

## Healing Journey

My thoughts for this article began formulating early in March. Easter was approaching. Easter is my favorite time of the year. I realize that without the birth of Christ we wouldn't have Easter. However, Easter is the most meaningful Christian celebration to me. This is because of Jesus' resurrection which gives us the hope of eternal life. The resurrection gives us healing and restoration now. The cross symbolizes what Jesus did for us. Because the cross is empty today, we have the gifts of healing and restoration. We have the hope of eternal life. The cross is empty because of the work that Jesus did for us.

The cross represents the end of Jesus journey here on Earth. John 19:30 Christ said "It is finished." The work that Christ did was not easy and came at a high price. Being human I don't have the understanding to be able to put into words what that must have been like. In Christ we find the key to healing. Jesus' message is very simple. Love heals. Forgiveness heals. "Father forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." Luke 23:24. Grace heals. God's simple message is that he loves us and gives to us. We need to believe and so we can receive. When we do, we are healed not only in this life time but we are healed for eternity. We can use the power of Jesus to put stress model principles into action. Simple messages can be complex.

Our journey can become complex for us. Our journey can be and is very difficult at times. So was the journey to the cross for Jesus. Jesus' journey consisted of people who didn't believe him and who judged him. Jesus was humiliated, tortured, and abandoned. Jesus suffered and was betrayed. His critics came from all walks of life. They were the common people and the government. They were the religious and his friends. I can liken this only in characteristic to our journeys. The intensity of what we go through doesn't even come close to what Jesus endured.

Our journey with our children can be our biggest challenge. It can put us in a place of being criticized. It can put us in a place of feeling humiliated and embarrassed. Our journey with our children can create fear. We can feel insecure, inadequate, and be full of doubt. The stress model principles can be most effectively put into action by following Jesus' model. Jesus model is simple but complex. Our challenge is to demonstrate Jesus' message of love, grace, and forgiveness every day in our journey. Ephesians 4:32 tells us "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as Christ God forgave you." We must first demonstrate these to our selves. We must then demonstrate these to our children. We must then demonstrate these in all areas of our lives. God's message to us is to love and to give and for us to believe so we can receive. When we do this, we create a safe environment for our children to believe and to receive like we did.

Where ever Jesus went there was healing. Why? Because he was perfect love. We cannot heal. We do have a responsibility in the healing process. Our part in the healing process is to create a safe environment. Our part in the healing process is to bring love, grace, and forgiveness into our children's life. Our part is to allow love, grace, and forgiveness to flow through our lives. When we do we help create an environment conducive to healing for others. We are not responsible for healing but we are responsible to others to help them on their journey to heal. Simple? Yes. Complex and hard to do? Yes. Perfect love and forgiveness comes only

from Jesus through our relationship with him. Therefore we must work to get ourselves into that place of love and forgiveness. We must purpose to get ourselves into that place of peace.

This is hard to because we have to look at ourselves. We have to “clear away the wreckage of our pasts” as stated in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. The Bible tells us that we must forgive others in order to be forgiven. Mattahew18:34-35 “In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart.” All of this can be and is overwhelming. Just writing about this is overwhelming to me. When that happens I know that I need to breathe and relax. I need to focus on the one thing will help me accomplish all of this. I need to keep my eyes on Jesus. 1 John 5:4-5 - “for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.” Only through him can I experience the peace that I need to do these things. Only through him can I forgive others and forgive myself. Only through him can I be available to others. Only through him can I meet others at their point of need. Only through him can I love others where they’re at.

It is important to remember that healing is a process and not an event. God has given us children. God has a divine plan or design for us and for our children. “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart,” says the Lord. Jeremiah 1:5. Parents are the critical element to raising children. It is our responsibility to nurture what God has designed for our children. It is our responsibility to support our children in God’s divine plan for them. We may not always know what that plan or design is. We must then trust in him for the good of all. Like seeds in a garden, our children need us to help them grow. When a tomato seed sprouts, it does not immediately have red ripe tomatoes. Parenting is difficult. It seems to require more and more everyday. As parents we get tired on our journey. I’m sure Jesus got tired many times. When he did he took time to rest in the Lord. God restored his strengthen and renewed his compassion. Compassion means that we are open to the suffering of our children. In order to do this, we must equip ourselves with the best gardening tools that we can. 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 is our toolshed. “Love is patient, love is kind. Space-based it does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices in truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always deserves. Love never fails. . . .” It is through our vertical relationship with Christ that we can be in a loving horizontal relationship with our children and help them heal.

I am convinced that the timing of this article came from God. I was praying about a topic for my April Newsletter. I knew I wanted to focus on Easter and the journey of Jesus. I then realized that the focus of Bryan Post’s Parenting Journal for May is healing. That is what Easter is all about. And that’s how t all came together for me. But before I could write this article, I had to stop and reflect on the journey of Jesus. I hope you didn’t eat too many chocolate bunnies in an attempt to regulate yourself.

Quote: “It is through our vertical relationship with Christ that we can be in a loving horizontal

relationship with our children and help them heal.”

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