

enditnow® Emphasis Day

August 27, 2016

“Learning to Love as He Loved”

Written by Nancy Wilson

Includes seminar

“Emotional Healing”

Written by Katia Reinert

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Prepared by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
Department of Women's Ministries



enditnow®

Adventists Say No to Violence

Children's Ministries, Education, Family Ministries, Health Ministries, Ministerial Association,
Women's Ministries, Youth Ministries



SEVENTH-DAY
ADVENTIST
CHURCH

General Conference
World Headquarters



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Dear Sisters,

Joyful greetings to each of you. Another **enditnow** Emphasis Day is here and once again we are focusing on this terrible issue that plagues our homes, neighborhoods, even our churches, countries and the world at large. The cry of our hearts is "Come Lord Jesus!"

Yet each day that passes as we wait is one more day of pain and anguish in the lives of many in this world. What can we do? Our sermon this year calls us to focus on the source of true love, our Heavenly Father. It is only as we are filled with God's love can we show the love, care, and empathy for those suffering from abuse or recovering from abuse.

The other area we are focusing on is "Emotional Healing." Once a victim is free from an abusive situation the long road to recovery has just begun. Emotional scars can last a life time. How can we help? What can we say?

Our pray this year as you present this information to your churches is that we will begin to see the scab of abuse removed and the healing power of love applied to each wound.

The Great Healer said, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" Matthew 11:28 NKJV. Let us bring those who are abused and hurting to our Savior who along can give them the rest - emotional, physical, spiritual - that they need.

Heather-Dawn Small, GCWM Director

Table of Contents

<u>ABOUT THE AUTHOR</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>SCRIPTURE READING</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>SERVICE OUTLINE</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>SERMON</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>SEMINAR</u>	<u>12</u>

About the Authors

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Nancy Wilson is a physical therapist, but now travels with her husband Ted N.C. Wilson, current president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, to serve the world church. The couple has three daughters: Emille Louise, married to Pastor Kameron de Vasher; Elizabeth Esther, married to Pastor David Wright; and Catherine Anne, married to Dr. Robert Renck. The Wilsons who married in 1975 now have ten grandchildren.

Before moving to the General Conference, Ted and Nancy served as missionaries in Africa and Russia. She enjoys spending time with family—especially those entertaining grandchildren—reading, gardening, hiking, baking, and having people to her home for fellowship.

Biblical text references in the sermon by Nancy Wilson are from the New King James Version.

Katia Reinert, PhD, MSN, RN, CRNP, FNP-BC, PHCNS-BC

Dr Katia Reinert is a Family Nurse Practitioner and Public Health Clinical Nurse Specialist practicing internal medicine at Shepherds clinic in Baltimore, MD. She is also serving as associate director for Health Ministries at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Recently she served as the Health Ministries & Recovery Ministries director for the Seventh-day Adventist church in North America.

Dr Reinert holds a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Washington Adventist University, a Master of Science in Nursing from Catholic University of America with focus in public health and the treatment of vulnerable populations, and a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Nursing from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, MD, focusing on interdisciplinary research on violence in the family.

Dr Reinert has served in the nursing profession at Washington Adventist Hospital for 15 years as a critical care nurse, occupational health nurse practitioner, Faith Community Nursing coordinator and Health Ministry Clinical Supervisor for Adventist Healthcare. She has been appointed a member of the National Advisory Counsel at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA) in the US Department of Health and Human Services. She has a special interest in Lifestyle & Preventive Medicine and the wholistic treatment of physical and mental/emotional disorders.

Dr Reinert has lectured and published on these topics while also been involved in faith-based partnerships to improve the health of individuals, families and communities.

Originally from Brazil, She enjoys bicycling, hiking, traveling and exploring the world and its beautiful natural scenery.

Scripture Reading

"Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself" (Philippians 2:3).

"My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1, NKJV).

