

## HEALING THROUGH OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS CHRIST

**THE PURPOSE OF THIS TEACHING:** Our primary purpose this session is to have each participant examine their relationship with Jesus Christ and if it appears that they may not be truly born again, to guide them—hopefully immediately—to a true conversion. Secondly, we want to show how ultimately our healing comes out of our overall relationship with Jesus Christ.

**INTRODUCTION:** This session will be a little different from last week's: you won't have to take nearly as many notes. but the notes you take will be very important. You will understand why as we go along.

1. If you were to ask me, as sometimes people do, 'How is a person healed?', I would answer, "We are healed through our relationship with Jesus Christ."
  - a. If the person is a Christian and accepted Christ years ago, but still struggles mightily with addiction, their real response to me might be. "Thanks for the pious Christian platitude, but what do I need your ministry for?"
  - b. If the person had never actually had a real relationship with Jesus, they wouldn't know what I was talking about. I would be speaking in some evangelical jargon that might as well be Greek to them.
2. In this session, I'm going to try and address both types of people, and hopefully offer much more than pious platitudes. I'm going to offer some of the best practical help you have ever received.
3. First I want to address the second person--the one who doesn't even know what a personal relationship with Jesus Christ is all about. I can sympathize with you because that is where I was for much of my life.

### TEACHER'S TESTIMONY

4. You may be like I was. Some of you may have an intellectual acceptance of God, but it has no practical effect on your life. You may have a religion, but that's not what Christianity is. It is a relationship. You may have given as much of yourself as you are able to Jesus, but somehow you know it's not enough. Somehow you sense in your spirit that there must be more. If you feel

this way, I assure you there *is* more, and God passionately wants for you to be able to experience more of Him. If you think there is a possibility that you may not have made that vital acceptance of Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior, stay tonight and talk it over with one of us or later with someone else whose Christian faith seems to have a real impact on their life. Jesus said we must be born again to enter the Kingdom of God. (Now don't get turned off by that phrase. That term comes from Jesus—not from some street evangelist.)

5. Others of you—maybe you—are born-again believers, but somehow you don't have the personal relationship with Jesus that you believe you should have. At least, to this point, it is not a personal relationship that has had much impact on your struggle with compulsive behavior. That can change, no matter how long you have been a Christian.

6. Let's begin with asking, "What is a personal relationship with Jesus Christ?"

a. First of all, it's a personal relationship like with anyone else; it is more than intellectual. Somehow the heart is involved. There is mutual respect, caring and understanding. Think of the closest personal friendship you have ever had or dreamed of, and that is what it is like. There is a deep understanding of and appreciation for each other.

b. Why do we talk about this kind of relationship with Jesus, rather than with the Father or the Holy Spirit? In this respect, the Three are interchangeable. We could certainly be talking about our relationship with the Father or Holy Spirit; but, for practical reasons, most of us at first find it easier to relate to Jesus.

(1). He is God in human flesh, so He is logically easier to relate to. The Bible stresses the humanity of Jesus in Hebrews when it says:

*For because He Himself has suffered and been tempted. He is able to help those who are tempted* (Heb. 2:18) and,

*For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence come near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need* (Heb. 4:15-16)

(2). Also, many of us may find that our relationship with our earthly fathers greatly hinders our relationship with our Heavenly Father. God presented Himself in the metaphor of our father's love and protection. For those of us who have not experienced such love and protection—or maybe experienced just the opposite, this can be a stumbling block. This is something for which there is no easy answer; but if

this is your situation, you may find that as you are able to open to a personal relationship with Jesus, He will heal you to the point of coming to truly know the Father.

- (3). David, in the Bible, of course did not know Jesus, but he did have a wonderful, deep, honest relationship with the Father. Listen to some of his psalms, and see how wonderfully personal that relationship was: (No need to take notes here; just listen.)

*He reached from on high, He took me, He drew me out of many waters. He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from those who hated me; for they were mighty for me. They came upon me in the day of my calamity; but the Lord was my stay. He brought me forth into a broad place; He delivered me, because He delighted in me. Psalm 18:16-19*

*For He has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; and He has not hid His face from him, but has heard when I cried to Him. Psalm 22:24*

*For my father and mother have forsaken me, but the Lord will take me up. Psalm 27:10*

*This I know, that God is for me. Psalm 56:9*

*Father of the fatherless and protector of widows is God in His holy habitation. Psalm 68:5*

*Because he cleaves to Me in love, I will deliver him; I will protect him, because he knows my name. When he calls to Me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will rescue him and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him and show him My salvation. Psalm 91: 14-16*

*Out of my distress I called on the Lord; the Lord answered me and set me free. With the Lord on my side I do not fear. What can man do to me? Psalm 118: 5-6*

*The Lord is near to all who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him in truth He also hears their cry and saves them. The Lord preserves all who love Him; but the wicked He will destroy. Psalm 145:18-20*

We can come to know the Lord as David did.

