful disciple of Jesus. It is only through Him you can receive complete and permanent healing from a broken heart and its negative effects. He will heal all who willingly turn to Him, on His terms.

(See Book 1 - A sure foundation)

Jesus said:

'Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, 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 souls.

Matthew 11:28-29_{NIVUK}

Deal with the symptoms of your broken heart, as you become aware of them, one at a time.

Take as much time as you need to deal with each one.

For each one:

⇒ Forgive* everyone that contributed to your pain and hurt.

- Ask the Holy Spirit to help you recall such people and/or the significant events that occurred.
- You may also need to write the names and events down so that you can deal with each one thoroughly.

***Understand the difference between forgiveness and reconciliation**

Some people find it difficult to forgive because they tie forgiveness to reconciliation.

Forgiveness is essential and needs only the wronged person to achieve it. You can even forgive people that are not sorry for what they have done. God commands us to forgive, or we will not be forgiven by Him.

Jesus said:

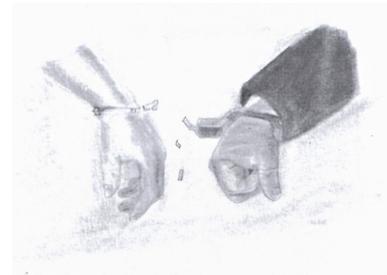
For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Matthew 6:14-15NIVUK

Consider the parable of the unmerciful servant:

Matthew 18:21-35

You must forgive in order to be free of past hurts. Unforgiveness chains you to the person that hurt you, prolonging your emotional pain.



It is in your own interest to forgive.

Forgiveness becomes easier when you consider that you have been forgiven for even more grievous wrongs by God.

Reconciliation is desirable and we need to do everything we can to bring it about. Some conditions need to be met before reconciliation can occur, so it involves more than one person.

Sometimes reconciliation is not possible, in spite of our best efforts, because the other person or persons involved are unwilling to work things out in truth and humility.

Forgiving people is mandatory for receiving healing from a broken heart. It does not mean that their actions are being condoned. God is able to deal justly with all unrepented of sins and acts of injustice. Leave them to God. In fact, you will be blessed if you pray for them; at least start with praying for their repentance.

Next steps in dealing with the symptoms of a broken heart:

- ⇒ Take responsibility for the manifesting behaviour even though you may have initially been victimised.
There is always a choice.
Acknowledge that you made the wrong one.
- ⇒ Ask God for forgiveness without making excuses for your behaviour.
Sincerely ask Him to forgive you and heal you.
- ⇒ Ask for and receive His grace which abounds towards you.
He knows every detail of what you have been through. He remembers the things that are still affecting you today, even those that you have forgotten. He understands the pain and hurt. He wants you to let go of those past hurts. His grace and love are more than enough to cancel the effects of past hurts and to fill you with love and acceptance you need.
- ⇒ Thank Him for healing you. Thanksgiving is a demonstration of faith in God. Know that He is able to make **all** things work for your good, even the difficult experiences, if you continue in faithfulness to Him and to His purposes.
- ⇒ Continually adjust your life to reflect the truths you are learning from the word of God, with the help of the Holy Spirit.

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge - that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3:14-19_{NIVUK}

Extra resources:

King's Church YouTube Channel

Course: You matter

A number of sessions starting with "Happily ever after?".

<https://youtu.be/kEMXqHOWsWE>

Session 2: Righteousness, peace, and joy

... Therefore do not let what you know is good be spoken of as evil. For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and receives human approval. Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.

Romans 14:16-19_{NIVUK}

True believers have the assurance that they are members of the Kingdom of God because they are resolved to do the will of God always.

Jesus said:

'Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

Matthew 7:21_{NIVUK}

In practical terms, true believers will demonstrate the evidence (*righteousness, peace and joy*) of being part of the Kingdom of God, increasingly, in all domains of life:

- In the inner person
- In the home
- In the local Church
- In the world

Walking in righteousness*, demonstrating peace within and being agents of peace, and experiencing joy even in challenging circumstances require effort and intentionality.

