

# Hurt of the Heart Inventory

*Examining Our Woundedness*



# Hurt of the Heart Inventory

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What would your reaction be if you heard of someone who severely cut open one of their arms to the degree that a massive amount of blood was flowing out of their body, yet they chose to seek no medical help? We would probably think that this was an unwise choice. Then what if you learned that this same person later went into a hospital once or twice a week but each time they refused to mention that their arm had been hurt and the wound subsequently became infected. At that point we might think that this person is making a serious mistake. If this is so obvious in the natural, why is it that so many of us, though we have been severely wounded in our souls, fail to seek the spiritual healing that we need? How is it that some people who even regularly gather with other Christ-followers (a spiritual hospital) come and go without ever letting others know that they are hurting and in pain?

Far too many souls around the world choose to live with deep pain in their souls, never taking the proper time to come to the Great Physician, the Holy Spirit, and allow Him to work a deep and real cleansing and healing of their hearts. Therefore, we have designed this inventory to be an initial step in the right direction. Within these few short pages we will begin to allow the Holy Spirit access to our hearts. We will begin to allow Him to show us the wounds that are in our souls, and we will start to learn that we really can take our hurt, our bitterness, and our pain to God, and watch as He Himself heals and restores us back to emotional wholeness.

- *Biblically speaking, how important is it that we deal with any hurts or unforgiveness that may be in our hearts?*

**For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions. Matthew 6:14-15 (NASB)**

One reason that we must begin to deal with the wounds of our hearts is because of the serious consequence that Jesus spoke about if we hold onto any unforgiveness in our hearts. Jesus stated plainly that we ourselves will not be forgiven if we fail to forgive others for the ways in which they have sinned against us. Jesus did not put a qualifying statement on this to allow us to justify unforgiveness. No matter how difficult the circumstances may have been, Jesus did not say it is okay to hold their sin against them.

Jesus never walked in woundedness. When we look at His life we never see Him giving into self-pity, unforgiveness, or rage for the way people were treating Him. In the natural He faced great opposition, being contradicted by His own creation, eventually being mocked, beaten and murdered by those He came to save. While He was grieved and upset at times by the pride and unbelief of the people, we do not see Him stepping into unforgiveness. The scriptures are abundantly clear that He never once went with woundedness, forgiving even those who crucified Him (Luke 23:34).

Though we may know this as a historical fact, have we ever asked ourselves the question, “Why did Jesus never give into woundedness? How was He able to rise above the temptation to give into woundedness from the hurtful actions of those around Him?”

## **Where do the wounds in our souls come from?**

Very simply, wounds that affect our souls stem from times when we believe that someone has sinned against us. This sin may be committed with an intention of deliberately harming us. At other times wounds can take place due to something that we have perceived as a sin, when in fact the offender did not intentionally sin against us, and may not even be aware that they have caused us any harm.

An example of a perceived sin would be when two people are communicating and one makes a statement in which they intended no harm, but due to mishearing what was said, the other person takes an offense. Wounds can take place when we are insulted and it offends our pride or when someone did not trust us with something that we believe we were capable of. We may have felt dishonored by something that was said or done and this can plant a

seed of unforgiveness in our hearts. Satan of course will be quick to seek to stir up thoughts of anger and unforgiveness. If we are not quick to forgive those who offend us, and in turn ask God's Spirit to heal our wound, then this seed of darkness can quickly grow into a debilitating unforgiveness and woundedness in our hearts.

When we look at the life of Christ, the key to Jesus' continuous victory over woundedness was that He never once gave into unforgiveness when He was sinned against. He never once chose to give into sin (pride in Himself and unbelief in God). He maintained a straight course, forgiving those who sinned against Him, and never once allowing offense or pride in His heart.

**(Jesus speaking) "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." John 16:33 (NIV)**

**Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation. 1 Peter 4:12-13 (NASB)**

Jesus promised us a life in which we would be sinned against. He promised us a life of being hated by all mankind. He Himself suffered rejection, humiliation and physical persecution, and He told us that we too would face similar difficulties. Perhaps this is one reason why He spoke about the vital importance of living a lifestyle of constant forgiveness and of praying blessing for our enemies. The apostles faced tremendous difficulties even to the point of despairing of their lives (2 Cor. 1:8). Yet somehow, in the midst of all our trials and persecutions, we are called to die to our pride and walk in real heart level forgiveness.