4. When we say that healing comes through a personal relationship with Jesus, what does this mean, practically? I think we can start to get a glimpse of this as we recall from last week what the deep needs are that drove us into our compulsion. Jesus is the only one who can meet those deepest needs. Consider them:
- a. **Love:** His is the only love that is great enough to heal those whose brokenness is rooted in an unmet need for love. Most often, our addictions are a misguided search for love, often coming from a need so deep that nothing else can fill it. But Jesus can. Our need can meet up with the One whose love knows no limits. It is boundless, and it is unconditional. It is a love that will never hurt you. It is a love that will never use you.
  - b. **Affirmation:** He is the only one who has the authority to give us the affirmation that we crave. For so many, addiction is a problem of identity and we seek to be affirmed by others based on the world's standards of acceptance. But the Bible says that we were created through Jesus Christ, and so He has the absolute authority to declare who we are. Jesus, the Son of the Father, brings us into the royal family, and affirms us, not just as sons and daughters, but as sons and daughters of the King.
  - c. **Power:** He is the only one who has the power to change our lives. How many years have we struggled to change—to change our thoughts, our feelings, our behavior? How many counselors, how many programs and schemes, and yet we remained powerless? But when we surrender to Jesus, we come into contact with the very power that has overcome sin and death itself. Addiction, compulsion, bondage—Jesus has power over them all.
  - d. **Faithfulness:** He is the One who will be our friend and comforter always. We place our loneliness, our needs for security and significance in food, and eventually that idol always lets us down. Jesus does not. He is totally faithful. He will walk down the road of life with us, never despairing, never giving up on us, always with an inexhaustible supply of unconditional love.

*Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (Roman 8:39).*

This is how we are healed through our relationship with Jesus Christ.

8. Then, how do we get into this kind of relationship?
- a. First, we have to want it.

- b. We may need a mustard seed of faith here, to seek and ask for something we don't yet fully understand. But that's all right. He wants it more than you. He died to get back into this kind of relationship with you.
  - c. Then comes the tough part—you have to pay for it. What do you have to give Him for it. NOTHING. Nothing, that is, except for yourself. Jesus wants a wonderful mutual relationship with you—you living in Him and He living in you. He wants to call you His friend, as He does in John 15:15. But we can't start out that way. For Him to be able to live His life out in us, we first have to give our lives to Him.
  - d. Most of you did that when you accepted Him as Lord and Savior, but I believe right now He wants something that has been terribly close to you, terribly precious to you—your addiction. If you are blocked in your healing and in your relationship with Him, the vital thing you must do is surrender that part of your life to Him.
9. That's what I want you to do right now—to surrender your addiction to Him. And this must be done counting the cost. What does your addiction mean to you?
- a. Is it your special fantasies—your faithful way of retreating from the world?
  - b. Is it your image; somehow users are a little superior to others?
  - c. Is it your being “different”; in a way that gives you an excuse to avoid all those things that you fear; those things that could bring you pain?
  - d. What is your god? Could it be your addiction? The Holy Spirit will show you.
10. If you surrender these things to Him right now, it doesn't mean that you will be able to release all of them instantly—that you will come into immediate obedience. These things will take a while, but you are making Him Lord of them right now, and so, in His good time, He has the right to take them from you. At the level of your will and in your spirit you are giving them to Him. And you are counting the cost. Counting the cost now, you will not be as likely to come back later and say, “Oh, I didn't mean that.” You may think you've already done this before, but I would wager that you haven't completely. I believe the Holy Spirit will show you right now parts of your addiction that you have not given to Him.
11. What I want you to do now, is to turn in your notebooks to the Prayer Journal page you are going to use this coming week. Now close your eyes and ask the Holy Spirit to bring to mind every part of your addiction that you need to release to Jesus right now. Take your time with this;

it's terribly important. As some part of your addiction comes to you that you believe you need to give to the Lord, write it down in your Prayer Journal so you will clearly remember what it is you are giving to the Lord. Then silently in prayer, offer it to Him.

### SILENT PRAYER

12. *“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone, but if it dies, it bears much fruit. He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there shall be my servant also; if any one serves me, the Father will honor him. (John 12:24-26)*

(Turn back to your class notes now)

13. You have made an offering to the Lord that can open up the personal relationship that is going to be the major source of your healing. Praise God!
14. Now what?
- a. The next step may be up to Him
  - b. You need to spend time with Him, to get to know Him more intimately. That means time in prayer, in the Bible, in church, and with His people.
  - c. Two things you are going to find out:
    - (1). Love is the greatest motivator to obedience there is. We will do so much more for love than we will out of *fear* or a sense of duty. As you grow in your loving relationship with Him, it will become much easier to be obedient.
    - (2). The other thing is that while you are walking with Him—with your friend, Jesus—you are on the path He has laid out for you. While you are on that path, you are in the place where many wonderful things can happen, including miracles.

PRAYER: Father, I pray for each person in this program that they will truly come to know you in the deepest way possible; that you will, for them, be the support, comfort and friend, they need so much. I pray not only for their healing through their relationship with you, but that one day even this wonderful healing will seem insignificant compared to the joy of truly knowing you. In Jesus' name. AMEN.

**Scripture Memory Verse:**

**Hebrews 2:18 (NASB)** For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.

**Assignment for the Week:**

1. When you prayed in class, you were to write in your notes those important parts of your addiction that you were willing to surrender to Jesus. Now, take a separate piece of paper and copy those things that you surrendered. Pray again, making these a true offering to the Lord, and then take the list and destroy it. As a symbolic act either burn the list, or tear it up into tiny pieces and flush it down the drain or bury it. Let this be like a sacramental death to this part of you.
2. In the teaching we discussed four needs of the overcomer that can be met through his personal relationship with Jesus Christ. They were:  
  
Love  
Affirmation  
Power (over sin)  
Faithfulness  
  
Select the one that you think represents your greatest need, and write a brief prayer on your Weekly Prayer Journal sheet asking Jesus to meet that need. Pray this prayer each day this week.
3. Daily review the Scripture verses in this lesson.