

The unabridged writings of Fred Morris, Manna Publications

Living for Jesus

HEALING BROKEN HEARTS

To the reader: Keep your Bible beside you. Always read your Bible first, then read these notes. Check the references and read them also. Invite a friend to study with you. You will be blessed.

Read Psalm 46:1-3

Israel's King David loved to praise God. He was a great poet and wrote many songs that are in the Bible. They are called Psalms. David wrote these Psalms to help people praise and worship the true and living God.

David found men to set his poems to music and to sing them in the great Temple. He had musicians and singers who led the people of Israel in their worship. They played horns and pipes, harps and flutes and clashing of cymbals made of brass. David also had choirs of singers. Some of his choir directors also wrote worship songs. Some of these are also in the Psalms.

David chose the choir leaders from the tribe of Levi, the third son of Jacob. Some Levites served God in the Temple.

Men and women today are overworked and hurried. They are sick with worry and stress, pressed down and broken in spirit.

So what do they do? They try to escape from their troubles by drinking, or gambling or by finding another mate. They hide their hurts, run from them or blame others. Or we say, 'So what, these troubles I'm having are no big deal!'

No one but Jesus can change our situation or bring healing to our hearts.

We all agree that we live in hard and troubled times. The world is a rough place and many get hurt. The hurt may not be in our bodies, but in our spirits. Is there healing for a hurting heart? Yes, there is!

God can heal our hearts. We find some of His healing words in the Psalms which are part of the Bible. They are like medicine for our souls.

David was a shepherd boy and cared for his father's sheep. He knew how easy it was for sheep to stray away and get lost. He said we are like sheep. We have strayed away from God and become lost. Jesus wants to be our Good Shepherd. He wants us to follow Him and find rest for our souls.

David wrote, "He makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside quiet waters..." Let God take over your life. "He restores my soul," David said (Psalm 23:3). David let the Good Shepherd lead him back to the safety of the fold where he felt safe.

Only God can restore our hearts or make them well again. Men and women are sick because of bitterness, anger, grief and rejection, but God is the great doctor. We must go to our heavenly doctor and ask Him to forgive us and heal our broken hearts.

Because Jesus died for us, God has said, "I will forgive their wickedness..." (Heb 8:12). No 'prophet,' preacher or priest can forgive your sins. For all who believe, sin was taken away when Jesus died on the cross.

TALK ABOUT

1. Where can we go to find 'medicine' for a broken heart?
2. Have you read the Psalms to find healing for your heart?

3. Why did David write the Psalms?
4. When God forgives our sins, He gives us a peace in our hearts (Is 44:22-23). Do you believe He has forgiven you, according to His promise?

A little song says:

*God has blotted them out,
I'm happy and glad and free;
God has blotted them out,
I'll turn to Isaiah and see;
Chapter 44, twenty two and three;
He blotted them out,
So now I can shout,
For that means you and me!*

ARE YOU ANGRY OR AFRAID?

When we give all our thought and attention to ourselves and our problems that is all we can see. They will fill our whole view (Psalm 42:3). The writer asked: "Why are you downcast, O my soul" (Psalm 42:5; 43:5)? Stop looking at your present situation and look to God. Give your situation to Him. He knows all about you anyway.

Look forward. Moses told the people to remember the past, but only because of what God had done for them. We must not let past mistakes rob us of our joy. Look to God and His promises. The future is in His hands; trust Him for tomorrow. Put your hope in God"

The Bible is full of promises of God's help. Take His promise as your own and tell Him, "I am trusting in your promise, Lord." Stop asking "Why?" and start standing on God's promises. Joshua told the people of Israel, "Not one of all the good promises the Lord your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled; not one has failed" (Joshua 23:14).

Stop making excuses. Others may fuss and fret and worry over things that happen to them, but you can be free and rest in God's love! Praise God for what He has done for you. Praise will make your worries fly away (James 4:7-8).

PUT YOUR HOPE IN GOD

The only answer to a broken heart is to "put your HOPE in God." As we draw HOPE from Him, praise comes to our lips.