A full life, the life that Jesus said He came into to bring to those who are willing and obedient is the aim. The outcomes will include good spiritual, emotional and mental health.

Jesus said

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

John 10:10_{NIVUK}

*Righteousness through faith

Walking in righteousness should not be confused with righteousness through faith in Jesus. No human being can attain a right standing with God in his or her own merit. Thank God that saving faith in Jesus justifies a person in God's sight when he or she truly repents of the terrible sin of rebellion and from resulting sinful acts, and asks for forgiveness. Such a person is counted as righteous in Jesus Christ. (Ref: *A sure foundation, Book 1, King's Church Discipleship series*)

Walking in righteousness

The Lord expects believers to do the right things, for His Name's sake and for their well-being.

Reflection/discussion

Titus 2:11-14

Psalm 1:1-6

Galatians 5:16-26

Walking in righteousness is to constantly choose to think, speak and act in line with the will of God, as revealed in the Bible.

We can draw on the grace provided by the Holy Spirit to say, "No", to sin and to obey God in everything. We would then progressively manifest the godly qualities described as the fruit of the Spirit.

We keep in step with the Holy Spirit as we make choices to obey His promptings, which are all in line with the truths revealed in the Bible.

Peace

Every human being longs for peace. Real peace can only come through our Lord Jesus. He was punished so that we would have peace in this life, irrespective of our circumstances. In Him we also have the hope of eternal peace.

Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Isaiah 53:4-6^{NIVUK}

Jesus said:

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

John 14:27^{NIVUK}

Reflection/discussion

Colossians 3:15

Philippians 4:6-7

1 Peter 5:7

Psalm 37:1-11

Romans 12:17-19

Guard your heart against:

- All fear, except the fear of God
- Anxiety; commit every cause for anxiety on Jesus
- Fretting about material things. Trust God to provide for you. Let Him guide you into fruitful work, so that you can earn a living and also be generous.
- Fretting about the apparent success of evil and wickedness. Leave justice to God.
- Vengeful thoughts towards people that upset or harm us. Let us forgive and pray for such people and leave God to deal with them in His own way and time.

Guard your heart in this manner and you will not only be at peace, but will also promote peace with other people

Joy

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: rejoice!

Philippians 4:4^{NIVUK}

Reflection/discussion

1 Peter 1:3-9

Nehemiah 8:10



Joy in the Lord gives strength.

Joy is not easy to describe in a concise manner. Some words that have been used to describe joy include delight, happiness, keen pleasure, elation, gladness, bliss, glee, festive gaiety, felicity, gratification, satisfaction, rapture, cheerfulness, merriment exhilaration, light-heartedness

As stated in 1 Peter 1:8, joy is inexpressible and glorious.

A believer in Jesus should experience joy, through the work of the Holy Spirit, even in difficult situations. This is because joy depends on the living hope of present and eternal security in God, and not on circumstances. This living hope cannot be taken away by temporal difficulties.

False hope in the material things of this world or in people will lead to disappointment and unfulfilled expectations and will drain joy out of the human heart.

The hope of eternal salvation and the bliss stored up for the believer in the coming age brings lasting joy, even in difficulties, trials and challenging situations.

Make every effort to always focus your thoughts on the hope of glory that is yours in Christ Jesus. Choose to rejoice in the Lord always.

Session 3: Joy and peace through prayer

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13^{NIVUK}

An unceasing prayerful life demonstrates dependence on God. True faith in God is genuine trust in Him and also faithfulness to Him, in everything.

The blessings of joy and peace are the outcomes.

Reflection/discussion

Philippians 4:4-9

James 1:2-4

John 16:33

Matthew 5:11-12

John 15:1-17

The example Hannah

1 Samuel 1:6-18

2 Samuel 1:1-2



David's example

From Psalm 30 - A psalm of David

I will exalt you, Lord, for you lifted me out of the depths and did not let my enemies gloat over me.

