

Healing
the Soul *of a*
Woman Devotional

90 Inspirations for Overcoming Your
Emotional Wounds

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NEW YORK NASHVILLE

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FaithWords

Hachette Book Group

1290 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10104

faithwords.com

twitter.com/faithwords

First Edition: October 2019

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ISBNs: 978-1-5460-3906-8 (hardcover), 978-1-5460-3851-1 (leather binding), 978-1-5460-3908-2 (ebook)

Printed in China

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10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Let Your Tears Flow

As soon as I heard these words I sat down and wept and mourned for days, and I continued fasting and praying before the God of heaven.

Nehemiah 1:4

Nehemiah was not afraid of emotion or reluctant to show it. Notice that he “wept and mourned.” Some people refuse to exhibit any kind of outward emotion, which is not healthy. Pent-up feelings are harmful and need to be released. If we do not release our emotions at appropriate times, as Nehemiah did when he heard the walls of Jerusalem had been destroyed, our emotions will eat away at us on the inside.

Stuffing or suppressing our feelings can also cause physical problems such as sleep troubles and digestive issues. Perhaps you have heard of people who went to the doctor because they felt so bad and were convinced something was wrong with them. Once they went through all kinds of medical tests, the doctor found nothing and simply said their symptoms were related to anxiety. Our emotions will always manifest in some way, so it’s best for us to deal with them before they deal with us.

God created us with tear glands and the ability to cry, which must mean there will be times in life when we, like Nehemiah, need to weep. The Old Testament woman, Hannah, wept and even stopped eating because she was brokenhearted over not having a child (1 Sam. 1:7). When David and the men with him discovered the Amalekites had burned the city of Ziklag and taken everyone in it captive, they “raised their voices and wept until they had no more strength to weep” (1 Sam. 30:4). David also wept when his son became deathly ill (2 Sam. 12:21–22). Even Jesus wept over the death of His friend Lazarus (John 11:35).

Tears are certainly part of the process of healing in our soul. God speaks through the prophet Jeremiah: “Pour out your heart like water before the presence of the LORD” (Lam. 2:19). This assures us that God wants us to bring our pain to Him. We can tell Him everything about it, holding nothing back. He knows it all anyway, but getting it out in the open is very helpful to us.

Though it is important to express our deep feelings through tears at times, God did not create us to remain in a season of weeping indefinitely. There is “a time to weep, and a time to laugh” (Eccles. 3:4). God’s Word promises us that “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning” (Ps. 30:5 NKJV). No matter what you are going through right now, ask God to help you deal with it in a healthy way. Cry when you need to, but always remember that the season of sadness will come to an end. As you walk with God, He will lead you into great joy.

Declare this:

I express my emotions in healthy ways, knowing that sadness will ultimately lead to joy.

Jesus Is the Best Kind of Helper

Although He was a Son, He learned [active, special] obedience through what He suffered and, [His completed experience] making Him perfectly [equipped], He became the Author and Source of eternal salvation to all those who give heed and obey Him.

Hebrews 5:8–9 AMPC

Have you ever tried to figure out how to make a gadget or an electronic device work properly? That kind of thing comes easily to people who know a lot about technology. But it can be very frustrating to people like me, who aren't technologically savvy and who just want the device to work! I have learned that if I accidentally hit the wrong button on my phone and start having trouble with it, all I need to do is look for a young person to help me. Though I am older and I have much more life experience than a sixth-grader who can fix my phone, that child has something I do not have: specific experience with today's technology. I may know a lot in some areas, but I can't fix my phone; I need help, and the best kind of helper is one with experience.

Jesus has all the experience required to help us along our

healing journey. Hebrews 5:8–9 speaks volumes to me not only about Him but also about my life and yours. Jesus needed certain experience in order to truly understand our pain and become our High Priest who can help us heal. My experience with Jesus' healing power makes me a good person to boldly tell others He will heal their wounded souls just as He has healed mine, and your experience will do the same for you.

Jesus suffered greatly and gained experience as a result. His experience equipped Him to fulfill what God wanted Him to do. Hebrews 4:15 says He is able “to understand and sympathize and have a shared feeling with our weaknesses” (AMPC) because He has already gone through the things we suffer. I hope you will think about this verse often and allow it to give you hope and confidence that what you are going through will enable you to help others.

I encourage you today, even at this moment, to offer your experience to God for His use if you have never done that. No matter how confusing, painful, or difficult it may be, He can use it to provide the experience you need to help someone else. I vividly remember praying one day, “God, I am a broken mess, but I'm Yours if You can use me.” He did. He chose to use me in specific ways to help others, and I believe there is a specific way He wants to use you, too. Nothing we give to God is ever wasted, so give Him your pain today and see how He will use your experience.

Declare this:

I trust God to use my painful experiences to help and encourage others.

You Are Free to Be Yourself

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

2 Corinthians 5:17

When we have been deeply wounded in our soul, we can struggle with identity as a result, meaning that we go through life feeling we do not know who we truly are. This can cause us to feel confused, purposeless or directionless, empty and unsatisfied no matter how hard we try to find fulfillment. One reason our woundedness has such a negative effect on our identity is that it causes us to want to hide our true feelings and to hesitate to express who we really are. For example, if someone is afraid to be vulnerable, she may pretend to be tough, confident, and self-sufficient to keep others from viewing her as weak or needy. This type of pretending to be something we are not or presenting a certain image that does not accurately represent us can be a temptation to everyone who has been wounded. Our hunger for acceptance and approval may cause us to try to alter our personalities to try to be what we think people want us to be instead of feeling free to be our true selves.

