

Book Review: Healing for Damaged Emotions

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(Book Review)

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Healing for Damaged Emotions was written by David Seamands, it was first published in 1981. The late David Seamands was a pastor, missionary, and professor emeritus and counselor in residence at Asbury Theological Seminary. He authored several books, including *If Only*, *Putting Away Childish Things*, and *Freedom from the Performance Trap*. *Healing for Damaged Emotions* is about anger, guilt, depression, inferiority, and perfectionism that pervading feeling that we are never good enough (Seamands, 2015).

Seamands book has helped hundreds of readers around the world deal with their inner hurts, such as a deep sense of unworthiness which includes feelings of anxiety, inadequacy and inferiority, a perfectionist complex which includes ideas of never being able to please themselves, God or others, a person filled with fears who constantly struggles with the “why’s” and “if’s” “ only’s” of life.

Seamands explains that people tend to carry deep wounds from their past and their wounds are situated largely in the emotions. He likens these wounds to the biblical idea of infirmities though he acknowledges that his word originally applied to physical defects and deformities. Seamands argues that we will forever be responding to our woundedness and that these scars will manifest themselves through deep character and interpersonal deficiencies until they are honestly confronted, address, and handed over to Christ whom Seamands calls the wounded healer.

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The way that these wounds manifest themselves, Seamands argue is in feelings of insecurity, worthiness, perfectionism, legalism, and anger. He offers plentiful examples of each of these and others, most drawn from his own experiences.

As Christians, we often thank God that Jesus paid for our sins on the cross. We also need to remember that in his full identification with our humanity and on the cross he took unto himself the entire range of our feelings and he bore the feelings of our infirmities, that we would not have to bear them alone. The fact that God not only knows and cares, but he fully understands that is the most therapeutic factor in the healing of our damaged emotions (Seamands, 2015).

Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices (2 Corinthians 2:11). Satan is an adversary, who is clever, wily, and dangerous. He knows all of our weaknesses and he understands our infirmities and he uses them against us to get an advantage over us. He strikes fear in our hearts and that causes us to doubt certain situations, causes us to worry about things, keeps us feeling guilty, and keeps us feeling worthless knowing that low self-esteem can be deadly. Seamands named four ways that Satan uses his deadly weapons to bring defeat and failure into our lives: Low self-esteem paralyzes your potential, Low self-esteem destroys your dreams, Low self-esteem ruins your relationships, and Low self-esteem sabotages your Christian service.

I feel that in order for one to have good self-esteem one must have a good self-image of themselves. Seamands defines self-image as a whole system of pictures and feelings you have put together about yourself. There are three essential components of a healthy self-image: A sense of belongingness, a sense of worth and value, and a sense of being competent (Wagner,

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1975). To go from low self-esteem to high self-esteem we must correct faulty theology, develop our worth and value from God, and cooperate with the Holy Spirit letting it guide us and teaching us how to love ourselves and other.

Many people who suffers from damaged emotions often have personality distortions known as perfectionism, alienation from your true self and even depression. Seamends defined perfectionism as a counterfeit for Christians' perfections, holiness, sanctification, or the spirit-filled life. Symptoms of perfectionism are a constant feeling of never doing well enough, your never quite satisfied with yourself and neither is God, Anxiety, Legalism, anger and resentment and denial. There is only one ultimate cure for perfectionism, it is as profound and yet as simple as the word grace.

Grace is freely given, undeserved, unmerited, unearnable and unrepayable favor. Grace is a pure gift, free from taking. The healing of perfectionism does not begin with some initial experience of grace in salvation or sanctification, and then move into a life lived by effort and perfect performance. Healing of perfectionism takes place day by day believing, living, and having a loving relationship with our heavenly Father.

The perfectionist needs to learn to be his or her true self in Christ. A perfectionist is often alienated from their true self, a kind of pseudo-self takes its place... Super You is a false idealized image you think you have to be in order to be loved and accepted. Many times, in life people will have an imaginary picture of themselves, or be someone they are not. According to Seamands people have been programmed to believe that no one will love them or accept them if they see the real them. Many strive to become Super You to gain love and acceptance from others or people that they care about.

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When you stop wasting your spiritual energies to maintain a false Super you and start using those energies in cooperating with the Holy Spirit for true growth, you will then find yourself free in Jesus Christ, freed from the approval and disapproval of others freed from condemnation of the performance gap between what you're trying to be and the person you truly are (Seamands,2015).

A lot of us have difficulty in relating to others because of hurts in our lives. These hurts affect the way we communicate and also the way we handle ourselves. This is one reason why we intentionally hurt others. Not until we are healed from our pains, we will always have difficulty in facing life. God's desire and will is to heal us. However, we must be willing to let him work in our life.

Wounds in our heart take place when we allow sin, unresolved past, unforgiveness, discouragement, feeling of rejection control our lives. Hurts in our hearts will be revealed during conflicts in our time of crisis. A healed heart will always result to a contented and joyful life. It makes us generous in every area of our lives. It enables us to handle conflicts in our lives properly. There is a connection between a healed heart and a positive attitude.

Seamands went onto talk about the myths and truths about depression. Depression is a common experience among Christians. Many feel that the term depressed Christian are contradictory or incompatible. If a person is filled with the Holy Spirit, then it should be impossible for them to be depressed. Several responses are noted by Seamands which eventually lead to depression. Each of these has elements of sin which he fails to acknowledge. First is indecision, double-mindedness, and the sense of being powerless or trapped, decisions are

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postponed. Second is anger Seamands claimed that depression is frozen rage and that if you have consistent depression, then you have unresolved anger. Anger may be a factor in depression, and if so, it must be handled biblically. It is not probably unrighteous anger. Depression is not necessarily a sign of spiritual failure. Some of the greatest depressions came from emotional letdowns following the greatest spiritual successes.

Depression can come from sources outside the purely spiritual. They come because something has gone wrong with the equipment perhaps in the physical or in the balance of emotions and personality. Circuits have been affected, a connection has burned out, and it has affected even the spiritual life. Seamands fails to provide adequate support for a depression that is not rooted in sin.

Some depression truly may not result entirely from one's own sin, but even then, it is difficult for a sinful person to handle their emotions without falling into sin. Godly counsel is crucial. Seamands does tell us how to respond to depression: Avoid isolation and withdrawal from others, seek help from others, sing and make music, Praise and thank God, Study God's word, and rest confidently in the presence of God's Spirit.

Because Christ is the Wounded Healer, because he does fully understand, when he got ready to leave this world, he promised that he would not leave his friends alone but would come to them by sending the Comforter, the Paraclete. The Paraclete is the God who understands who see we are carrying a burden too heavy for us, who realizes we cannot make it on our own, who comes along side and takes hold of the heavy burden and its pain and helps us to lift it, enabling us to carry our crippling infirmity (Seamands, 2015).

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Whether through our own fallen temperament, willful disobedience, or as victims of the hurtful actions of others, many of us struggle with crippling emotions, among them perfectionism, depression, and low self-worth. The pain is often present with us though the incidents and relationships that caused it may be long past. Seaman helps Christians realize that there are still human emotions, depression, anger, and guilt that one lives and deals with on a daily basis. These emotions do not make a person less of a Christian. There is hope and growth through Jesus Christ we just need to turn to him and let him guide us and direct our path.

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Reference:

<https://hubpages.com>

Seamands, 2015 Healing for Damaged Emotions