Lord my God, I called to you for help, and you healed me.

You, Lord, brought me up from the realm of the dead; you spared me from going down to the pit.

Sing the praises of the Lord, you his faithful people; praise his holy name.

For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favour lasts a lifetime;

weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.

To you, Lord, I called; to the Lord I cried for mercy:

'What is gained if I am silenced, if I go down to the pit?

Will the dust praise you? Will it proclaim your faithfulness?

Hear, Lord, and be merciful to me; Lord, be my help.'

You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, that my heart may sing your praises and not be silent.

Lord my God, I will praise you for ever.

Session 4: Dealing with baggage

Every human being is made up of the material (body) and the immaterial (soul and spirit). When physical death occurs the immaterial separates from the material. The Bible reveals that the immaterial part of each person that continues to exist after death consists of the soul and the spirit. There is a natural tendency to focus on the body and pay little attention to the real person inside it. The result can be catastrophic, in this world and the permanent world to come.

It is clear that the Bible sometimes deals with the immaterial part of the person as a whole, depending on the context, using soul and spirit interchangeably. It is also clear that in other contexts the Bible distinguishes between the soul and the spirit.

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Thessalonians 5:23^{NIVUK}

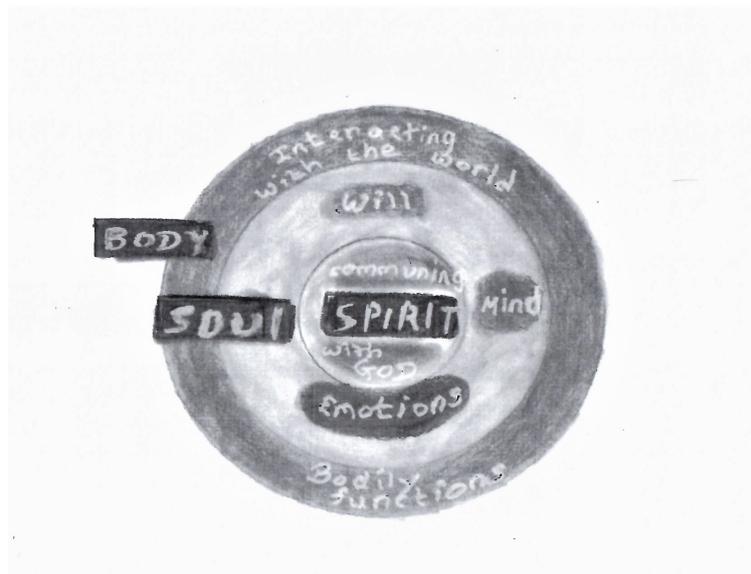
There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from their works, just as God did from his. Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will perish by following their example of disobedience.

For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes, and he is the one to whom we are accountable.

Hebrews 4:9-13^{NIVUK}

The spirit of a believer is alive to God because of the presence of the Spirit of God.

Many have come to agree that the soul consists of the will, mind and emotions. The body acts according to the dictates of the spirit and the soul.



When someone is in Christ, his or her spirit is alive in God. The person is moved, in a spiritual sense, from the kingdom of darkness, ruled by Satan, to the Kingdom of God where God's will is done. The spirit now fully desires to do the will of God.

The problem lies in the soul. The soul has accumulated 'baggage' or 'pollution' that must be dealt with.

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

James 1:27^{NIVUK}

All human souls experience conditioning and trauma, to varying levels, in this rebellious, broken and tragic world.

Ungodly worldviews, thought patterns and brokenness in the human soul are passed on from generation to generation, knowingly and unknowingly.

Mentally and emotionally traumatised people tend to inflict trauma on others, especially to those close to them. Sometimes the trauma is acute, as in one catastrophic, life altering event. More commonly the trauma is chronic, as in a series of apparently small but on-going events, in form of damaging words or actions. These tend to create ungodly thought patterns that may be described as footholds and strongholds.