We will find that God does not answer all our prayers the way we want Him to. His greatness cannot be searched out (Psalm 145:2-3). But He does give peace to our hearts! Jesus said, "My peace I give you... Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" (John 14:27).

"Casting all our care upon Him," the Bible says, "because He cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7). The Bible says we can live secure and at peace. Put your hand in His; cast your troubles on the Lord!

TALK ABOUT

1. Can we find answers for our troubles in the Bible?
2. How should we 'look to God' in times of trouble?
3. Does the Bible answer all our questions? Why not?
4. How does trouble make our faith stronger?

Read: Mark 5:24-34

GOD IS EVERYWHERE

God is everywhere! Where there is trouble, God is there! He has not promised us a life of no trouble, but He has promised to be with us in our troubles: "He will call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him," David wrote (Psalm 91:15).

A big crowd pressed around Jesus and a sick woman came close behind Him. She had spent all her money on medicines, but she only got worse. Her faith said, 'Touch Jesus,' so she reached out from behind and touched the hem of His cloak. That moment, she knew she was healed.

The power to heal this woman's sickness was not in His clothes. The power was in Jesus, in His Person. It is God's power that heals sick people and their faith. The Bible says, "And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him" (Hebrews 11:6).

Jesus turned and asked, "Who touched Me?" He knew that power had gone out of Him (Mark 5:30; Luke 8:45). God always answers our weak faith. And when He blesses us, we must not hide.

The woman knew she was healed, so she came forward and fell at Jesus' feet. He adopted her into His family and called her 'daughter' (Eph 1:5).

"Your faith has healed you," He told her. "Go in peace" and be freed from your suffering (Luke 8:48). No one had ever spoken such words to this woman before.

Maybe you have a sickness, or someone hurt you. The hurt happened years ago. You have tried everything but the pain will not go away. Reach out to Jesus. He will stop everything to heal you. Right now, He is looking for you.

ARE YOU SAD AND LONELY?

We can weep and wring our hands, but that will not bring our loved ones back to us. What should we do? Let God restore your soul! If you are grieving today, God sorrows with you. He knows about your broken heart and He wants to comfort you. He cares for you more than you can ever know.

All your tears cannot change the past. Accept what you cannot change. Put the past into God's hands and ask Him to give you comfort and peace. He will give you the Holy Spirit - the Comforter - in special measure for this time of sorrow.

Think about what you have in Christ, not about what you have lost. You will feel the pain of loss, but let God finish His work in you. Trust Him for what is still to come. He will give 'beauty for ashes' and 'the oil of gladness for mourning...' (Is 61:3).

Strength and joy come from God's river of grace. That river flows into our lives by His Spirit and it comes to us all the time.

TALK ABOUT

1. When we sorrow, does God send comfort to our hearts? How?
2. When I am pressed down and broken in spirit, how will God 'restore my soul'?

WE MUST HONOUR CHRIST

Christ told His disciples to eat a covenant meal to remember His death, until He comes. But our eyes must be on Him, not on eating, or on our own needs.

Paul told the Christians, "a man ought to examine himself before he eats the bread and drinks the cup..." If we are not ready to confess our sins, we are not ready to eat the Lord's Supper. If you are living in sin and eat you will not honour Christ. And you will bring God's

judgment upon yourself.

Read: Luke 22:7-22

A FEAST TO REMEMBER CHRIST

The Lord Jesus Christ sent His disciples to find an 'Upper Room' where He could eat His last meal with them before His death. It was "the night He was betrayed" by Judas Iscariot. Jesus took the bread - the common loaf from the table and made the bread a symbol or picture of what would happen to Him. "When He had given thanks, He broke the bread and said, 'This is My body, which is (broken) for you. Do this in remembrance of Me.'" The verb means 'keep on doing this'.

It was not His real body because He stood there before them. The bread would represent His body that would be broken on the cross. Forever, it would be our reminder of what Jesus had done.