Service Outline
“Learning to Love as He Loved”
enditnow Emphasis Day Resource Packet

Call to worship:

Opening Song:

Invocation: The divine worship speaker

Scripture reading:

Pastoral Prayer:

Children's story:

Call for the offering:

Offertory music:

Special music:

Sermon: “Learning to Love as He Loved”

Closing Song:

Closing Prayer:

Sermon
LEARNING TO LOVE AS HE LOVED
By Nancy Wilson

*"My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin.
And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father,
Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1, NKJV).*

Introduction

It's likely that no one in this room labels himself or herself as abusive. *Abuse* is a word we've become immune to, because it's the kind of thing that other people do: awful people who live in awful places and do awful things that we don't do. However, when we realize that to abuse simply means to mistreat, we must face the fact that we are all prone to—and to a greater or lesser degree, guilty of—this particular sin. We all need the power of God to overcome our tendency to lift ourselves by putting down others.

The great difference between the character of Christ and the character of Satan is SELF: Satan is entirely selfish while Christ is entirely selfless. And the great promise of redemption in Jesus is the transformation of character, that "we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Corinthians 3:18)

Perhaps no other place is this moral transformation more needed than in the home circle, in our closest associations and most intimate relations. In *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 349, we are counseled, "The restoration and uplifting of humanity begins in the home... Out of the heart are 'the issues of life' (Proverbs 4:23); and the heart of the community, of the church, and of the nation is the household. The well-being of society, the success of the church, the prosperity of the nation, depend upon home influences." Similarly we read in *The Adventist Home*, p. 318, "If religion is to influence society, it must first influence the home circle."

When God created humanity in His image, He created a man and a woman, binding them in a covenant to "become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). In so doing, God intended the marriage relationship to reflect the selfless symbiosis of the Godhead, a reciprocity of mutual affection and self sacrifice. And even after sin stole into the human experience, God demonstrated His selfless character of love when "He gave His only begotten Son," a Son whom the Apostle Paul sentimentally declared, "loved me and gave Himself for me" (John 3:16; Galatians 2:20).

Inspired by the Holy Spirit, the Apostle Paul elsewhere admonished believers to "Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself" (Philippians 2:3). Furthermore, speaking directly of the time in which we now live, Paul warned

that “in the last days perilous times will come, for men will be lovers of themselves,” —a selfishness being manifest in a litany of sinful and abusive behaviors: “lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.” Most troubling of all is his concluding comment that such behavior would be done by those “having a form of godliness but denying its power.”

As we compare the apostle’s warning to the state of society today, we must concede the sobering accuracy of his prophetic foresight. Within the Christian faith and even our own Seventh-day Adventist movement, we find evidence revealing that selfish disregard and abusive contempt for those closest to us is far too prevalent. By God’s pardoning and empowering grace we must end it now.

A Truly Loving Relationship

While abuses such as physical violence and sexual battery are obvious and heinous violations of God’s law of selfless love, exclusive focus on such reprehensible sins may cause us to inadvertently leave almost unnoticed—or at least unaddressed—the more common forms of abuse that plague even Christian families. The propensity to mistreat those whom we are covenant-bound to cherish and uplift is a tendency every son or daughter of our fallen first parents must overcome through the regenerating grace that only Jesus Christ can provide.

A special responsibility of leadership in the home has been entrusted to husbands and fathers. This is not, however, to be used as an excuse to exercise selfish disregard for the well-being of his wife and children. On the contrary, Scripture makes man’s duty plain:

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church (Ephesians 5:25-29).

Expounding on this biblical principle of a husband’s responsibility to love self-sacrificially, Ellen White writes in *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 21, p. 217:

Let those who stand as husbands study the words of Christ, not to find out how complete must be the subjection of the wife, but how he may have the mind of Christ, and become purified, refined, and fit to be the lord of his household. All wicked passions must be overcome, and the love which Christ has exercised toward His church must be symbolized in the family circle. Husbands who are husbands in deed and in truth will do those things which make for peace. The fruit of Christian love will be seen in the courtesy, in the holy, tender affection that is manifested in the home. They will comfort and encourage, sympathizing with wives and children in times of

sorrow. They will seek to keep their minds peaceful, elevated, and uplifted, that they may be perfect in character... When a man is domineering, it causes his wife to wish that she had never entered the marriage relation, but when married life is what it should be, it is a representation of the life in heaven.

