

The Past and Its Interpretation

Introduction: We are all the products of our past. What has happened to us has led to the establishment of certain patterns of value and actions. Often these patterns are not in harmony with either truth or reality.

- I. The Primary Act or Acts in the Past. (What happened in your past? Were you manipulated, hurt, put under pressure, required to live up to the standard of another, never treated as a person? Were you spoiled and allowed to live without responsibility? Did you have to earn love?)
- II. The Immediate Effects of such Activity. (What happened to you? Did you submit, rebel, learn to manipulate, retreat, suffer as a martyr, give up? What patterns started in your life?)
- III. The Interpretation of this Activity. (How did you interpret this activity - as rejection, as love, as though you were worthless and inferior? How do you interpret all this now?)
- IV. What are the Present Effects of I-III? (What influence does this have on you now? Are you still trying to win some battle, or earn love? Are you now attempting to correct the past by some activity of your own? Are you passive toward the past?)
- V. What are the Patterns of Response Now Present Due to I-IV? (Do you bear a grudge, live with bitterness, fear, suspicion? Do you cover-up your own feelings, take out your hatred and hurts on others? Do you demand first place, accept emotions of inferiority and hopelessness?)
- VI. What Needs Do You Now Have Due To I-V? (Are you serving the need to be single, to be married, to be a parent, to work hard, to earn money, to be a successful Christian? Do you have a need to be thin, or heavy? What needs are you serving when you do that which you do not approve of?)
- VII. The Evaluation of I-VI. (What is the TRUTH about the above? What errors have been accepted? What attitudes, actions, and patterns of response must be changed? What is defeating you now? What is the cause of that defeat - is the need legitimate, and the method you are using to satisfy that need?)

- Instructions: 1. Write out a separate page for each point. Be thorough and honest. Put yourself back into each stage of the problem. Do not be superficial or dishonest with your history, with yourself, or your responsibilities.
2. Be particularly careful with VI and VII. For example: If the person had no right doing what they did to hurt you, and if the effect of what happened and your interpretation were and are erroneous - then what right do you have of allowing the past to be a dominant factor in your life? It is possible to accept error, and to maintain it by the way we live! When we do so we forfeit to some degree the blessing of God and open our life to the enemy and defeat. God can only deliver and heal us through the truth, John 8:32.

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