

Grounded in Grace

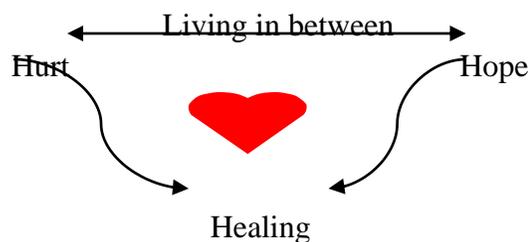
LIVING IN-BETWEEN HURT, HOPE, AND HEALING PT 1

Introduction

Last Thursday, I waited for my last client. I looked at my notes from the three previous people whose stories I have had the privilege of entering. As I prayed and pondered each soul, I realized that each one was living with some kind of hurt from either a past wound, disappointment, or lost opportunity. They also were coming to me because they wanted to have some kind of hope that they could not only just survive this life but thrive in this life as well. Lastly, each one came for some sort of healing. One of my clients asked me, “Can I be fixed?” I softly replied to her, “No, you can’t be fixed. I can’t fix you, but I can point you to one who can heal you.”

Living In-Between

All of these souls were living their lives in what I like to call “living in between.” One day they have hope, the next day they feel hurt, and then the next day there is a sense of becoming more healed and seeing growth. Actually, many of them bounce in between all three. I would plot it like this:



And if we are honest, we bounce “in between” all the time. However, sometimes we get stuck in hurt and we can’t grow in our walk with Christ or mature as people until we dive into the dark caves and crevices inside our hearts.

I believe that there is a direct correlation between our spiritual maturity (our understanding of theology, our relationship with Christ, and how we relate to and love others) and our emotional maturity (our understanding of ourselves, our capacity for self-reflection, and the ability to confess our weaknesses before others). The key to this maturity is the willingness to uncover and heal from the wounds, insecurities, and pains that have been buried deep within our hearts. Someone can be 45 years old and have the *intellectual* level of a man in his 70’s but have the *emotional and spiritual* maturity of a teenager.

As I pondered this, I began to ask myself many questions, such as:

- How does the gospel transform our lives?
- How does Jesus provide healing?
- Are there examples of Jesus providing hope and healing?
- What does it mean to deal with our hurts and wounds?
- What role does sin play in our lives and healing?
- What does it look like to be honest with our souls?
- Will Jesus challenge us to transform patterns that have plagued us for years?
- What if we can't get over these things? Didn't Paul have a thorn in his flesh?

The questions above are aimed to discover how Jesus really transforms our lives and how he does it. Many of us don't live in freedom but live in insecurity, defensiveness, and/or self-destructive patterns. We become stuck in the arrogance of our abilities or the self-loathing of our self-pity. (I wrote the book on this one. More on that subject later! ☺) We live in fear and forget about the hope that love provides.

Living in Hurt While Being Seen

So this is the next journey that awaits my soul. This journey will take us into several stories and people's lives. Along the way, I hope to share a little of my personal healing journey. We may come back and view more of this story later, but for now let's look at these two verses:

As he approached the town gate, a dead person was being carried out--the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the town was with her. When the Lord saw her, his heart went out to her and he said, "Don't cry." Luke 7:12-13

Here was a woman who was living in hurt. She had no hope and needed healing for her soul. Notice that Jesus "saw her." He peered straight into her heart and noticed that she had no hope. Jesus was filled with compassion. He didn't just let her pass on by. But Jesus stopped and saw her in a crowd. He saw her hurt and the pain in her soul. Then Jesus spoke words of comfort. Jesus stopped, saw her, and spoke to her heart. Do we believe that Jesus will stop, see, and speak to our soul as well?

As we journey, my hope is that we will be listeners to conversations, watchers of Jesus' personal touch, and witnesses to lives that are transformed. But most of all, my prayer is that we will be listeners to our own hurtful cries that we have never wanted to hear or have ignored for many years. I hope we will be able to watch the gospel of grace seep into souls and provide refreshment and salve for healing. I pray we will witness the transformation of patterns that have plagued us and be pointed towards hope. I hope that that you will continue to join me as we walk and live in "the in-between."

By Dr. Steve Benson