In the same way He (Jesus) took the cup they had passed around. It was the common cup they used during the meal. "This cup is the New Covenant in My blood..." He told them (Luke 22:20).

Again, Jesus made the wine that was in the cup a symbol of His own blood. He was still with them. His blood had not yet been shed, but without the shedding of blood there could be no New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-33; Heb 9 and 10).

The apostles received these instructions "from the Lord." They passed them on to other faithful men. Paul passed it on to the church at Corinth, but they had forgotten what he said. He told them again (1 Cor 11:23-26).

TALK ABOUT

1. What last command did Jesus give His disciples (Matt 28:19-20)?
2. What must we do to honour Christ?
3. Does God care how we live?
4. What does God give us that makes us rejoice?

Read: 1 Corinthians 11:17-34

"MANY OF YOU ARE WEAK AND SICK..."

Many in the church had not confessed their sins to God; they were not living holy lives, so Paul said to the Christians in Corinth: "Many of you are weak and sick..." (1 Cor 11:30). And he gave the reason for their sicknesses... they had guilty consciences!

A number had fallen asleep. That meant some of them had died because of their sins. Their sins so troubled them that they got sick in their bodies and died. Yes, if we don't confess our sins and be made clean, guilt can make us sick! The judgment of God came upon them! God was not pleased. They did not honour Him in the way they lived.

When they came together for a fellowship meal, they separated into groups. They did not eat as one fellowship (1 Cor 11:21). Some got drunk, others acted as though they were the only ones there and would not share. They were not like a fellowship of believers, but acted like heathen. There was no caring for others and no sharing their food with the poor. Their worship time turned into a wild party. Everyone grabbed food for himself. In all this they did not honour Christ's death. 'If you have to behave like this, you had better eat at home,' Paul told them, "It is not the Lord's supper that you eat."

WE ARE NOT WORTHY

We are not worthy to come to the Lord's table, but we are made worthy as we confess our sin and put wrong things right. So "Let us draw near to God":

- a) With a sincere heart (1 Pet 2:1-3).
- b) In full assurance of faith (Heb 10:22).
- c) With heart (conscience) and body sprinkled by His blood (Heb 9:13-14).
- d) Holding to the hope we profess (Heb 3:6).
- e) Considering how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:22-24).

God gives us many chances to repent. When we are careless and don't take Him at His word, "we are judged by the Lord" (1 Cor 11:32). God's judgments come with His mercy. They are sent to change us and make us more like Jesus (Heb 12:5-11).

The Holy Spirit will show us what is wrong in our lives. By His grace, we can put those things right. If we have hurt others, we say we are sorry. If others have harmed us, we forgive them for Christ's sake.

The Holy Spirit will show us the things we do that hurt others. If you have done wrong to a brother or sister in you fellowship and he has no peace, your brother's hurt spirit will spoil your worship. It will also spoil your service to God.

Stop praying, stop serving and put things right with your brother. Ask your brother or sister to forgive you. If you do not forgive others for the hurt they caused you, the offense (or bitter spirit) will:

- Come between you and God (1 John 1:7).
- Stop your prayers being answered (1 Pet 3:7).
- Grow into a bigger hurt (Heb 12:15).
- Spoil our fellowship with others (Phil 2:1-3).
- Poison the spirit in our fellowship.
- Grieve the Holy Spirit so that He withdraws his presence from you (Eph 4:30).

TALK ABOUT

1. What gives us entrance to God's presence?
2. Who is in God's presence as our Mediator and friend (1 Tim 2:5)?
3. What stops us from coming near to God?
4. Is the Lord's table open to all? Under what conditions?

BITTERNESS WILL DESTROY YOUR SOUL

All Christians are one in Christ's Body on earth. And we all suffer stress, hard times, loss, loneliness, and want. None of us is free from the problems of life. A bitter spirit is not the answer!

A young man might think, 'If only I had a wife. That would take care of my loneliness!' But when he marries a wife he finds himself facing not just his problems, but her problems, too!

