

## Hope for the Hurts of the Past



Gary Wilkerson December 21, 2020

Many people need restoration after lifelong heartbreak and brokenness. When wounds go deep, some try to repress the hurt, never allowing their emotions to surface because they are too painful to face. Even Christians bury their struggles and hide behind Bible study or service, pressing on in spite of their pain.

Jesus did not promise anyone a pain-free life, but he does promise that we can be restored to abundant life. John tells us, "The Spirit who lives in you is greater than the spirit who lives in the world" (1 John 4:4). We have been given authority by the Holy Spirit who lives within us and we are to call on that authority as we face our enemies.

For any wounded brother or sister reading this, the Bible speaks one command more than any other: "Fear not." Why would God say this more than "Don't sin" or "Love one another"? It must be because God knows we will have fearful events in our lives that can make us want to shrink back.

We already know we have been given supernatural authority to stay in the fight. Jesus assures us: "Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart because *I have overcome the world*" (John 16:33). If you choose to shut down pain, you also shut down the possibility of receiving love to heal that pain. Friend, our hope does not lie in our past experiences but in the future Jesus has prepared for us. "Let all that I am wait quietly before God, for my hope is in him" (Psalm 62:5).

The Lord's love is unconditional: "Love is patient and kind. Love ... keeps no record of being wronged ... Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance" (1 Corinthians 13:4-7). Every wounded person should apply this unconditional love toward himself. After all, it describes God's love for you. Everyone who understands this love from God will not need external validation.

Unconditional love reveals this truth: "You're growing. You're being stretched. This challenge is calling you to new heights because the merciful, gracious, healing foundation Jesus has put underneath you is solid."

You will face challenges, but your Father has put power within you to conquer them all. Stay in the fight, stay in community, and find his abundant life filling you day after day.

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