Unfortunately, in our world today—and too often even in our own church—men who should be spiritual protectors have abdicated that responsibility and instead become dismissive, neglectful, and abusive of those placed in their trust. Sadly, in extreme cases, criminal prosecution may even be necessary to stop the harm done by these men. Please pray for families who are dealing with such painful realities. May the Lord provide not only physical safety but emotional healing and spiritual restoration for the abused and abusers alike.

When God established the family in Eden, He describes Adam's wife as "a helper comparable to him" (Genesis 2:20). After the fall, God declared to Eve that "your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you" (Genesis 3:16). In the light of God's ordinance, the Apostle Paul instructs, "Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:22). Thus, alongside the husband as leader lies the corresponding duty of a supportive wife and nurturing mother, a position Ellen White called "the queen of the home" (*The Adventist Home*, p. 231).

After describing the positive force of a godly wife, Ellen White cautions:

If the wife is fitful in character, self-admiring, exacting, accusing, charging her husband with motives and feelings that originate only in her own perverted temperament; if she has not discernment and nice discrimination to recognize his love and appreciate it, but talks of neglect and lack of love because he does not gratify every whim, she will almost inevitably bring about the very state of things she seems to deplore; she will make all these accusations realities (*The Adventist Home*, p. 109).

What is needed in our homes—and by extension in society as a whole—is not merely the absence of abuse but the intentional cultivation of mutual respect and positive edification. Those for whom Christ sacrificed Himself are deserving of our genuine love and most sincere regard. To all our relationships, the biblical injunction speaks: "Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another" (Romans 12:9, 10).

Becoming New by His Spirit

One day while speaking to a great multitude, Jesus instructed, "Whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets" (Matthew 7:12). In one simple, practical ordinance Christ summarized all Scripture and outlined the operating principle of heavenly society. Echoing this foundational truth, Mrs. White writes in *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 2, p. 132: "In heaven none will think of self, nor seek their own pleasure; but all, from pure, genuine love, will seek the happiness of the heavenly beings around them. If we wish to enjoy heavenly society in the earth

made new, we must be governed by heavenly principles here.” Brothers and sisters, through the pardon and power of Christ, heaven can begin right here, right now.

Exactly how the Holy Spirit accomplishes this work of restoration is something that simply cannot be understood by finite minds, yet it can be accepted by faith, and the results can be clearly seen in the life. When He taught Nicodemus the necessity of spiritual rebirth, Jesus explained the process of moral transformation saying, “Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit” (John 3:7, 8.) In application of Christ’s teaching, we read the following in *The Desire of Ages*, p. 173:

While the wind is itself invisible, it produces effects that are seen and felt. So the work of the Spirit upon the soul will reveal itself in every act of him who has felt its saving power. When the Spirit of God takes possession of the heart, it transforms the life. Sinful thoughts are put away, evil deeds are renounced; love, humility, and peace take the place of anger, envy, and strife. Joy takes the place of sadness, and the countenance reflects the light of heaven. No one sees the hand that lifts the burden, or beholds the light descend from the courts above. The blessing comes when by faith the soul surrenders itself to God. Then that power which no human eye can see creates a new being in the image of God. It is impossible for finite minds to comprehend the work of redemption. Its mystery exceeds human knowledge; yet he who passes from death to life realizes that it is a divine reality. The beginning of redemption we may know here through a personal experience. Its results reach through the eternal ages.

Conclusion

Are you a parent, child, friend, or spouse who struggles with tearing others down in sarcasm, frustration, or in anger? Perhaps you don’t feel you do this but others have said you hurt them or make them feel small? Perhaps you know you do it but for some reason you feel it’s okay? Or perhaps you wish you could stop and be a different kind of person but you have tried and just can’t. Be of good courage! God wants to take your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. He is calling you to something so much greater than your current experience. He wants to take the hurt, anxiety, anger, or sadness that overflows on to others and use it to grow sympathy in your heart. He assures us that He can change and heal and that nothing is too difficult for Him. Keep fresh in your mind precious promises of forgiveness and victory such as these:

- We do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need (Hebrews 4:15, 16).
- My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous (1 John 2:1).