Healing and transformation

The healing transformation of the soul begins with the decision to do only the will of God. God knows what is best for the human soul.

It is wise to choose to do His will.

Reflection/discussion

The will

Matthew 7:21

Colossians 1:9-14

Philippians 2:12-13

The mind

The mind is a battleground. Healing and transformation will follow if this battle is fought and won, through the grace provide by God in work of the Holy Spirit.

Thoughts make people who they are. Behaviour will change for the better as they learn to conform their thoughts to the will of God as revealed in the Bible.

Romans 12:1-2

Romans 8:5-11

Proverbs 4:23

1 Peter 1:13-16

John 8:31-32

Emotions

Emotions are an indication of the state of the mind. They are valid and important, but they do not determine what is true. Truth is determined by the word of God, as revealed in the Bible. A believer should rely on the truth of the word of God, not on feelings.

A mind focused on God fosters positive emotions of joy and peace, irrespective of circumstances.



Practical application

Footholds and strongholds

Ephesians 4:17-32

2 Corinthians 10:3-5

Footholds and strongholds are thought patterns that are contrary to the will of God. The devil uses lies and half-truths to build up thought patterns in peoples' minds that are contrary to the will of God. Thought patterns control behaviour.

Footholds and strongholds need to be identified, 'demolished or deconstructed', and replaced with the relevant truth from God's word.

Jesus Christ gave believers in Him the authority to overcome all the power of devil.

Luke 10:17-20

James 4:7

Identifying strongholds

Unacceptable and damaging behaviour, and experiences that cannot be easily brought under the control of an individual are probably the result of a stronghold.

Examples include:

- Irrational fear and stress
- Addictions
- Lust
- Hatred
- Rage
- Depression
- Feelings of rejection
- Recurrent events such as nightmares
- Consequences of any involvement with the occult
- And so on

Pray

Pray that the Holy Spirit will help you to identify any strongholds that you need to deal with. **Psalm 139:23-24**

Forgive

Forgive all who have offended you or harmed you in any way. If you do not forgive, you will not be forgiven by God. Forgiveness is essential for the well-being of every human being. **Matthew 6:14-15**

Ask for forgiveness

Take responsibility for your wrong thoughts and actions and ask God to forgive you. **1 John 1:9**

Use the authority of Jesus

In the name of Jesus, expel or refute anything that has gained access to your soul and is a negative influence on your thoughts.

Express your decision to replace the wrong thought pattern with the relevant truth from the word of God. **Romans 12:1-2**

Pray

Ask God to fill you with His Holy Spirit.

Submit that area of your life to the Holy Spirit.

Dealing with 'baggage' in this manner is an on-going process. There should be increasing evidence of transformation for the better.

Session 5: Freedom in Jesus

Jesus said

"If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth shall set you free."

"So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and have it to the full."

It is clear from scripture that wicked spirits from the kingdom of Satan are always looking for opportunities to gain "holds" in humans, in order to control their lives and thereby bring oppression, destruction and death.

Ephesians 4:26-27

1 Peter 5:8-9

The greatest freedom comes with salvation. There is evidence in Scripture that salvation is an on-going process, not just a one-off event.

Reflection/discussion

Saved (justification)

Ephesians 1:13-14

Ephesians 2:1-10

Colossians 2:13-15

For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Colossians 1:13-14^{NIVUK}

When people repent of their sin of rebellion and the resulting sinful behaviour, and trust in Jesus for salvation, they are moved from the kingdom of the devil (the kingdom of darkness) into the Kingdom of God (the Kingdom of light). They are set free to serve God, now and forever. The spirits of such people come alive towards God, and the Spirit of God comes to live within them.

Being saved (on-going sanctification)

John 17:13-19

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

2 Thessalonians 2:14-15

Romans 12:2

2 Corinthians 10:3-5

The soul is being saved; the mind is constantly being renewed by the truth of the word of God; the will is being brought into submission to the will of God; the emotions respond by demonstrating peace and joy.

