

# ***Healing the Broken***

## Truth and Error Regarding our Past

### Introduction

- A. We have seen how God's provision is spiritual freedom through understanding and practicing the truth -- by faith and love.
- B. We have also seen how a violation of truth brings spiritual bondage.
- C. The areas where we are the most vulnerable and tend to fail -- are areas of unbelief (acceptance of error) and sinning (practice of error).
- D. For the believer to be free, it is necessary to understand and reject the error that has been accepted and to stop its practice. A major step toward such freedom is found in resolving one's past.

### **I. The Example of the Apostle Paul.**

#### **A. His affirmation of spiritual freedom.**

*Brethren, I count not myself to have been apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Philippians 3:13-14.*

Comment: Here Paul declares his freedom to live for God and to serve Him. As we think of his former life as a sinful and bigoted Pharisee, we can only marvel at the effects of the grace of God.

Question: Was this reversal of belief and priority automatic in the apostle's life? From the context of this passage we know it was not. Paul had to work through his past with understanding, confession and decision just as any other believer.

#### **B. His basis of spiritual freedom.**

1. Confession and resolution of pride and self-confidence.

*Although I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews, as touching the law, a Pharisee. Philippians 3:4,5*

Comment: In this passage Paul not only confesses his sins of pride and self-confidence -- he points out where this started in his life. This is an important principle regarding spiritual freedom. To break the bondage of sin we must do more than deal with out present.

2. Confession and resolution of false religious zeal.

*Concerning zeal, persecuting the church. Philippians 3:6*

3. Confession and resolution of religious self-righteousness.

*... Touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.  
Philippians 3:6*

4. Confession and resolution of error regarding the Messiah.

*But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.  
Philippians 3:7*

5. Confession and resolution of wrong values and priorities.

*Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for who I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.  
Philippians 3:8*

Comment: These verses dramatically point out how thorough Paul was in cleaning up his life. The reason why this is necessary is that when we accept error, it produces patterns of thought, belief, and practice. Therefore, to change how we think, believe and life -- we must learn to confess and resolve the acceptance of such error.

## **II. The Biblical Principles Regarding Our Past.**

### **A. The principle illustrated in confession.**

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. I John 1:9.*

Comment: Confession means to "say the same thing" that God says about a subject. One aspect of confession, therefore, is to acknowledge how we have deviated from truth.

When we sin we must confess the sin to be what it is -- a lie, or gossip, or sensuality, or jealousy, etc. And, to make the confession complete -- we must understand why we committed such a sin -- and that will bring to light the root of the sin and make possible true spiritual freedom.

It is very rare for a sin to stand alone in our life -- without some root (acceptance of error) in our past. One reason why we are not able to live in freedom from sins we confess -- is that we have not taken the time or effort to find and extract their root.

### **B. The principle illustrated in forgiveness.**

*And when ye stand praying, forgive, if you have ought against any, that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.  
Mark 11:25 (see also Matthew 6:12,14; 18:22-35; Ephesians 4:32)*

Comment: We must forgive those who sin against us. The only way to be free and to be healed is to forgive. Failure to do so will result in continual pain, bondage, and bitterness.

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