- If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?... For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:31-39).

Friends, look to Christ and live. Claim the promises of Scripture and be reconciled to God today. Christianity is far more than a mere declaration of denominational association; it is very the power of God to transform sinful, selfish people into the selfless image of Jesus Christ. Today I would urge every member of God's remnant movement to search their hearts and afflict their souls.

With the Psalmist let us cry, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties... see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Psalm 139:23, 24). And when the Spirit of Truth convicts you of sin, don't be discouraged, but run to the arms of Jesus who promises that "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

Seminar
EMOTIONAL HEALING

By Katia Reinert
Adapted from Adventist Recovery Ministries

(Title slide – Slide 1 – Emotional Healing)

Introduction:

All of us are broken in one way or another. Some may have experienced pain and traumatic events at an early age, others in adolescence or adulthood. Traumatic experiences such as sexual, physical or emotional abuse, neglect, losing a loved one, feeling betrayed, suffering from a chronic physical or mental health condition, having a family member incarcerated or who suffers from a mental illness, living in a violent or dysfunctional family or other difficult circumstances, may have caused emotional scars in our soul. Some of the scars cause us to experience shame, fear, feelings of inadequacy and bitterness that not only can last a lifetime, but also contribute to mental and physical illness.

(Slide 2)

Activity:

Think about an experience that has left scars in your heart, mind and soul. If you feel comfortable, share this experience with the person next to you. If not comfortable, you may share how someone you know is impacted by a painful experience in the past.

(Slide 3)

Psalm 147:3 - God is the healer. Our job is to position our hurting heart so we can experience whatever God chooses for us to experience in our lives.

2 Corinthians 1:2-4 - God is described as the God of all comfort who comforts us in all our troubles.

Psalm 147:3

³ “He heals the brokenhearted
And binds up their wounds [healing their pain and comforting their sorrow]” (AMP Bible).

2 Corinthians 1:2-4

² “Grace to you and peace [inner calm and spiritual well-being] from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ³ Blessed [gratefully praised and adored] be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort, ⁴ who comforts *and* encourages us in every trouble so that we will be able to comfort *and* encourage those who are in any kind of trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God” (AMP Bible, emphasis added).

The good news is that God is our healer. He sent Jesus to this world to bring restoration and healing. But to understand and experience healing we must first search for a biblical foundation and truths about healing. Then, we must allow those jewels of truth to become part of our understanding and thinking about how to respond to His healing touch. We can then allow God to touch us in our deepest thoughts, beliefs and feelings. Let's explore what does the Bible say about finding emotional healing.

We live in a sin filled broken world, and as a consequence we will be exposed to pain. Psalms 147 says that God is our healer and our job is ourselves in such a way to experience what He wants us to experience.

When we realize we are in His care and in the center of His will, when painful experiences come we can be sure He can comfort us in **ALL** our troubles (2 Corinthians 1:2-4). **ALL** includes all the most painful experiences we may have had, which sometimes we may feel alone thinking no one can understand.

(Slide 4)

- **2 Corinthians 12:7 - God does not always take the trial or pain away.**
- **Psalms 23:4 - God is with us in the midst of the hurt and pain.**
- **2 Corinthians 1:4-5 - God does not only comfort us for ourselves, but that we might be instruments of comfort in the lives of others.**

2 Corinthians 1:5-6

⁵For just as Christ's sufferings are ours in abundance [as they overflow to His followers], so also our comfort [our reassurance, our encouragement, our consolation] is abundant through Christ [it is truly more than enough to endure what we must]. ⁶But if we are troubled *and* distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; or if we are comforted *and* encouraged, it is for your comfort, which works [in you] when you patiently endure the same sufferings which we experience. ⁷And our hope for you [our confident expectation of good for you] is firmly grounded [assured and unshaken], since we know that just as you share *as partners* in our sufferings, so also you share *as partners* in our comfort" (AMP Bible).