This process is known as sanctification. It includes deliverance from the lies of the enemy that have become deeply entrenched in the mind. These thought patterns are footholds and strongholds from which the devil and his evil agents gain control of the person in those particular areas.

Deliverance occurs when the lie of the enemy is exposed and replaced by the appropriate truth from the word of God.

As we go through this process we gain increasing levels of self-control, becoming truly free to live holy lives that bring glory to God.

Will be saved (future glorification)

1 Peter 1:3-9

1 John 3:1-3

1 Corinthians 15:35-58

The great hope of Christians is that one day they will receive complete salvation for all eternity. They will see Jesus and be perfect like Him. They will have new bodies like His resurrected body, which will never be sick, grow old or die. This hope of ultimate and permanent freedom through Jesus motivates and encourages the believers.

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.

We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

Romans 8:18-25^{NIVUK}

Practical application

Identifying 'Doorways'

Some activities, attitudes and experiences give wicked spirits access to the human soul, depositing lies that gain control over the person's life. These need to be confessed and repented of. The following are some well documented and proven doorways:



- **Inheritance**

Unwholesome traits, sins and some sicknesses can be passed down family lines through demonic activity.

- **The occult**

Any involvement with the occult, no matter how fleeting or seemingly innocent, opens the door to demonic oppression.

- **Sexual sin**

This includes any extramarital or perverted sexual activity.

- **Persistent and wilful sin**

- **Emotional crises**

Examples include extreme fear, grief or sorrow, anger that leads to the sin of unforgiveness, and incidents or circumstances that foster deep insecurity.

- **Childhood doorways**

These may be the results of rejection, trauma, constant exposure to critical and destructive words, lack of proper discipline, attention and care, and infiltration by the occult through music, games etc.

- **Ignorance**

The devil takes advantage of ignorance. It is important that we find out what the Bible says about the enemy of the human soul.

- **Curses**

It cannot be overemphasised that it is the Holy Spirit who leads us into all truth. However, where two or more of the following symptoms are found, one should consider the possibility of a curse at work.

- Illness which runs in the family. It can be physical, mental or emotional.
 - Persistent or recurrent illness that defies diagnosis and yet is very real.
 - Repeated tragedies with a recognisable pattern
 - A feeling of being 'tethered'. Going round in a vicious cycle and not being able to break free.
 - Lack of fruitfulness and success in undertakings despite diligent effort.

Words are very powerful.

Curses and blessings are usually delivered using words. Be careful not to use negative and careless speech against yourself or others.

One important method of fighting spiritually is to refute immediately unwarranted negative words directed at you, or negative thoughts that assail your mind. Counter them with Biblical truth.

Do not allow such words to take root and do damage to your heart and mind.

If you are guilty and deserve the words directed at you, then take responsibility and repent. Apologise and make restitution if necessary.

Wilful disobedience to God can bring on a curse.

For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does.

The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.

We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5^{NIVUK}

Recommendation for further study:

Blessings and Curses by Derek Prince

Deliverance

1. Identify 'doorways'
You may have already identified possible doorways for some areas of your life in which you know you lack self-control. If so, move on to step 2.
If you are unsure, ask the Holy Spirit for revelation and trust that He will find a way to show you the relevant doorways. Identify the lie that has become embedded in your mind.
2. Forgive anybody who was instrumental in opening a particular doorway.
Take responsibility for your wrong actions and repent. Ask God for forgiveness and thank Him for forgiving you.
3. In the name and authority of Jesus, expel (cast out) any evil spirits that may have gained control through that doorway. Reject the lie and replace it with the corresponding truth from the word of God. Thank God for setting you free because of the shed blood of Jesus.
4. Ask God to fill you with His Holy Spirit. Consciously submit that area of your life to the Holy Spirit.

