

Healing Journey Curriculum Outline

Unit I. Egypt: A Place of Pain and Suffering

Class #1 Road Map to Healing

In this introductory class we discuss questions and concerns regarding the healing journey. We talk about the areas of healing encompassed in the lessons as well as expectations and responsibilities. No matter where we have been or where we are currently, God's Word promises us there is hope for healing.

- Scripture: Isaiah 1:5; 61:1-4; Luke 7:36-50
- Questions we hope to answer:
Where do our wounds live?
What is this course about and do I belong here?
Can my life be healed?

Class #2 Temptation Crossroads

Temptation is a crossroad that demands a choice in order to pass. We must answer the question, "Whom do I serve?" If we choose Trust Trail—God's way—it leads to the Promised Land. If we choose Pride Pathway—our way—it leads to Egypt, a metaphor for bondage and pain.

- Scripture: Jeremiah 6:16; Genesis 3:1-6; Luke 4:1-13
- Questions we hope to answer:
Where does my pain come from?
What is the source of temptation?
Where do Trust Trail and Pride Pathway end up?
How do I learn to choose Trust Trail?

Class #3 Life on Pride Pathway

The trouble begins when we forsake God. We forsake him when we do not rely on him and choose to live life our own way. When we make prideful choices to rely on ourselves and go our own way, we inevitably end up with plans and schemes that don't work. The consequences are severe. Our merciful God cares about us and provides a way back to him.

- Scripture: Jeremiah 2:13-22; 3:12-13; Ecc. 2:1-11
- Questions we hope to answer:
Why did I make so many mistakes in my life?
Why don't my ways work out?
Does God care about the choices I make?

Class #4 Joseph's Story

Because Joseph had many difficult things to cope with in his life, he is an excellent role model in our own healing journeys. He came from a dysfunctional family and suffered many injustices. God was working for his highest good in each of the events using the struggles to prepare and mature him. Joseph had to choose to serve God within his painful events in order to become truly free.

- Scripture: Genesis 37-50; Acts 7:9-10
- Questions we hope to answer:
Are Joseph's struggles relevant to me?
Why does God allow and sometimes bring suffering?
Why did Joseph have a successful life?

Unit II. Living as My Own God

Class #5 Getting a Handle on the 3 P's

God wasn't just moving his people to a new neighborhood when he called Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. He was shaping them into a God-fearing nation who would follow his ways. God accomplishes the transformation of people by revealing himself through his incredible power, ability to protect and desire to provide for all needs. God not only desires to be our provider, protector, and source of power, but he is the only one qualified. Our faulty belief systems propel us to take over God's roles and be our own god.

- Scripture: Exodus 6; 12; 14; 16
- Questions we hope to answer:
What does it mean to be my own provider, protector and power source?
Why is an accurate belief system so critical?
Why don't I trust God to be in charge?

Class #6 Leaders' Stories

The class leaders will share testimonies of God's healing in their own lives.

Class #7 Your Journey

This class is devoted to the participants' stories that are shared in their small groups.

Unit III. The Peak Perspective

Class #8 The Peak Perspective

Our perspective is the judgment we make upon a person or situation and is fed by our beliefs and thoughts. God's perspective about our circumstances is different and more encompassing than what we can see from our limited vantage points. He is seeking a higher good than we can ever imagine. We explore these differences and look at both Joseph and Christ to see how their perspective affected their ability to handle crisis.

- Scripture: Isaiah 55:8-9; Luke 4:14-30
- Questions we hope to answer:
How does God see things?
How do our beliefs impact our perspective?
Why is my perspective different from God's?
Does God really know what he is doing?

Class #9 A Perspective on Abuse

The rape of Tamar by her brother Amnon is one of the toughest stories in Scripture. We will look at the devastating effect abuse has on the entire family as we try to understand why abuse happens and who is and isn't to blame. Each person in the story made critical choices with far-reaching consequences. We will look at the connection between being a victim and being an offender. We always have a choice about how we respond to what happens to us.