The Bible also says that sometimes God does not take our trouble of pain away. But He is always WITH US in the midst of our hurts and pain.

Not only to comfort us because He loves us, but because He wants us to also comfort others! He wants to use us, to be of comfort to others by sharing the comfort we received from Him in our own lives.

(Slide 5)

- **Isaiah 63:9 - God himself suffers whenever we suffer.**
 - **He does so without using any mechanism to minimize the pain.**
 - **Because of this, he feels the pain fully, more than we do.**
- **Proverbs 17:22 - A broken spirit dries the bones.**
 - **Emotional pain has physical consequences, even death (see also Proverbs 18:14).**

The thought that God suffers when we suffer is often not well understood. Think about a painful experience you have had. Was God there? Where was He? Where do you picture Him when you were hurt?

Was God there when His son Jesus was beaten on the way to the cross? Was Jesus physically, emotionally, and verbally abused? (Yes) He also was nearly naked in front of people at the cross, wasn't He? For some, that can be considered a form of sexual abuse. Where was God when that happened? He was there, just as He was there when we also got hurt.

Because of the great controversy we live in, God had to allow His son die, so we could be saved. Likewise, often God has to allow this sinful world, and people's choices to take effect, so also the universe can be ultimately saved.

The difference between Jesus and us, is that each of us uses our own defense mechanisms to deal with our pain while Jesus took the blunt of it all, without any defense. And He took the pain for you and me. Imagine all the pain you have suffered, and your mother, and father, and your husband and son or daughter, your neighbor or friend, and the many billions of people in this world. He felt it all... So He feels our pain more fully than we can ever feel, so we can be healed. (By His stripes we are healed!) Does that make us feel better?

(Slide 6)

- **Proverbs 15:13 - The spirit is broken by sorrow of the heart.**
 - **Sorrow is related to loss and grief over the loss.**
 - **We grieve not only over death in old age, but over losses at any point in life, even infancy.**

Solomon in his wisdom and inspiration wrote that what brings brokenness to our lives is sorrow! Sorrow is a byproduct of loss and grief.

We all will experience loss at some point in our lives. In fact, some studies show that by the age of 70, ninety percent of people will experience some form of depression due to the losses of life. And that is not only for adults. Studies also show that even little children experience pain and loss, although sometimes they cannot remember it as adults.

Thus, we carry with us the pain from losses from our infancy all the way through adulthood, and many of us carry these as open wounds, never having experienced the needed emotional healing that can soothe the wounds and the pain. But how can that healing take place? Here are some truths and principles for emotional healing.

(Slide 7)

Principles of Emotional Healing

- **God is not limited by place and time when He heals.**
- **Although God can and does heal instantaneously, most healing is incremental.**
- **God is more interested in our growth in the long run than he is in making us feel better.**

Healing is not instant all the time. It usually takes time. The priority in God's plan, is not just to heal us so we can feel better, but to heal us to save us. SOZO is a Greek word in New Testament scripture that means to HEAL and also to SAVE. God does both simultaneously. He is ultimately interested that we be saved. He wants us to grow in our dependence on Him, our relationship with others, and in our character. He wants to use us for His glory.

(Slide 8)

Scripture can be used as a powerful instrument of healing:

- **God's Word has power.**
“So will My word be which goes out of My mouth;
It will not return to Me void (useless, without result),
Without accomplishing what I desire,
And without succeeding *in the matter* for which I sent it” (Isaiah 55:11, AMP Bible).
- **The wounding was experiential. Therefore, the healing of trauma must be experiential.**

We can use Scripture as a powerful healing tool because the Word of God has power to heal!

Hebrews 4:12:

“For the word of God is living and active *and* full of power [making it operative, energizing, and effective]. It is sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating as far as the division of the soul and spirit [the completeness of a person], and of both joints and marrow [the deepest parts of our nature], exposing *and* judging the very thoughts and intentions of the heart” (AMP Bible).

