

July 10, 2022
New Life Series

Brian Racer

“Growing Through Woundedness to Compassion—We All Have Scars”

INTRODUCTION

On September 7th, 2019, my younger brother was severely burned during an accident at a youth group bonfire in Winchester, VA. He sustained 2nd and 3rd degree burns on his torso, arms, hands, and his neck and jawline. I believe he has been through 5 skin graft surgeries and from the outset the treatment involved a daily or twice daily process called debridement, which is the removal of dead tissue which is meant to prevent several negative things, like infection and cellulitis from taking hold, but it also, with other interventions aids in the re-growth of new skin.

I am very thankful for the Lord sparing my brother’s life, for the wonderful ministry of the doctors and nurses at Washington Medical Center, and that my brother has experienced a tremendous amount of healing and nearly full functionality, especially with his hands, with on-going therapy and treatment. But he will carry the scars of that accident the rest of his life.

Scars—we all have them, don’t we? Reminders of the wounds of the past, or maybe you are carrying some that are still very fresh. Woundedness, brokenness, is part of the human condition and as such, it can crowd out the experience of healing as we remember the way others have hurt us: the lies told about us, the gossip, the rejection, the judgement from others, the unreasonable expectations, the abuse—verbal, emotional, physical or sexual—that has been experienced; the disappointment, the broken relationship, the unreturned love; the abandonment, the loss and grief of death, and many, many other intentional or unintentional wounds are a part of our lives in this broken and sinful world we live in.

Let’s also not forget the self-inflicted wounds we cause through responding to the hurts and the people that caused them with anger, bitterness, resentment, and unforgiveness that keeps us off the path to healing. And whether we have the honesty to admit it, sometimes we turn those emotions and sinful responses against God Himself.

As much as we don’t like them, scars are a good thing in the sense that they indicate wounds which have healed.

Today we want to examine the experience of woundedness, how it impacts our identity, but also how if we understand it correctly, it is meant to transform us into people of compassion.

I. Hardened Hearts

- A. Two Feedings, Mark 6:30-52; Mark 8:1-21
- B. Two Contrasting Responses
 - 1. Jesus’ Response of Compassion
 - 2. The Disciples Response of Indifference

C. A Lack of Understanding

1. Jesus' True Nature
2. Their Mission

II. Our Brokenness Is Our Strength; Not Our Curse

- A. Properly Responded to It Prepares Us for Greater Ministry
“It is doubtful that God can use anyone greatly until He has hurt him deeply.”
– A. W. Tozer
- B. It is how we transform Weakness into Strength, 2 Cor. 12:7-10
- C. It Provides a Platform for Ministry to Others, 2 Cor. 1:3-4

III. The Command of Christ on Compassion

- A. Matt. 9:9-13; 35-38; Command: “But **go and learn** what this means...”, v. 13
- B. Luke 10:25-37; The Good Samaritan, “**Go and do** the same.” v.37

IV. Six Marks of True Compassion (steps to grow a compassionate heart)

- A. “See” Another’s Pain
- B. “Feel” With Another’s Pain (emotional identification)
- C. Move Toward the Need
- D. Meet and Over-meet the Need
- E. Move meeting the Immediate Felt Needs to the Deeper Needs
- F. Remember that Compassion is Costly (time, emotions, materially, financially)

*Have the faith that God will provide what you lack—God provides, you serve

Conclusion – Where do you stand today?

- A. You may be hardened. Christ wants to break your heart with His love and compassion for you. You have to have experienced it in order to share it. There may also be a need for repentance because you have responded to your wounds with

retaliation, bitterness, or resentment.

B. You may be having a hard time being compassionate because you have had a hard time feeling the compassion of Christ in a personal way. You beat yourself up over your self-inflicted wounds or you would rather wallow in self-pity (an aside to people with the gift of mercy) and have been listening to long to the lies of Satan that your situation is a hopeless cause. Jesus loves you unconditionally to the point of laying His life down for you. He wants to make you whole. There may be things so deep that you will need some professional counseling to help you find healing.

C. How do you come to recognize it?

1. Reflect on your pain. [golf ball]

I read that the early manufacturers of golf balls originally made them with smooth outer covers, something like a ping-pong ball. However, it was discovered that after a ball had been roughed up, knocked around the course a few times, a golfer got more distance out of it and it tracked straighter. So, the manufacturers started putting dimples on the outer covers, as we see them today. It is the same way in your life, believer. It often takes the tough scrapes and points of pain of life to enable you to travel farther and straighter.

2. Trust God's power to provide all that you need.

3. Pray for God to give you the ability to look through His eyes.

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A Horrible Experience

Wounds & Scars...We all have them

I. Hardened Hearts

A. Two Feedings, Mark 6:30-52; Mark 8:1-21

B. Two Contrasting Responses

3. Jesus' Response of C_____

4. The Disciples Response of I_____

C. A Lack of Understanding

1. Jesus' T_____ N_____

2. Their M_____

II. Our Brokenness Is Our S_____; Not Our C_____

A. Properly Responded to It Prepares Us for G_____ M_____

“It is doubtful that God can use anyone greatly until He has hurt him deeply.”

– A. W. Tozer

B. It is how we transform W_____ into Strength, 2 Cor. 12:7-10

C. It Provides a P_____ for M_____ to Others, 2 Cor. 1:3-4

III. The Command of Christ on Compassion

A. Matt. 9:9-13; 35-38; Command: “But **go and learn** what this means...”, v. 13

B. Luke 10:25-37; The Good Samaritan, “**Go and do** the same.” v.37

IV. Six Marks of True Compassion (steps to grow a compassionate heart)

- A. “S_____” Another’s Pain
- B. “F_____” With Another’s Pain (emotional identification)
- C. M_____ Toward the Need
- D. Meet and O_____ -meet the Need
- E. Move from meeting the Immediate Felt Needs to the Deeper Needs
- F. Remember that Compassion is C_____ (time, emotions, materially, financially)

*Have the faith that God will provide what you lack—God provides, you serve

Conclusion – Where do you stand today?

- A. You may be h_____. Christ wants to break your heart with His love and compassion for you. You have to have experienced it in order to share it.
- B. You may be having a hard time being compassionate because you have had a hard time feeling the compassion of Christ in a p_____ way.
- C. How do you come to recognize it?
 - 1. R_____ on your pain. [the golf ball]
 - 2. T_____ God’s power to p_____ all that you need.
 - 3. Pray for God to give you the ability to l_____ through His e_____.