

SESSION ELEVEN

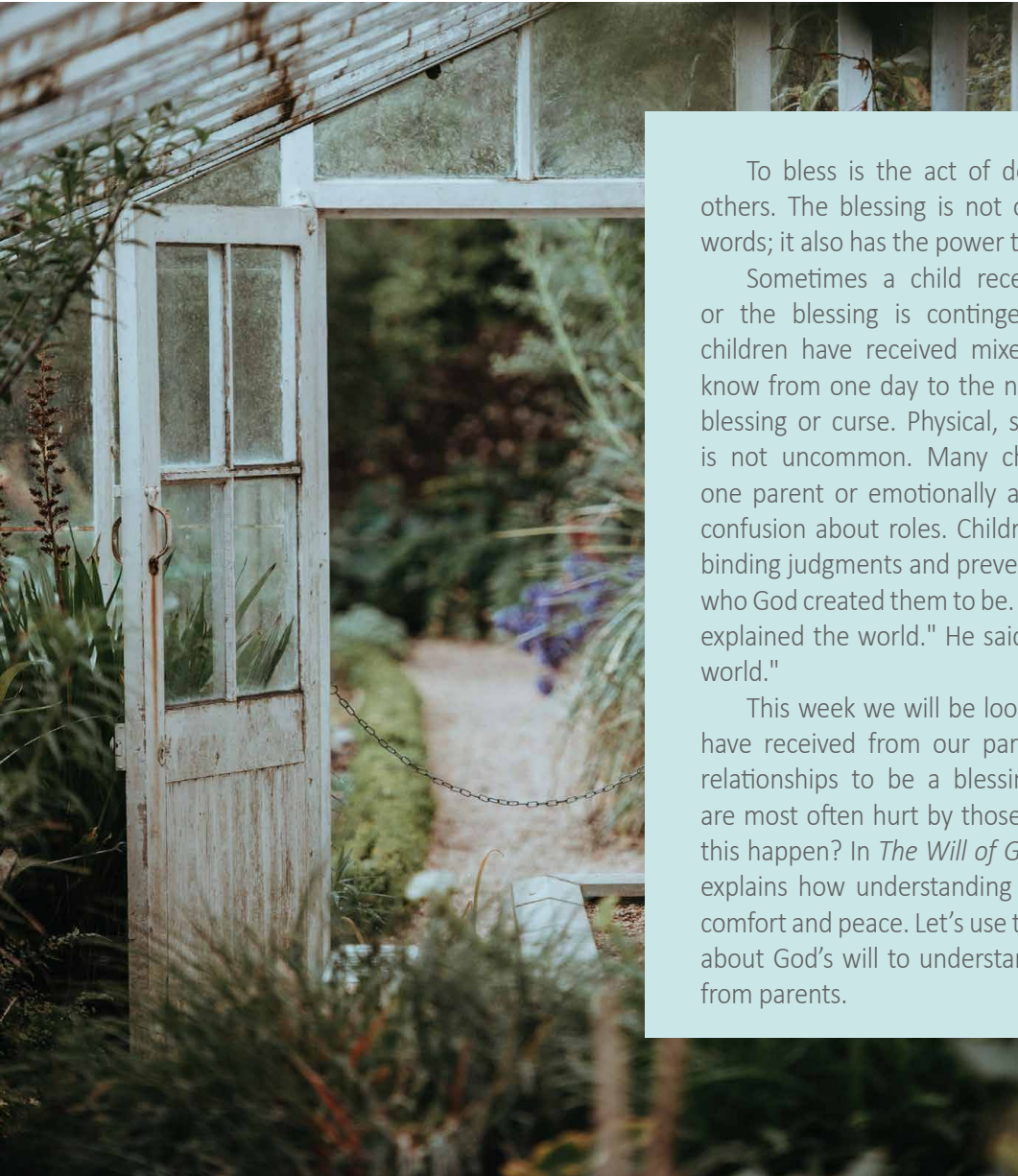
Mother/Father Wounds

PRAYING WITH OTHERS | LEVEL TWO



Mother/Father Wounds

THE DOORWAY



To bless is the act of declaring God's favor on others. The blessing is not only the good effect of words; it also has the power to bring them to pass.