Another young man thinks a new truck will satisfy him, but will it? Very soon it eats up his money and takes all his time. He feels as if he is 'married' to his auto. Some are!

A young woman longs for a strong husband and a beautiful home and a baby. She thinks this will take away the empty feeling! But her baby cries a lot and keeps her 'on duty' most of the night! She finds that she cannot even bathe herself without the baby crying, or little hands pounding on the door. And the baby is expensive, very expensive to keep!

Remember, in all the stress and weariness of life, Jesus was there first!

Signs of a bitter spirit:

- a tight set jaw
- hard eyes
- no consideration for others
- selfish and not thankful
- easily offended
- a lonely person who withdraws from others

Bitterness grows out of hurts:

- it spoils the whole life
- it affects others; they feel badly
- it builds walls between people
- it breaks relationships
- it threatens our health; we suffer.

JESUS KNOWS ABOUT YOU

Jesus knows every step that we take. We tread where He trod. We follow the pathway He walked.

Because He knows all our weaknesses, we can trust Him. He said, "I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matt 28:20). He has all authority and power.

Do you think you are the only one who has troubles and adversity? You are not alone! Job was a man who had everything. He had a big farm and thousands of camels, goats and oxen. Then, suddenly, he lost everything. Job asked God, "Why me, Lord?" Because Job trusted God in all his troubles, God gave him back all he had lost.

God uses the hard times in our lives to make us strong. A strong wind blowing on a tree, makes its roots go down deeper. God wants to make us into whole persons.

In Bible times, the refiner heated metal in a furnace until it melted. When the impurities floated to the surface, he skimmed them off. The fire caused the metal to be made pure. God is looking for holiness and purity in our lives.

Read: Zechariah 13:9

LEADERS WHO HAD TURNED AWAY

The leaders of Judah had turned their backs on God. He said He would take them and "bring them into the fire. I will refine them like silver and test them like gold" (Zech 13:9). Then, He said, "They will call on My name..."

Jesus often spoke of God as the Master Gardener. God uses pruning shears. He "cuts off every branch that does not produce fruit" and prunes those branches that do bear fruit for even larger crops (John 15:2-3).

God needs fruit-bearers, not pretty leaves. When Jesus was hungry and went to the fig tree to get a fig, He found only leaves. This was a picture of the nation of Israel.

It is okay to feel hurts. It is how we handle the hurts that matters. Remember, you can have a friend 'that sticks closer than a brother' to walk through the pain with you. From Him we receive comfort and strength to go on and to live for Him.

TALK ABOUT

1. Why does God allow us so much trouble?
2. Does trouble make a Christian strong (Romans 5:3-5)?

SATAN WILL TORMENT YOU

Feelings of guilt, fear, anger or bitterness will torment you. If these 'tormentors' come from the wrong things you have done, you will never be free from them. Satan will use them as "footholds" to get a hold on your life. God will set you free!

Confess your sin and ask God to forgive you. Then ask Him to give you power over these tormentors.

Even ugly thoughts attack our minds. Under commander Satan, they come flooding in for a surprise attack just when we want to think good thoughts. Grab them and dismiss them. Take them to the cross, before they get a foothold in your life.

A bitter spirit can cause big trouble in a family or group and it destroys the person who carries it in their heart. Don't be afraid to share your feeling of hurt with others who can pray for you.

Bitterness is like a root that grows and grows. The more we think about our hurts the bigger they grow in our minds. The root yields bitter fruits like anger, malice and hatred. Jesus spoke about these bitter things coming from within a person (Mark 8:22).

If we confess our bitter spirit, God will forgive us. And He will give us the power to forgive others. Then we can go to the person who offended us and ask them to forgive us.

If you do not forgive others, bitterness will destroy you! We must not to hold on to our grudges. They will only make our hearts bitter.

TALK ABOUT

1. Why must we repent before God before we forgive our brother?
2. What does 'a root of bitterness' mean?
3. Are you bitter toward someone?