The chameleon is a lizard-like animal that can change its color

so it will blend in with everything around it. Chameleons do this to protect themselves. If their predators can't distinguish them from a log or a leaf, they can't hurt them. Although people cannot change colors, we have our own protective mechanisms, one of which is to develop false identities to guard ourselves against rejection or disapproval.

Those who fear rejection often become people pleasers, doing what they think others want them to do instead of becoming their true selves. That is sad, because we are never truly free until we are free to be ourselves.

The world urges us to conform to its image. It tells us what we should wear, how we should style our hair, what kind of car we should drive, how much education we need—and on and on. We sense intuitively that if we do not measure up to the world's standards, we will not be accepted.

God loves and accepts us unconditionally, and when we receive Jesus as our Savior, He makes us new. All the old pressures we have felt melt away. We no longer have to feel guilty about old mistakes. When God makes us new, we become like fresh lumps of spiritual clay. The world wants to fashion us in its image, but the Holy Spirit wants to mold us into something new, to shape us in such a way that we can fulfill God's amazing plans for our lives. In Christ, we are finally free to be our true selves, and that's the best person we can possibly be.

Declare this:

Because I am in Christ, everything old has passed away. God has made me new!

Believe and See

“Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.”

Mark 11:24

If we look at life without considering the promises of God, all we have is what we see or feel. But with God’s promises, what seems impossible becomes possible. God’s only requirement is that we believe what He says more than we believe anything else. The world says, “I won’t believe until I see,” but God says, “Believe and then you will see.”

What do you believe about yourself, your past, and your future? Do you believe things will always be the way they have always been? I hope not, because if things in your life have not been good, that means you are stuck with that as your destiny. Perhaps you didn’t have a good beginning in life, but you can have a great finish! I know that is true because God says in His Word that He has a good plan for our future, one that should fill us with hope (Jer. 29:11).

When people have been emotionally wounded, it adversely affects how they think. Their thoughts are often negative, especially

about themselves and their life in general. They may live with what the Bible calls “evil forebodings,” which is an expectation that something bad is going to happen. However, God’s Word renews our minds. It teaches us how to think and to expect good things to happen. It gives us a new attitude that allows us to live with joy and hope rather than with sadness, depression, and discouragement. It takes time and patience to see the changes you desire, so don’t expect things to change overnight.

God’s Word has inherent power in it, and once we learn to think in agreement with God, we will see positive changes in our lives. But remember, believing must come before seeing. God told David he would be king, but twenty years passed before he wore the crown. David went through a lot of difficult testing of his faith while he waited, but at the right time, he did become king. Like David, at the right time you will be all God wants you to be and have all He wants you to have. Just continue believing God’s promises and refuse to give up!

Ask God for things in prayer that are impossible and believe you will see them come to pass. While you wait for God to heal your wounded soul, stay busy helping and being kind to other people. The Bible tells us to “trust God and do good” (Ps. 37:3). Each morning, ask God to show you someone you can help that day, and as you do, your joy will increase and you will be sowing seeds for your own harvest.

Declare this:

I believe God’s Word, no matter what my circumstances look like, and I expect to see all of God’s good promises come to pass in my life.

The Painless Path

What comes easy won't last, and what lasts won't come easy.

Author Unknown

We frequently delay our own healing because we keep searching for a painless path. We want to get well, but we don't want it to hurt. That is understandable, but powerful things never come easily. What Jesus did for us didn't come easily.

I don't want to give you false hope, so I will openly tell you that if you have been abused, abandoned, rejected, or wounded through long-term illness or disappointments in life, your journey to healing won't be easy, but it will be worth it. The reason it is not easy is that you will have to open up areas of your life you may have kept hidden or stuffed somewhere deep inside you, refusing even to admit you are a wounded person.

Only the truth will set us free, but facing that truth may be one of the most difficult things we ever do. For example, all children want their parents to love them, and I found that even as an adult, I continued being hurt and disappointed by my parents because I

kept trying to get something from them that they simply did not know how to give me.

One day I looked at myself in the mirror and said, “Joyce, your parents did not love you, and they never will. It wasn’t your fault, so let it go and move on!” It hurt to face that, but it also set me free to stop frustrating and disappointing myself by trying to get something my parents couldn’t or wouldn’t give. They were both wounded themselves and did not even know what real love was.

You may have to face something about yourself that will be hard to do. I had to face that I was bitter, full of self-pity, selfish and self-centered, and controlling, just to mention a few. When God began to deal with me about these things, I assured Him that I had a very good reason for all of my bad behavior. After all, I had been abused! He let me know that although I did have a good reason, I had no right to continue behaving badly because He was willing to set me free. Letting go of feeling sorry for myself was hard for me because by then I was literally addicted to self-pity and it was my go-to emotion anytime I did not get my way. Thankfully, God continued dealing with me until I was free, and He wants to do the same for you.

God never allows more to come on us than we can bear, and you can be assured that if God is dealing with you about something, it is the right time to let go of something old and take hold of the new way of living He offers. You may not feel ready to face something painful, but the Holy Spirit, Who is your Helper, will be with you each step of the way, and He will strengthen and enable you to do it.

I encourage you to stop looking for an easy way and know in your heart that sometimes God has to lead us the long, hard way

for our own good. You will learn things along the way that will be of great value to you in the future. Easy things never make you stronger, but difficult things do. Take God's hand and trust His guidance even if you don't understand it.

Declare this:

I am not afraid of difficulty because I know God enables me to do whatever I need to do in life.