Because emotional pain is experiential, the healing of any trauma, must also be felt experientially. As we connect with the word of God, He will work in our heart, mind, and soul to help us experience the healing in tangible ways.

(Slide 9)

- **John 8:44 - Trauma also often leads of cognitive distortions in the form of false beliefs or lies that we believe about ourselves, others, God and the world around us.**
- **John 8:32 - Reframing these beliefs in the light of God's word brings freedom.**

We must beware of the possible cognitive distortions that can cloud our thinking. These distorted thoughts come from the lies the enemy of God places in our hearts. Naturally, as human beings and sinners, we tend to allow these distortions in our mind.

John 8:44:

“You are of *your* father the devil, and it is your will to practice the desires [which are characteristic] of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks what is natural to him, for he is a liar and the father of lies *and* half-truths” (AMP Bible).

However, Scripture can help us to see more clearly and avoid distortions. Reframing these beliefs in the light of God's word brings freedom.

John 8:32:

“And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free” (NKJV).

(Slide 10)

- **Broken people often hurt other people in their attempts to protect themselves.**
- **A part of the healing process we must honestly look at ourselves, confess and repent.**

We must watch ourselves because when we are hurt, we tend to hurt others. Doing an inventory of our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors towards God, towards ourselves, and towards others can help us look at things we need to confess, the things of which we need to repent.

(Slide 11)

- **Broken people do their best to survive.**
- **In this process they build structures to protect themselves, and in doing so, live as if they were self-dependent.**
- **This is a form of idolatry that must be addressed.**

Guilt and shame are common side effects of our brokenness. Many of us live long lives but not to the full. We do our best to survive and cope, but sometimes we become self-dependent and find it hard to trust others. We carry masks, that reveal a smile or happy face, when deep inside we are hurt and feel unhappy. Our inability to trust others cause us to be too self-reliant and this results in self-centeredness and selfishness at times. However, we must realize this is a form of idolatry and this must be addressed.

Conclusion:

(Slide 12)

Activity:

Take some time now and write down (for your reference) 5-10 reasons why you feel hurt or broken. Consider how these negative experiences of trauma or loss are affecting you. Are these experiences causing you to hurt others, to be bitter or to cultivate distortions about yourself, God, the world or others around you? Do you long for healing?

(Slide 13)

¹"He has sent me to bind up [the wounds of] the brokenhearted,
To proclaim release [from confinement and condemnation] to the [physical and spiritual] captives
And freedom to prisoners,
²To proclaim the favorable year of the LORD,
And the day of vengeance *and retribution* of our God,
To comfort all who mourn,
³To grant to those who mourn in Zion *the following*:
To give them a turban instead of dust [on their heads, a sign of mourning],
The oil of joy instead of mourning,
The garment [expressive] of praise instead of a disheartened spirit" (Isaiah 61:1-3, AMP version).

We are reminded in Scripture that by Jesus' scars and stripes we are healed! In Isaiah 61:1-3 we see that wonderful transformation can happen in our lives when we accept Him as our healer and when we allow Him to touch us with His healing touch: if we are in mourning, we will find comfort and consolation; if we are carrying the colorless and lifeless ashes of our past experiences, we will find beauty and joy; if our hearts and spirit are heavy with the emotional burden of unforgiveness or bitterness we will exchange that for praise and gratitude to God.

(Slide 14)

Jesus Christ says to us: "I know your tears; I also have wept. The griefs that lies too deep to be breathed into any human ear, I know. Think not that you are desolate and forsaken. Though your pain touch no responsive chord in any heart on earth, look unto Me, and LIVE" (E. G. White, *Desire of Ages*, p. 483, emphasis added).

Are you willing to find healing for your hurt, pain and brokenness today? He wants to touch you with His healing touch. But you need to be willing to become vulnerable today and open your heart to Him. Do you trust He can understand your pain and heal you? I invite you to come to Jesus. Let us pray and ask Him for healing today.