With faith in God and His promises, go through the above process for each behaviour pattern. You will experience increasing freedom as the Holy Spirit helps you gain self-control.

You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

Galatians 5:13-26^{NIVUK}

Dealing with curses

1. Acknowledge, with thanksgiving, that curses placed on you can be revoked because of the finished work of our Lord Jesus.
2. If you know who is responsible for the curse, forgive them. If you wronged them, you would need to ask for forgiveness. You may need to make restitution in some cases.
3. Repent and ask God for forgiveness if you have brought the curse on yourself through sin or disobedience. Repentance also means that you will turn away from sin and obey God. If any cursed or occult objects are involved, get rid of them.
4. Now revoke the curse with authority and faith in Jesus, and in His name. Ask the Lord to set aside every curse.
5. In the name of Jesus, command evil spirits to stop operating in your life as a result of the curse - because it has been rendered null and void.
6. Thank the Lord for releasing you from the curse and ask Him to fill you with His Holy Spirit.

If you do not have the faith to do this on your own, speak to your Church-in-the-home leader.

Do not live in fear of curses. A curse will not be valid except it is deserved.
Proverbs 26:2

Growing in freedom

- Keep studying the Bible and allow the truths to continually renew your mind.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal areas of your life in which you need to go through deliverance
- Carry on resisting the devil and his demons. Be alert, so as to reject their lies which are designed to lead you into sin and bondage.

Psalm 139:23-24
James 4:7

Session 6: Dealing with temptation

It is important to recognise the difference between temptations and trials.



Trials are beneficial because they help a believer to stand firm on the narrow path to life and to grow in godliness.

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

James 1:2-4_{NIVUK}

Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.

James 1:12_{NIVUK}

Temptations on the hand are to be overcome at all costs because they will lead to sin and death.

When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed.

Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

James 1:13-15_{NIVUK}

The sources of temptation

James 1:13-15

Matthew 4:1-11

Galatians 6:1

The remedy

Psalm 119:11

Mark 14:38

1 Corinthians 10:12-13

1 Peter 5:8-9

James 4:7



Practical application

- Believe the word of God which shows that continuing to sin deliberately can cost you your eternal reward. Every sin is ultimately dangerous to the human soul. **1 John 3:1-10; 1 Corinthians 9:24-27**
- Choose to believe that sin has lost its power over you, and that you have received grace to overcome the sins that you are susceptible to.
Romans 6:1-14
- When you are tempted to sin, pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help you overcome temptation. Listen to Him and choose to obey Him instead of giving in to your wrong desires. **1 Corinthians 10:1-13**
- Resist the pull of sin. You can. You are not helpless in the face of temptation.
Hebrews 12:1-4
- Ask God to fill you with His Holy Spirit.
- Turn to harmless and uplifting activities. There are so many things you can enjoy doing without sinning. It is easier to overcome the temptation to sin if you have a range of harmless activities and hobbies that you can enjoy in your spare time.
- If you do sin, repent immediately and confess your sin. Receive forgiveness and cleansing from God. Ask for the grace to recognise and learn to avoid the situations that lead you into that particular sin.
1 John 1:9

Session 7: Healthy relationships

A full life is dependent on staying connected with God and other people in healthy relationships.

Staying connected with God

On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. 'Teacher,' he asked, 'what must I do to inherit eternal life?'

'What is written in the Law?' he replied. 'How do you read it?'

He answered, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind" and, "Love your neighbour as yourself."

'You have answered correctly,' Jesus replied. 'Do this and you will live.'

Luke 10:25-28^{NIVUK}

We stay connected to God when we respond to His love by loving Him back with all of our being:

All your heart:

No idols. The worst idol can be oneself. Anything or anyone that controls our choices, other than God, has become an idol.

All your soul:

His will takes precedence.

A deep on-going appreciation of His being and His overwhelming grace engage the emotions, resulting in peace and joy.

All your strength:

Your abilities and resources at His disposal.

All your mind:

Your thought patterns progressively brought in line with the truth, as revealed in the Bible.