- Scripture: 2 Samuel 13
- Questions we hope to answer:
Why does abuse happen?

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How is our identity affected?
Where is God when abuse occurs?
Is there hope for abuse victims?

Class #10 A Perspective on Freewill

By embracing a broader perspective, one with eternal boundaries, we begin to get a more accurate take on what this life is all about—particularly the hard stuff. God knew when he created our freewill that we would use it harmfully, so he made a plan to restore victims and offenders. Our choices will be either a wall or a door to God's restorative work being done. We need to leave the matters of justice and mercy to God because he is the only one who can perfectly keep them in balance.

- Scripture: 1 Peter 1:3-9; 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10
- Questions we hope to answer:
How can a loving God allow abuse?
How do choices affect abuse?
What is freewill all about?
Is my eternal salvation secure?

Class #11 Seeing Challenges God's Way

Through the life of Nehemiah, we will look at a positive example of trusting God's perspective. We will observe the way he processed his difficult feelings; how he trusted completely in God as his provider, protector, and power and God's amazing faithfulness.

- Scripture: Nehemiah 1-2
- Questions we hope to answer:
What were Nehemiah's five steps?
How do beliefs affect our painful situations?
Does God care about my feelings?
Does God really answer my prayers?

Unit IV. The Life of the Victim

Class #12 Hagar and the God Who Sees

In the eyes of the world, Hagar was a "nobody." Yet a compassionate God sees Hagar's misery and responds by coming to her and providing for her within her circumstances—even though she is partially responsible for her painful situation. After an encounter with the "God Who Sees," she is lifted out of her pit of hopelessness.

- Scripture: Genesis 16
- Questions we hope to answer:
How do Hagar's feelings relate to being both a victim and an offender?
Does God see me and care about my feelings?
How do unhealed emotions propel our choices?

Class #13 The Four Directions of Anger

Our anger is not our enemy; it is merely a communicator trying to tell us that something important has been threatened. Like water, our anger must go somewhere and there are four possible directions. Our

anger takes many forms, some subtle and others obvious. We need to be aware of our own anger patterns so we will not be controlled by them and tempted to sin. Responding in anger hurts our relationship with God, others, and our self.

- Scripture: Ephesians 4:22-32
- Questions we hope to answer:
What is feeding my anger?
What forms of anger play out in my life?
How has anger caused damage to my relationships?

Class #14 The Desert, Sea, and Prison

Our journey as a victim often resembles a desert-like experience, a stormy sea, or a gloomy prison. We seek to satisfy our basic need for significance, acceptance, and security, but find ourselves only dissatisfied because of our pride, unbelief, and rebellion. No matter what we have chosen, no life is so dark that God cannot bring us into his light.

- Scripture: Psalm 107
- Questions we hope to answer:
What are the unmet longings in my heart?
How is pride, unbelief, or rebellion guiding my choices?
How can I begin to turn my situation around?

Class #15 The Victim Women's/Men's Club

The victim identity tells us we are defined by what has happened to us and we have no choices. Just because we have been offended or victimized doesn't mean we have to live as victims. This is a strong bondage that can keep us stuck and miserable as we live defeated and ineffective lives. We can begin to change these patterns by changing what we believe about ourselves: our identity.

- Scripture: Psalm 10:14; Ecclesiastes 7:18
- Questions we hope to answer:
What are the five rules victims live by?
What are the false beliefs I have embraced about my identity?
Have I attempted to manage other people's lives?
Where are my areas of imbalance?

Class #16 Self-Acceptance

Self-acceptance comes from believing the truth about who we are in Christ. He views us as his precious sons and daughters and accepts us as we are. Sober judgment embraces our weak and imperfect dark sides as well as our valuable, gifted, bright sides. Receiving God's grace makes sober judgment possible.