If we are to face such rejection, a good question to ask would be, "How many people within the Body of Christ have been properly equipped to handle the daily offenses that take place in life?" Beyond just knowing in our minds that we should "forgive those who have sinned against us", how many Christ-followers are truly prepared to face the daily onslaught that comes against our faith in the form of various offenses? For far too many, this has been the unexpected battleground that has caused us to be defeated in our walk with God. Therefore, in order to walk forward in victory with a heart that is whole and healed, it is important to give the Holy Spirit permission to reveal to us any way that we may be walking in woundedness and unforgiveness.

#### **To make use of this inventory:**

- Choose to get alone with God apart from distractions such as your cell phone and computer.
- Ask God to show you which past experience is affecting you currently. (This worksheet does not contain an exhaustive list of possible reasons for the hurt of the heart; allow God to lead you by His Spirit towards what He wants you to know.) Your hurt may be related to one of the categories, but will probably be connected with a specific person's actions or attitude or an incident in your life. Ask for clarity from God. It is not what the hurt is itself, but what this hurt means to you. In what ways has it affected you?
- Ask God how you may be seeking to comfort yourself apart from His real comfort.
- Ask God to show you that He suffered with you through your pain and has never abandoned you or given up on you. If you need to, ask someone you trust to discuss the inventory with you.
- Be willing to be quiet in God's presence until you know you are finished with this process.

# Categories of Wounding

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Abandonment (Physical or emotional)

Abuse (sexual, physical, mental or emotional)

Incest

Harsh, non-redemptive criticism (ridicule)

Trauma (physical, mental, emotional)

Loss through death or divorce

Loss through bad decisions

Rejection of your person or your best performance

Unjust punishment

Demands of perfection

Made to feel that you do not matter

Owning the pain of another person close to you

No physical affection

Neglect (deprived of the basic needs for food/shelter/clothing/security)

Overindulgence

Overprotection

No investment of time

Broken promises or being lied to

Manipulation (being jerked around emotionally)

Being in warfare

Cultural wounding

Being bullied

Religious abuse

Exposure to occult practices

Taught harmful values (hate/fear/"life should be fair"/"the world owes me a living"/certain kinds of people are inferior)

Hurts inflicted by your addictions (self-inflicted wounds)

# Interacting with God

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1. During this time of being with God, which hurt/s of the heart did He draw you to from your past needing to be healed? (Write these down here)
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2. Ask God to show you how this hurt translates into your life—in what ways are you affected by it? To discover this, you can examine your self-talk. How do you talk to yourself about yourself? About yourself in relationship with the people who wounded you? About yourself in relationship with God?

Here are several questions you may want to consider. Deep down, does this *hurt of the heart* translate for you that:

1. You feel **unloved**, especially by those whose love you crave, so now you feel you have to pursue love wherever you can find it?

**Self-talk focus:** I wish I could find someone who loves me. No one cares about me.

2. You feel you are **insignificant**, lacking value in the eyes of others, so you let others define you or you feel the inner drivenness to succeed and prove them wrong?

**Self-talk focus:** I am nothing in other people's eyes. They do not see me.

3. You feel you are **powerless** to help or defend yourself, so you always feel putdown and defeated?

**Self-talk focus:** No matter what I do, I always lose. People step all over me.

4. You feel **hopeless**, so you see no point in having dreams or striving for a better life?

**Self-talk focus:** I feel trapped in this unhappy life. Other people have better lives.

5. You feel you will **never be accepted** so you always find yourself on the outside?

**Self-talk focus:** I am never included by anyone. People make me feel unwelcome.

6. You feel you are **violated and dirty** in ways you will never be free from again?

**Self-talk focus:** I feel that I was robbed of my purity and innocence. The person who did this to me does not even care.