Reflection/discussion

Consider the link between loving God and obeying Him

John 15:9-10

1 John 2:3-6

1 John 5:1-5

Practical application

Building a relationship takes time and effort. Although it is important to learn how to be aware of the presence of God, the Holy Spirit, throughout the day, spending dedicated time with God each day is the essential means to 'stay connected' with Him.

What we do during our regular time with the Lord may vary, but should include:

- Reading, studying and meditating on the word of God

The Bible is the word of God. We can get to know God more and more by reading and meditating on the Word of God, with the help of His Holy Spirit.

- Praise and thanksgiving

The more we learn about God's wonderful qualities, the more sincerely we can praise Him. As we review our many blessings, we are able to give Him our heartfelt thanks.

- Listening

Make a habit of waiting in a listening mode, with the expectancy that God may speak to your heart directly. A relationship is a two-way thing.

- Repentance

As we study the Bible, we may become aware of specific things we do wrong, or commands we are not obeying. It is appropriate to ask for forgiveness and resolve to obey God, with help from the Holy Spirit.

- Petition

We are invited to make our requests known to God, praying for ourselves and others.

Be intentional

DECIDE when and where you will meet with God each day.

MAKE changes in your schedule to make this happen.

TAKE steps to minimise or eliminate interruptions during this time.

Staying connected with other people:

'A new command I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.'
John 13:34-35_{NIVUK}

Jesus commands us to love one another.

This type of love is referred to as 'agape' love and is described clearly in the Bible.
1 Corinthians 13

"So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets"
Matthew 7:12_{NIVUK}

To receive love, we must be prepared to show love to others.

Reflection/discussion

Consider the teaching of Jesus Christ on loving others

Luke 6:27-36

Matthew 5:43-48

Luke 10:25-37 - the example of the good Samaritan



Our disposition should be to do good and be a blessing to every human being we meet. We are to have that global outlook; not exclusive and selective about doing good to others. Our Lord Jesus illustrated this truth with the story of the good Samaritan. He even commands us to bless those that curse us and do good to those that hurt us, even our enemies.

The problem is that we sometimes do not know what is good and what is not. What some people think love is, is not love at all; we may not recognise an act of love because it may not "feel" good. For instance, God disciplines those He loves. Discipline does not feel good while it is being administered.

Genuine acts of love produce good fruit in the recipient and challenge bad fruit without rejecting the person.

When we show genuine love to all, we become 'safe'* people.

Although we should show love to all people, we need to have a number of 'safe' people to stay in connection with, in order to have a full life and keep growing towards spiritual and emotional maturity.

*Safe people will:

- Be humble.
- Have a desire to grow.
- Draw us closer to God.
- Draw us closer to other safe people.
- Help us to become the kind of people that God created us to be.

Unsafe people may display some or all of the following characteristics:

- Are not interested in changing for the better.
- Disobey God and encourage you to do the same.
- Isolate you from other people through gossip, a critical attitude and selfishness.
- Are self-centred and domineering, and may withdraw from you emotionally if you try to act independently of them.
- Would flatter you instead of confronting you with the truth, but have no qualms about talking negatively about you to others.
- Are unreliable and inconsistent. They are likely abandon you when you are in need. They do not keep promises unless it is to their advantage.
- May be envious of others.
- Try to justify their wrong doings instead of repenting and apologising.