Sometimes a child receives a partial blessing or the blessing is contingent on behavior. Many children have received mixed messages and don't know from one day to the next if it will be a day of blessing or curse. Physical, sexual, emotional abuse is not uncommon. Many children are raised with one parent or emotionally absent parents. There is confusion about roles. Children hear things that are binding judgments and prevent them from thriving in who God created them to be. Jesus did not say, "I have explained the world." He said, "I have overcome the world."

This week we will be looking at wounds we may have received from our parents. The Lord created relationships to be a blessing to us. However, we are most often hurt by those closest to us. How can this happen? In *The Will of God*, Leslie Weatherhead explains how understanding God's will can bring us comfort and peace. Let's use the thoughts in this book about God's will to understand blessings (or lack of) from parents.

About God's Will

God's Intentional Will

God's intent is for every child to have unconditional love, nurture, meaningful touch, affirmation, edification, assurance they are highly valued, physical needs met in a safe and stable home environment and parents who picture a special future for their children—to nurture the God-given gifts and usher them into the future of blessing.

Write one thing or more that was God's intended will for you.

God's Circumstantial Will

Although it's possible for a child to receive many rich blessings growing up, no child has received the fullness of blessing. Parents cannot give what they have not had themselves.

Write one thing or more that was your reality due to realities of this world/your parents brokenness.

God's Ultimate Will

Because Jesus overcame the world we can see ourselves as valued, loved, worthy, able to bless, able to be intimate, able to forgive. Regardless of our past, God does redeem and restore and is not bound by time or place. He does transform memories and sets us free by transforming places in our hearts. Inner healing brings the power of God to do the things we cannot do ourselves. The Lord wants to heal and pour his love into us and bless us as the only perfect parent. He can bring us the fullness of blessing and bring us peace.

Write one thing or more that indicates how you believe the Lord could restore, redeem, reform, recreate your childhood circumstances so that you see yourself as God sees you.

Assessing Your Mother/Father Wounds

To begin the healing process, it's important for you to recognize how you were wounded. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you take an honest look at how your parents cared for you. For each statement indicate if it is true of your relationship with any of your parents by marking an "M" for mother, "F" for father, "SM" for step-mother, and "SD" for step-father in the circle before the statement.

PART ONE

Identifying How I Was Wounded

Things I needed that I didn't get:

- I was not cherished and celebrated by my parents simply by virtue of my existence. I thought I had to be different or perform to be accepted.
- I did not have the experience of being a "delight" to my parents and those around me.
- I did not hear affirmation—words of acceptance and validation.
- I did not hear my mom or dad say, "I love you."
- I did not have a parent that took time to understand me or encourage me to share who I was: what I felt, what I needed and what I wanted.
- I did not receive any significant physical nurturing: laps to sit on, hugs, arms to hold me or a willingness to let me go when I had enough.
- I was not to given adequate food, clothing, shelter, or medical or dental care.
- I was not taught healthy boundaries in my actions or relationships with others.
- I did not receive constructive discipline, but rather was disciplined in a manner that made me feel shame and condemnation.
- I was not taught how to do hard things—to problem solve and develop persistence.
- I was not given the freedom to make mistakes and learn from them.
- I was not given opportunities to develop my personal gifts and talents.
- I was not allowed to make age-appropriate choices and decisions for my life.
- I did not have a home where my mom and dad loved each other and stayed together.
- I was not taught the truth about God and his love for me.
- Other things I needed that I didn't get:

Things I got that I didn't need:

- I experienced physical abuse: such as violent spankings that left marks, face-slapping, hair-pulling, shaking, punching, or tickling me into hysteria.
- I experienced verbal abuse: name calling and words that made me question my value.
- I experienced sexual abuse, inappropriate touching.
- I witnessed or was within hearing range of someone being abused.
- I was exposed to pornography at a young age.
- I was physically abandoned by one or both of my parents.
- I was emotionally abandoned by one or both of my parents.
- I experienced torture or satanic ritual abuse.
- My parents were too hard on me.
- My parents were too easy on me.
- I received a distorted view of God, which characterized him as a God of judgment rather than a God of love.
- My parents did not practice what they preached.
- Other things I got that I didn't need:

PART TWO

Identifying How My Woundedness Has Played Out in My Life

When we are wounded by our parents, there is emotional pain that produces consequences within you. The effect of the wounding can include the the following statements on the next page. Read through the statements and check the ones that resonate with you.

A Mother's Blessing affects our sense of being and well-being at our core. Their role is particularly crucial the first 10 years of life when a foundation for a healthy identity is being laid. **Wounding in my relationship with my mother has resulted in:**

- Feelings of abandonment and dread of aloneness
- Feeling empty and insignificant
- Feeling invisible/not present
- Loss of self and sense of being
- Emotional detachment – fear the pain of attachment/build protective walls to hide behind/commitment avoidance
- Emotional dependency- clinging to others in an attempt to fill the void
- Low self-confidence
- Fear/anxiety/ insecurity
- Deep loneliness
- Feeling unworthy of love
- Deep fear of rejection
- Confusion about self-worth
- Sexual confusion related to touch/ powerful hunger for feminine touch that can be eroticized
- Separation anxiety that leads to striving, passivity and depression

Pleasure seeking behavior:

- Addictions—food, alcohol, shopping
- Fantasy bonding – attaching to fantasies-- pornography
- Fetish bonding – attaching to things, clothing, hair
- Attachment to self – fantasy image of self
- Emotional incest – meeting emotional needs of your mother
- Weak sense of identity and of being

Implications specifically for women:

- Internalize a low view of women
- Addictive, emotional and romantic dependencies
- Infantile desire for union with women

Implications specifically for men:

- Ambivalence towards women – need them but very wary
- Fixate on feminine objects of desire to fill the deprivation of mother love
- Either detach or remain in toxic grip of an unhealthy reliance with mother

A Father's blessing affects our sense of competence and gender identity. It is especially important ages 10-20. **Wounding in my relationship with my father has resulted in:**

- Fear of aggression due to violated boundaries
- Fear of failure and unhealthy driven-ness due to lack of affirmation of competence
- Gender confusion or insecurity due to lack of gender identity affirmation
- Ambivalence towards authority and power due to a father who is unsafe and not affirming
- Sexual brokenness...LGBT community, pornography, women seeking affirmation through sex with men
- Feeling stupid/incompetent/not good enough
- Feeling like I am unloved or unlovable
- Feeling angry inside
- Feeling I need to continually prove myself/ work harder to justify myself
- Seeking to perform and prove my worth through perfectionism and materialism

Addressing Your Mother/Father Wounds

Though my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will receive me. —Psalm 27:10

STEP ONE

Invite Jesus Into Your Initial Memories and Emotions

Knowing that Jesus wants to heal all who are broken-hearted, invite Jesus to enter into the place of your brokenness—into the specific memories—at birth, early in life, wherever it happens to be. Ask Jesus to reveal His truth to you and receive His truth about who you are. **Write out a prayer asking Jesus to heal you.**

STEP TWO

Release Your Pain to Jesus and Stop Living From the Center of Your Wounded Child

Ask Jesus to take away the pain in each painful memory and replace it with His love. Pay attention to whether there is a particular lie that you have agreed with in this place of pain. Pray the Lord will remove the pain and then transform the memory and any lies you have believed with His love and truth. Check all that apply in the list below.

These are the things done by my parents that cause me pain and anger:

- Not giving me the attention I needed
- Abandoning me
- Judging me harshly
- Making me doubt my self-worth
- Not providing meaningful touch
- