

Book Report  
on  
“Healing Damaged Emotions”  
by  
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LS 101  
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Dr. David Seamands book, “Healing Damaged Emotions,” is a great literary tool to be used as a personal help or personal development guide to help Christians as well and non-Christians deal with damaged emotions. Seamands uses the word of God mainly Matthew 8:17, “That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sickness (The Holy Bible King James Version, 2010),” and Romans 8:26-27, “Likewise the Spirit helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what to pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered, And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God (The Holy Bible King James Version, 2010),” as the thesis for this book. Seamands believes that the infirmities mention in these verses are synonymous with damaged emotions. By defining damaged emotions from a biblical perspective, Seamands, being a man of God, uses biblical insight to give an spiritual remedy to provide healing for damaged emotions. Just because a person is a Christian or spiritual doesn’t mean that they are exempt from having emotional problems. Seamands states, “somewhere between our sins, on the one hand, and our sickness, on the other, lies an area the Scripture calls infirmities (Seamands, 2015).” In chapter one, five different damaged emotions are identified, sense of unworthiness, perfectionist complex, super-sensitive, fear and sex. Not only are these emotions identified and defined, Dr. Seamands writes the spiritual prescription to help the healing process to begin.

Furthermore, Dr. Seamands defines a deep sense of unworthiness as, “a continuous feeling of anxiety, inadequacy, and inferiority, an inner nagging that says, I’m no good. I’ll never amount to anything. No one could ever possibly love me. Everything I do is wrong

(Seamands, page number?).” The person with the perfectionist complex says, “I can never quite achieve. I never do anything well enough. I can’t please myself, others, or God. This kind of person is always groping, striving, usually feeling guilty, driven by inner oughts and shoulds (Seamands, page number?).” The super-sensitive person is an individual who, “has been hurt deeply, reached out for love, approval, and affection, but instead received the opposite and has scars deep inside of him (Seamands, page number?).” People who suffer from the damaged emotion of fear greatest fear is the fear of failure. This fear usually paralyzes them and they never really get started in the game of life. Finally, there is the damaged emotion of sex. This damaged emotion is woven into the very fabric of all the others mentioned and this is nothing new. Seamands alludes to the fact that the Apostle Paul addressed this in his letter to the church at Corinth. Our country, the United States of America, is very similar to Corinth in that we are inundated sexual immorality on all levels.

Now that the problems have been identified, what are the remedies and solutions that Seamands suggest? Dr. Seamands suggests six steps to start the healing process and to get on the road to recovery. The first of the six steps is to “face your problem squarely.” This means the foundational step is to be honest with yourself about what is causing the emotional pain. This should be done understanding that God is a gracious and forgiving God. Part of this process is also finding someone that you can trust with your innermost feelings and problems. When this individual is identified confess those things to them being genuine and honest with no hidden agendas. Confession is good for the soul and scripturally James instructs us to confess our faults one to another for healing to take place. Seamands states, “Some people miss deep inner healing because they lack the courage to share deeply with another person (Seamands, page number?).” Secondly, Dr. Seamands wants us to “accept personal responsibility in the matter.” This means

that the immaturity of always playing the victim card has to stop. Yes it may be true that people may wrong us, but for every action there is a reaction. We are not responsible for the actions of others but we are responsible for our own actions. Seamands believes, “the individual will never receive healing for damaged emotions until blaming everyone else stops and personal responsibility is accepted.” (Seamands, page number?). Step three in this healing process is, “ask yourself if you want to be healed.” This step is important because this is where the gut check takes place to see if the person is willing to do what it takes for their healing. Seamands used the example of the man who had been sick for thirty-eight years in John chapter five. Jesus asked the sick man a question, “Do you want to be made whole?” In other words, are you willing to take full responsibility for your healing or are you going to continue to make excuses for the situation and rut that you find yourself in. So many times in life people are stuck in ruts because they are not willing to do what it takes personally to get out of them. We talk about losing weight, but never change our eating habits or start to exercise. We talk about changing our financial situation, but we never search for better job opportunities. In the previous two examples the only person that is holding you back is you. Step four in the process is to, “forgive everyone who is involved in your problem.” Forgiveness not only releases the person who wronged the individual, it also releases the individual that was wronged. Many times in life we become a prisoner to what someone else has done to us because we refuse to forgive. Hold on to this eats away at our emotional health like corrosive acid. As a result, it prevents healing from occurring. Fifthly, the forgiveness doesn't stop with forgiving others, it is important to forgive yourself. We have a tendency to hold on to things that God has forgiven and forgotten. We become our own enemy when we hold on to the very things that we ask God to forgive us for. Forgiving one's self is an emotional detox or cleansing. The final step toward healing for

damaged emotions is allowing the Holy Spirit to show you what the real problem is and how to pray. Seamands quotes the Apostle Paul from the book of Romans about allowing the Holy Spirit as guide, teacher and intercessor to guide us in identifying the problem and addressing it as the Spirit directs and not our carnal minds. If we are not praying for the proper things then it's not possible to find the right solution. Using these six steps according to Dr. Seamands is paramount to successful healing of emotions.