Recommendation for further study:

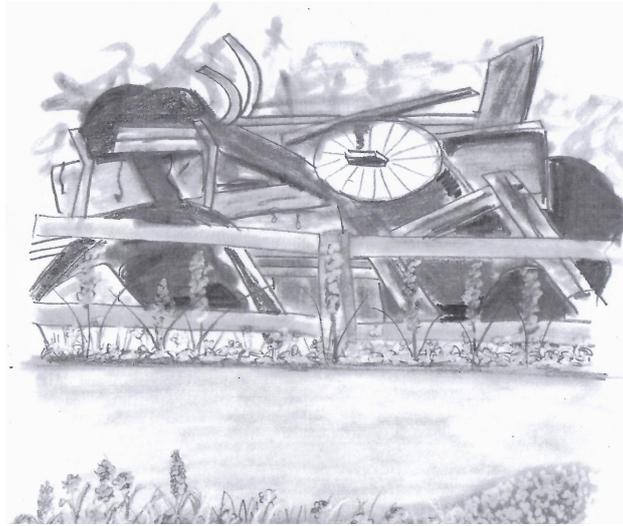
Safe People

By Dr Henry Cloud and Dr John Townsend

Session 8: Healthy boundaries

Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.

Proverbs 4:23^{NIVUK}



Your choices, which originate from the heart, have lasting consequences on your life and sometimes on future generations.

You set boundaries by deciding clearly what is you and what is not.

Your beliefs, thoughts, attitudes, values, feelings, responsibilities and choices are all within your boundaries and define who you are.

These need to be based on the objective truth of the word of God.

You have the responsibility to maintain your boundaries by allowing good things in and keeping bad things out.

- You need to set limits on yourself and maintain them.
- You also need to set limits on other people and ensure that they are aware of them.
- You need to apply appropriate consequences to maintain your boundaries.

Recommendation for further study:

Boundaries

By Dr Henry Cloud and Dr John Townsend

The aim is to be ...	Instead of...
Free	Bound
Powerful	Victimised
Submitted	Subdued
Connected	Isolated and lonely
Fruitful	Barren

People are not free if they are not fully in control of themselves. Cooperating with the Holy Spirit, who lives in us, will result in increasing levels of self-control.

Reflection/discussion

Key questions:

- Do you recognise what you are responsible for and can control?
- Do you truly have self-control?
- Do you fret over what you cannot control?
- Do you care too much about what others think about you?

Your honest answers to these questions reveal your true emotional state. It is only as you hold on to God, the Holy Spirit, in a real relationship that you will receive the wisdom and strength to do the following.

- Adhere to the truth.
- Learn to say no when necessary.
- Communicate your true self in order to keep your boundaries visible.
- Take time out for restoration when needed.
- Maintain geographical distance when necessary.
- Maintain emotional distance when necessary.

Session 9: A life of service

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Ephesians 2:10^{NIVUK}

Although salvation is by grace alone, through faith in Jesus, God has prepared works of service for each believer to do. It is important to find your place of service in the local body of Christ, the Church. Your role is crucial for the healthy functioning of the Church.

Reflection/discussion

1 Corinthians 12:12-31

Romans 12:1-13

Ephesians 4:1-16



Motivation for service

The believer is eternally secure and will go to heaven because of the foundation of faith in Jesus. However, there will be a judgement of believers to reward them for the way they have built on this firm foundation through their works of service.

1 Corinthians 3:10-15

It is important to serve God. He has promised to reward those that serve Him in the right way. It is therefore also important to serve God with the right motive out of love for God and love for others, not selfish ambition nor the desire for status and recognition.

1 Corinthians 13

Practical application

Some kinds of service are mandatory for all believers:

- To God: Worship - thanksgiving, praise, and obedience
- Intercessory prayer
- Sharing the gospel (personal and corporate evangelism)
- Sharing truths from the word of God and encouraging obedience to His commands (discipleship)
- Giving of tithes and offerings to facilitate the work of the Church
- Meeting the needs of others from our own resources (in addition to our tithes and offerings)

Other kinds of service depend on particular gifts, talents and the specific call of God.

- Any gifts, talents and skills you have acquired can should be put to good use in the context of the local church. Make yourself available to appropriate sub-groups within the church.
- Discuss any specific call of God on your life with the leaders for testing and eventual deployment. Meanwhile seize every opportunity to serve.



To be **fruitful** in service a believer must be:

- Spirit-filled
- Faithful
- Available
- Willing to keep learning and growing