7. You feel **unforgiven** and find it hard or even impossible to forgive others?

**Self-talk focus:** I have to pay for my sins. People will never forget my past.

8. You feel **fearful**, so you feel paralyzed and cannot make life decisions?

**Self-talk focus:** The world is full of things and events of which I am afraid.

9. You feel that you are **ruined/damaged/broken** and can never be made whole again?

**Self-talk focus:** Nothing is right about me. I wish someone could fix me.

10. You feel **at fault for what happened** so you will not forgive yourself?

**Self-talk focus:** If only I could go back and undo the harm. People know that I did it, too.

11. You feel **emotionally enmeshed** with the people who wounded you, so that you cannot mature without their permission, which you never seem to get?

**Self-talk focus:** How could I live without them? They won't let me go.

12. You feel **entitled**, so you are easily offended when you do not get your way?

**Self-talk focus:** I deserve whatever I want. If others get in my way, they are wrong.

13. You feel you are a **disappointment** to the people in your life, so you have spent your life trying to please them?

**Self-talk focus:** I wish that person thought better of me. I will never measure up.

3. As you start to understand your inner view of yourself, ask God to help you connect your personal interpretation of yourself to the broken or strained relationships you have. As you consider your *hurt of the heart*, **who is the person(s) that played a role in the wounding?**

**Take time to ask the Holy Spirit this question:**

- Reveal to me those who have sinned against me and caused my heart to be wounded: (Write down the name/s of those that God reveals to you)

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If that person is still living and you know where he or she is, use the following scale with #10 being the worst, mark how deeply fractured your relationship is. (If there is more than one name, mark a number next to each name.)

- 1) Uncomfortable to share personal thoughts and feelings with this person
- 2) Secretly angry, but the person is not aware he or she is the object of your anger
- 3) Openly angry and in conflict but the person does not know the source of your anger
- 4) Openly angry and the person is aware of why you are angry
- 5) Secretly hate the person
- 6) Indirectly seeking to bring harm to the person by sharing personal information/story with others
- 7) Avoid being with the person except when necessary
- 8) Publicly state your hatred of the person
- 9) Actively cut off and not in communication with the person
- 10) Actively seeking to bring the person harm by acts of abuse or lies against the person

- Now, take time to go name by name and ask the Holy Spirit if you have ever allowed Him to heal you of the hurt that was caused by what was done to you. (Take as much time as you need to pray through this)

## 4. Moving Forward in Forgiveness, Repentance & Healing

### *Learning Forgiveness*

**What forgiveness is:** Releasing the debt the person owes you into God's hands and discovering you have compassion for that person. It's not humanly possible – it is the work of the Holy Spirit.

**What forgiveness is not:** It is not reserved for the person who is sorry and healed. Nor is it believing that the person is safe.

**What forgiveness does:** Opens the forgiving person to perceive and accept God's forgiveness.

**Impact:** The forgiving person will spiritually attract people with similar wounds who are looking for healing.

**Practical Exercise:** Now we want to begin to deal with any unforgiveness that may be in our hearts. Take time in prayer to ask God the following questions. We would encourage you to take your time and not rush through this exercise. These questions are incredibly important:

- Is there anyone that I am holding a grudge against?
- Is there anyone I haven't forgiven?
- Is there anyone I hate?
- Is there anyone I refuse to love?

#### **A. Repentance of our unforgiveness / Chose to forgive and pray blessing for the offender**

- Begin to ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you the areas of your heart where you have lived in unforgiveness.
- Choose to forgive those who have offended you. Choose to pray for and bless the person or persons who have offended you. As you release and bless them in this way you will simultaneously be released and blessed.

It is always helpful to remember that forgiveness is not a feeling but a choice that we can make at any time no matter how we feel. Forgiveness is a choice of our will in which we release the offense that took place against us. We can do this when we feel peaceful and when we feel angry and upset. At all times, we can make the choice to forgive.

#### **B. Repentance for responding to the offense with any of our own sin (pride/unbelief)**

- Begin to ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you any areas of pride and unbelief you have allowed as a result of the offenses against you. (Typically speaking, even though wounds often begin with the other party who has sinned against us, it is our own sin of pride, and unforgiveness that has allowed the wound to remain.)