Forgiveness is a very important step in the process of emotional healing, so much so that Seamands gives in-depth commentary and explanation to this subject. He explains that one of the leading causes for emotional problems is the failure to receive forgiveness and the failure to give forgiveness. On the issue of failure to receive forgiveness, Seamands contends, and I agree, that most Christians have yet to grasp the enormous magnitude of the doctrine of grace. He explains that grace is a concept that is stopped at the head level, but very rarely makes it into the emotional level of an individual. Seamands states, "grace is God's undeserved favor, but it not in our feelings, not in our living and we don't go far enough." He goes on to argue, "grace is not only God's undeserved mercy and favor. It is also unearned and can never be repaid (Seamands, page number)." One of the biggest misnomers concerning forgiveness is that when we hold grudges or unforgiveness in our hearts is that we are hurting the individual that wrong us. This is of the contrary. Dr. Seamands contends that, "the unforgiven are unforgiving and the unforgiving complete the vicious circle because they cannot be forgiven." (Seamands, page number). It's impossible to give something that you don't have or possess. Additionally, Dr. Seamands poses three simple test that will reveal if you need to forgive yourself or someone else. First there is the resentment test, which consists of thinking of anyone that you may resent and no one is off limits from your pastor, to parents, to siblings or other family members even your

spouse. This also extends to teachers and people who may have contributed to your personal development or someone you trusted and they abused that trust by taking advantage of you emotionally, psychology, and sexually. Secondly, the responsibility test which consists of taking personal responsibility for your contribution to the emotional damage that has occurred. Then lastly, there is the reminder and reaction test. This test involves you reacting a certain way because a person reminds you of someone that hurt you or you resent, therefore causing unforgiveness.

For believers, we only have two enemies, ourselves and the adversary, Lucifer, the crafty cunning one. The greatest weapon he has in his arsenal is the ability to attack our psyche to make us feel inferior, inadequate, and low self-worth. Low self-esteem or self-worth according to Seamands, “paralyzes potential, destroys dreams, ruins relationships and sabotages Christian service. What an individual thinks about themselves is the very thing that drives a person to greatness or to disaster. Dr. Maurice Wagner explains that there are three components that lead to a healthy self-image, a sense of belonging, a sense of worth and value and a sense of being competent (Seamands, page number?).” According to Dr. Seamands, self-image or self-worth are derived from the outer world, the inner world, Satan and evil forces and God and His Word. The outer world are all of the external experiences in your life that shaped you into the person you become. The inner world consists of the psychological, emotional and spiritual stimuli that mold you. Dr. Seamands’ concept, being a pastor and man of God, deal strictly with allowing the Word of God and the Holy Spirit to lead, guide, direct and instruct the individual on who they are, their purpose and His plans for their life. A product of damaged emotions is low self-esteem, which can lead to depression. While there are many forms of depression, Seamands discusses a form of depression called perfectionism. Likewise, perfectionism is a spiritual

distortion, with symptoms that include the tyranny of the oughts, self-depreciation, anxiety, legalism, anger, and denial. The person suffering with the oughts has a constant feeling of never doing well enough or never being good enough. Self-depreciation brings on the feeling of not every being able to please God. The symptoms of oughts and self-depreciation bring on stress and anxiety that comes and goes. The legalism comes in to play as a result of the low self-esteem and always trying to please people in order to feel self-worth, which brings forth a laundry list of do's and don'ts' that will never be lived up to. Anger develops as a result of the other symptoms. The anger is directed at self, others, but also at God, because there is the notion that we are serving a God that we will never be able to please, which is a skewed perspective. Denial sets in because the other issues are never dealt with properly. What is the cure?

The cure is non-other than the grace of God in the person of His Son Jesus the Christ. Dr. Seamands refers to Him in chapter three as, "the Wounded Healer." Seamands contends, "infirmities themselves are not sins, but they do undermine our resistance to temptation (Seamands, page number?)." Being that Jesus never sinned, meant that sacrifice never had to be offered on His behalf, which made Him the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world. What makes Him the "Wounded Healer," is the fact that He understands exactly how we feel when we are tempted and what we go through. He understands because He was tempted in the wilderness, He understands because He came from humble beginnings, He understands because He was talked about and made fun of, He understands because one day he was praised by His people, but soon after they turned their backs on Him, He understands because in the Garden of Gethsemane He felt the anxiety and pain of leadership and purpose, and He understands because He suffered the cross and everything leading up to it. Not only does He understand but He is the cure for whatever ails us whether psychological, spiritual, or emotional.

This book was a great read. I have and will continue to recommend it to others. It is an excellent book to be used for personal development and by organizations as well. I'm looking forward to reading other literary works from this author because of his deep spiritual insights.

## Bibliography

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The Holy Bible King James Version. (2010). Nashville, Tennessee: Holman Bible Publishers.