- Scripture: Romans 12:3; 1 Corinthians 15:10
- Questions we hope to answer:
How have lies affected my identity and how I feel about myself?
How does God see me?
How can I view my identity accurately?
Who am I really?

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Unit V. Journey to the Promised Land

Class #17 Leaving Egypt

The journey to freedom is hard and God knows this. He encourages us to not be afraid because he loves us and is with us every step of the way. It is in the journey that we are transformed. He has made a way out and will provide every needed resource for the trip.

- Scripture: Isaiah 43
- Questions we hope to answer:
 - How do I deal with my fear of trusting God?
 - What will happen if I trust God?
 - Will anything else save me?

Class #18 Freedom From the Enemy

We are in a battle we didn't ask for. Success on our journey requires awareness of the enemy, accurate thinking about how he works, attentiveness to the things that attract his attention, and appropriate action when he attacks. Satan's goal is to take us captive but Jesus is our rescuer. Even though the enemy is real, he is no match for the power of God. The best way to defeat the enemy is to know God's truth, get rid of the garbage in our lives, and live in the light.

- Scripture: 1 John 4:4; 1 Peter 5:8-9; James 4:7
- Questions we hope to answer:
 - Who is Satan, what does he do, and why is he after me?
 - How is the garbage in my life giving him permission to interfere with me?
 - How do I keep the enemy from messing with me?

Class #19 Our Season in the Wilderness

It is easy to think of Joseph as the golden boy who did everything right. The truth is that he struggled through his healing journey, just like we do. In this story, his less than stellar choices led to an erratic and messy process. As we look at Joseph's experience of healing from his painful wounds we can see him navigate the difficult terrain of blame, anger, pain, and grief.

- Scripture: Genesis 42-44
- Questions we hope to answer:
 - What can I expect during my journey?
 - Will I still heal if I make mistakes?
 - Why do I have to feel hard feelings before I can heal?
 - Is God capable of cleaning up the mess if I let my pain out?

Class #20 Humility Valley

One of the goals of our healing journey is to be in an intimate relationship with God. Sin blocks intimacy. The remedy is confession. Our unhealed wounds have propelled our sinful choices to become offenders to God and others. Because of God's tender mercy, it is safe to go to him in honesty and vulnerability. Confessing our sins and receiving forgiveness will set

us free from shame and guilt and move us toward the Promised Land.

- Scripture: Isaiah 57:14-21
- Questions we hope to answer:
 - How have my choices offended God?
 - What happens to my relationship with God when I sin?
 - How has God provided for the restoration of my relationship with him?

Class #21 Life in the Promised Land

The moment we turn toward God and seek his way, he begins blessing our life. We have God's favor. He delights in us. Little by little he brings to us contentment, joy, and peace as he accomplishes the restoration of our mind and heart. When he is finished we will enjoy a warm and caring relationship with God and our life will bear fruit for his kingdom.

- Scripture: Ezekiel 36; Isaiah 61:1-3
- Questions we hope to answer:
 - What are the five traits of living victoriously?
 - What are the blessings that God promises?
 - Why is obedience always the proof of belief?

Unit VI. The Destination—A Life that Worships God

Class #22 Justice, Mercy, and Humility

As we begin to shed the victim identity we need something new to put in its place. Living victoriously is the standard God has provided for us. We are to act justly and do the right thing regardless of how other people are treating us. Victorious men and women treat others with mercy, giving them grace rather than judgment. We live in humility knowing it's all about God—not me.

- Scripture: Micah 6:8
- Questions we hope to answer:
 - What does "acting justly" look like?
 - How do I "love mercy"?
 - What does it mean to "walk humbly"?

Class #23 A Life Model: Trust, Commit, Rest, Wait

It is likely this earthly life will never stop giving us tough problems to work through. How do we stay on Trust Trail when this happens? God tells us the first step is to trust him and believe he is the one for the job. Next, we commit our way by following his Word and doing what he tells us to do. Rest follows by resisting the temptation to control or act out. Finally, we wait while God works, knowing his timing is perfect.