- As we repent of our own sin (pride and unforgiveness), God's Spirit will be loosed to bring healing, restoration and freedom to every wound that we have been unable to overcome.
- C. Ask the Holy Spirit to heal our hearts of any residue of the wound.** Give God's Spirit time to reveal to you His perspective regarding the offense that you have faced. Allow God to show you what He believes about you. Trust Him to bring you through to the place of full restoration.
- After you have had time to thoroughly repent of any way in which you have reacted wrongly to being sinned against, take time to be before the Holy Spirit and allow Him to speak to your heart. Allow Him to reveal to you why this wound was allowed to remain in your heart. Ask Him to heal you.
  - Especially if this wound was in the area of being diminished in the eyes of others, allow God to speak to you about how He sees you. Ask God to bring you to a place of faith in what He believes to be true of you. Allow His Spirit to change your heart so that you begin to believe what He believes about you.

**Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Philippians 3:13-14**

In order to remain free in the area of woundedness, this is not a one-time exercise but a lifestyle that we must allow God's Spirit to teach us. We may get freed up today but what about the offense that will take place next week or next month. There is a way that God's Spirit can teach us to forget what is behind and press on toward what is ahead so that we are healed in the present, and prepared to handle future offenses. We never need to dwell on past offenses, but always ask the Holy Spirit to keep our hearts pure from any unforgiveness.

If we will allow Him to teach us how to live in this way, we like Jesus, can love our enemies and bless those who curse us. We will be free, and we will be used by God to set many other captives free!

**5. End by asking God, "What is my next step in being healed?"**

**6. What do you think you need to share with your spiritual guide or community?**

# Hurt of the Heart Inventory Explained

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Now that you have spent time with God over your Hurt of the Heart Inventory, here is some information that will help you process what you discovered.

1. God's goal for all who believe is to conform them to the likeness of Jesus (Romans 8:29). To accomplish this, He uses every event—good, bad and ugly—to lead us towards intimacy with Him and, through a deepening relationship, transform our lives (Romans 8:28). The wounds you are discovering define neither who you are nor who you will become. Your true identity is God's child. That will not change no matter what how many wounds you have experienced in this world.
2. Everyone you will ever meet, including the person in the mirror, has been wounded by living in a world affected by the Fall. This also includes the people who wounded you. Often these wounds are inflicted by those that love us, but whose love failed at a critical moment. This does not mean they meant to wound us or that they are even aware that they wounded us. Nor are all the wounds people receive in life from other people. The whole creation has been affected by the Fall. Some wounds are a product of fallen creation itself in the form of trauma, sickness, death and the unfairness of life that emerged after the Fall.
3. In the Bible, the heart is the place where emotions and rational thinking are weighed to make a 'will decision'—"What will I do in this life situation?" *Hurt of the heart* issues damage our emotions. As a result, where our emotions are damaged, they take on weight in determining will decisions. Damaged emotions create their own reality in our thinking, so that the will decisions we make often seem irrational to those who are observing us. But for us, they seem perfectly rational in light of the reality our damaged emotions have created.
4. It is these damaged emotions that become one of the main avenues through which Satan lies to you about what is true and how much you cannot trust God. For the person who is struggling with damaged emotions, the lies of the enemy feel much more real than the truth from God.
5. During this time of being with God, He probably drew you to a specific wound that has bearing on the transformation He is going to do in your life at this time. It is probably not the only *hurt of the heart* you have, and may not even be the one you were expecting Him to point you to at this moment. But do not reject what God has shown you. Instead, listen to the Spirit and accept that this is the place where God is going to heal you today.
6. What is important is that not only are you wounded, but the *hurt of the heart* of which you are becoming aware has meaning in your life you may not realize. Most people you meet can share about similar wounds, but it may be important to know how this particular wound would translate for you. For example, not just that you were unjustly punished, but how the injustice of that event defined you. Much of this can be found in what you say to yourself in your inner conversations. Self-talk is a window to the emotions of the heart, letting you re-enforce the stories you hold to be true even though they are products of your damaged emotions. It is always a signal that something is wrong within. When fully developed, harmful self-talk helps establish your false identity instead of moving you towards being restored to the person you were created to be by God.

The purpose of the categories of self-talk is to allow you to identify from the way you interact with yourself how you actually view the damage that has happened in your life. You may have more than one way of talking to yourself. By accepting that this self-talk is the result of the

woundedness you carry, you may be ready to allow God to heal you deeply. If you do, you will find that your self-talk will change.