Read: Matthew 6:14-15

DO NOT AVENGE YOURSELF

Paul wrote to the Christians in Rome, "Do not take revenge, my friends... for it is written, 'It is Mine to avenge; I will repay,' says the Lord (Romans 12:19).

Non-Christians sometimes live by a system of 'pay back.' The natives living in Papua New Guinea did before they become Christians practice pay back. When an enemy tribe kills a person of another tribe, that other tribe carries vengeance in their hearts, sometimes for years, until they get a chance to kill a man in the enemy tribe. That is known as "Pay back."

Paul said "Don't pay back wrong for wrong!" Trust God to put wrongs right.

Does it make you angry to see people do wrong to others and get away with it. They are not judged by God right away. This puzzled David. He wrote, "Do not fret because of evil men or be envious of those who do wrong... Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for Him... to bring them to justice" (Ps 37:1,7).

Jesus said, "If you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins" (Matt 6:14-15).

Has God forgiven you? Don't feel guilty any more. No one can condemn you before God, not

even Satan! (Rom 8:1).

Has God forgiven you? Go and forgive your brother or sister. Tell them you are forgiving them because Jesus healed your broken heart and forgave you all your sins! If they accept Christ as their Saviour, you will be twice blessed.

TALK ABOUT

1. Why does God delay judgment on sinners (2 Peter 3:9)?
2. What was King David's advice (Ps 37:1,7)?
3. Does it make you angry to see people mistreating others? What should we do about it?

“VENGEANCE IS MINE”

About the time I was revising this small book, they captured and killed the 'chief' terrorist in the world. Because our family had suffered personal loss at the hands of terrorists when they destroyed the World Trade Center in New York, people asked me if I was glad Bin Laden was dead.

I told them, I was not glad but sad for all the millions of people who are caught in such a cruel and godless religion. I pray for them every day, that more and more of them will be saved by the blood of Jesus. They worship a false god who can give them no hope or peace.

Read: 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18

THE HOPE OF THE RESURRECTION

The early Christians suffered terrible persecution for their faith in Jesus Christ. They were cut in two, fed to wild animals and burned at the stake. What held them steady in their loyalty to Jesus?

This body we live in now will turn to dust, just as God has said it would (Gen 3:19). That does not mean that our spirit will die. God said, "The dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it" (Eccl 12:7).

Man's spirit will live on and God has prepared a new home in heaven for those who love Him and own His name... Jesus told His disciples, "I am going (to heaven) to prepare a place for you. If I go to prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with Me that you also may be where I am" (John 14:2-3).

When the trumpet of the Lord sounds, there will be a great resurrection. The dust of the bodies that lie buried in the ground will spring to life. Daniel wrote, "Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt" (Daniel 12:2).

THE RESURRECTION GAVE HOPE

As we get older and all our joints hurt, those who love the Lord look forward to going to heaven to be with Jesus. God has a place "reserved for them." Peter called it "an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade - kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power... in this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have to suffer grief in all kinds of trials" (1 Peter 1:4-5).

The new home which was waiting for Paul in heaven, gave him great hope. He wrote, "Now we know if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling... For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be

swallowed up by Life” (2 Cor 5:2-4).

Paul thought of his old body as a tent, falling down because it was so old. He had lived in his body many years, but now it was rotting away and would soon fall down. Or it was like an old robe. He did not want the robe to be taken away from him and to be left naked, yet it was no longer useful. He wanted to be clothed with his new, resurrection body that would be like Jesus’ resurrected body.

Paul’s new body would show the marks from the floggings he had suffered “for Christ’s sake.” He told the Galatians “I bear in my body the marks of Jesus” (Gal 6:17).

TALK ABOUT

1. Are you sure you are going to the home in heaven when you die?
2. What makes you so sure?
3. What kind of body will God give His children (1 Cor 42:-45)?

Read: Mark 5:1-20

JESUS WAS HIS ONLY HOPE

Jesus left the crowds behind and crossed the lake Galilee. At Gadara, on the other side of the lake, a man with an evil spirit came to meet Jesus (Mark 5:1-20).

Beside the Sea of Galilee there were tombs and caves where people buried their dead. The wild man lived there. The people in the nearby town tried to tie him up with chains, but he was very strong and angry and he broke the chains and ran off.

Jesus was the man’s only hope and perhaps he knew that. “When he saw Jesus at a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of Him. Then he shouted at the top of his voice, ‘What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God. Swear to God that You won’t torture me.’ For Jesus had said to him (the evil spirit), ‘Come out of this man, you evil spirit’.” (Mark 5:5-8).

Luke says the demons asked not to be sent into the Abyss (Luke 8:31). This was a place where other evil spirits were held in chains against a future judgment day (Jude 6; Rev 9:1-2).

Then Jesus asked him, “What is your name?”

“My name is legion,” he replied, “for we are many.”

‘Legion’ is a Latin word which means a troop of six thousand men. In this context it may mean ‘many demons.’

They were many and they were very strong. Who can stand before a legion of demons? We are no match for Satan and his demons. Only in the Lord and the power of the blood of Jesus can we have victory over Satan.

Then the demons begged Jesus, “Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them”, for a large herd of pigs was feeding on the hillside nearby.

Jesus said they could go into the pigs. The evil spirits came out of the man and went into the pigs. “Then the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned.” The man saw them run into the lake and he knew he had been set free.

TALK ABOUT

1. Why did Jesus tell the demon spirits not to tell who He was (Mark 3:12)?
2. Did they obey Him?
3. When Jesus crossed the lake, who did He meet?
4. What happened next (Mark 5:1-20)?
5. When the man was in his right mind, what request did he make?

6. What did Jesus tell him to do?
7. Why did he need to go back to his family?

WHY THIS STRANGE EVENT?

You may wonder why God told us about this strange event in Jesus' ministry. The demon possessed man was a terror to himself and to his neighbours. He knew he needed Jesus. Jesus was his only hope. No one else could deliver him from the devil's power. The devil is a cruel master, but Jesus can set you free from Satan's power.

The demon spirit did not want to be 'naked' so they asked Jesus to send them into the pigs. The pigs were probably kept for sacrifice to the chief idol of the town.

At Christ's command, the demons came out of the man. Their war against God was over. They had no power to stand against the Most High God, and we can believe they were destroyed in the lake.

The people of the town were afraid of Jesus and begged Him to leave the place. But the man who had been healed sat down at Jesus' feet. He wanted to go with Jesus. He was quiet now and he wanted to be one of Christ's disciples. He had no friends, no food and no work. "Let me come with You," he asked Jesus, to learn more about You.

"Go home to your family," Jesus told him, "and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how He has had mercy on you" (Mark 5:19).

For many years his family had been deprived of a husband and father. When Jesus healed him, it was like a man coming back from the grave. The man's body was alive and healed and his spirit was made ready to meet God. The man was "made whole."

TALK ABOUT

1. Moses warned the people of Israel to choose life (Deut 30:19-20). Did they?
2. Who is our "Tree of Life?"
3. Have you eaten the 'fruit' of that Tree?

THE SPIRIT OF MAN

God has told us very little about man's spirit or where it goes to await his or her resurrection body. I take my theology from the words of Jesus. When Jesus was crucified He said, "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit" (Luke 23:46). But to the dying thief on the cross He said, "Today, you will be with Me in paradise" (Luke 23:43). Paradise is the word for a Persian garden. The hanging gardens of Persia were some of the wonders of the then known world. So Jesus would be in paradise with the spirit of this man. That very day their spirits would be enjoying fellowship. The thief's redeemed spirit would not have to wait in some intermediate state, in some kind of stupor, doing nothing. His spirit would be able to enjoy fellowship with his Redeemer, while he waited for the coming resurrection.

When a hymn writer wrote these lines, he gave us a picture of the desire of every true believer

*"Into the love of Jesus
Deeper and deeper I go,
Trying to find the answer;
Why He should love me so..."*

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