- Scripture: Psalm 37:1-11
- Questions we hope to answer:
 - How does God want me to handle hard situations?
 - What does trusting, committing, resting, and waiting involve?
 - What are the blessings in this process?

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Class #24 The Congruent Woman/Man

While living in Egypt we say one thing, do another, and still believe something else. This reality begins to transform into congruency as our healing progresses. Our thoughts, feelings, actions, words and beliefs begin to line up with God's heart and we become congruent men and women. We then begin to reflect the glory of God to everyone around us. Our life becomes a beautiful sacrifice of service for the Lord.

- Scripture: Romans 12:1; James 1:21-27; Psalm 51:17
- Questions we hope to answer:
 - What is a congruent woman/man and how do I become one?
 - How can I worship God in these areas?
 - How does God help me do this?

Class #25 Healing for My Wounds

We are like small children desperately guarding our wounds so no one will hurt our heart—but our strategy is ineffective. We need God's healing light to penetrate deep into our wounded place if it is going to truly heal. When we forgive our offenders, we are giving God the green light to apply his healing. Forgiveness is the remedy for wounds others have created. Forgiveness is applying the mercy I have received to my offenders and letting God be their judge instead of me.

- Scripture: Matthew 18:21-35; Luke 6:37-38
- Questions we hope to answer:
 - How does unforgiveness keep me in bondage?
 - How do I heal from the wounds others have inflicted on me?
 - Does forgiveness mean I am letting my offenders off the hook?

Class #26 The Place of Grieving

Grieving is the last stop on our healing journey before we arrive in the Promised Land. Forgiveness removes the barriers and allows the sadness to finally emerge as we mourn our losses. God applies his soothing balm and sustains us during this time. When the grieving is over we are finally free and healed. New fruit then grows where the old wounds used to live.

- Scripture: Genesis 42-50; Romans 8:28
- Questions we hope to answer:
 - What does the grieving process look like?
 - How did Joseph grieve?
 - Is God really working for our good?

Unit VII. Victorious Living in the Promised Land

Class #27 The Battle for our Thoughts

Victorious men and women stand guard, watching what boards the on-ramp of their minds. They screen their thoughts, measuring them against God's truth, and reject anything that doesn't measure up. Satan will constantly try to get us to allow false thinking on board because he knows he can defeat us if he succeeds. By submitting to God and believing the truth we defeat the enemy.

- Scripture: 2 Corinthians 10:3-5; Romans 12:2; James 1:13-18
- Questions we hope to answer:
 - How can my thought life lead me into bondage?
 - Is it possible to control my thoughts?
 - What are the weapons God wants me to use to fight this battle?

Class #28 Remaining on the Trail

Once we have experienced some freedom and healing, it is important to maintain our new closeness to God by being attentive to the basics of prayer, quiet time, Bible study, and fellowship with Christians. By reviewing the various healing steps, we will be reminded how to complete our healing journeys and stay on Trust Trail.

- Scripture: John 15:1-8; Acts 2:42-47
- Questions we hope to answer:
 - How can I increase my motivation to be with God, to read and pray?
 - How can I truly be in God's presence?
 - How do I avoid acquiring new garbage piles in my life?

Class #29 The Throne Room of God

We are so limited in how we view the purpose of our life. It is easy to get wrapped up in our own little dramas and forget this life is not the point. God gives us glimpses of the eternal perspective in his Word. Our hearts were created for and long for perfection which is why we experience so much disappointment here. But the day will come when we will experience the fullness of God's promises and dwell with him for all eternity. Hanging on to this will give us hope and sustain us in this life.

- Scripture: 2 Corinthians 4:17-18; Philippians 3:20; Isaiah 58:12; 1 Peter 5:10-11; Revelation 19:6-9
- Questions we hope to answer:
 - What is the purpose of this life?
 - How do I switch my focus from the daily difficulties to the promised future hope?
 - How can I use my time here on earth to the best advantage?