7. Broken relationships are always the outcome of *hurt of the heart*. This part of the interaction with God calls for ruthless honesty. However broken the relationship is, knowing what needs to be healed and allow God to do so is the first step to wholeness, forgiveness and reconciliation.
8. It is important to know that you have already done something about the pain apart from asking God to heal you. Instead, you have chosen to comfort yourself by deadly *sin choices*, which has led you to being trapped by behavior and attitudes that are slowly but determinedly moving you towards further loss and grief. You may have made these choices unconsciously and maybe made them when you were young or long before you began to follow Jesus. That does not lessen the ongoing impact of those choices on you. (In order to see what choices you may be making to comfort your pain, you may consider going through the *Cleansing Prayer Guide* located here: [www.dninternational.org/isrt\\_preparation](http://www.dninternational.org/isrt_preparation))
9. The good news is that God is the Great Physician who heals. Once you come to the place where you know you cannot live with the pain anymore, you will find that God is the Great Physician. It is the very act of going to God and allowing Him to deal with your *hurt of the heart* issues that starts your journey to freedom. You will also need God as your King to deliver you from *sin choices*. So while you have already chosen to comfort yourself with deadly *sin choices*, God is more than able and willing to heal and deliver you. The next step in your faith journey will be to draw close to God and learn from Him how He will do this.
10. God put us in a faith community so we would not be on this journey alone. You are encouraged to find people you can trust and allow them in on the process through which God is taking you—remembering they are in a process with God as well.

## Now that I have completed the *Hurt of the Heart Inventory* what's next?

### Are there any practical next steps?

Going through this inventory and the other related spiritual diagnostic tests is not to simply fill us with greater head knowledge about how weak we are. Seeing a problem but not knowing the solution is not helpful. We are not interested in providing just a short term relief from a problem only to find that it pops back up in a few weeks, months or even years. Jesus stated that in order to live in victory we must learn to develop a deep intimacy with God.

**I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. John 15:5 (NASB)**

We want to give you some very practical next steps that you can begin to put into practice in your relationship with God, that overtime we believe will empower you to be healed of past wounds, and walk in victory over sin. Not by your power, but by His indwelling Holy Spirit.

### Step #1: Continue to allow the Holy Spirit to do a thorough search of your life.

During the initial "**Preparation**" component of our training, in addition to the *Hurt of the Heart Inventory*, if you have not done so already, we would encourage you to go through the **Cleansing Prayer Guide**.

This resource is available free of charge at this link: [www.dninternational.org/isrt\\_preparation](http://www.dninternational.org/isrt_preparation)

Only as we have a clear understanding of where we are at, and what we are currently holding onto, are we in a position to surrender all of this to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and invite Him to deliver us from sin and heal us of the hurt of our hearts.

It is likely that as you go through these resources that some areas of undealt with sin will be revealed to you, as well as wounds that are in need of healing. **The solution to the problems that these diagnostic tests have revealed is very simple: deeper intimacy with God.** Therefore, we highly encourage you to now move beyond these diagnostic tests to the next step – A Lifestyle of Deep Intimacy with God.

### Step #2: Develop a Lifestyle of Deeper Intimacy with God

Once you have completed the spiritual diagnostic tests you can go to the next section of our online school which will help you to establish a lifestyle of deep intimacy with God.

These resources are available at this link: [www.dninternational.org/isrt\\_foundation](http://www.dninternational.org/isrt_foundation)

**Further courses are also available through our online school. We encourage you to take full advantage of all the courses we have available.** Each course will seek to deepen your intimacy with God and equip you to be a fruitful servant in His Kingdom. [www.dninternational.org/onlineschool](http://www.dninternational.org/onlineschool)

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The *Hurt of the Heart Inventory* has been graciously supplied to us by Dr. Steve Smith with Church Equippers. All rights are reserved. Visit their website at: [www.ChurchEquippers.com](http://www.ChurchEquippers.com)

Various excerpts in the ISRT version of the *Hurt of the Heart Inventory* were taken from **Journey into the Spirit Empowered Life** (Chapter 5: Understanding and Overcoming Woundedness) – Click here for more information on this resource: [www.dninternational.org/SpiritEmpoweredLife](http://www.dninternational.org/SpiritEmpoweredLife)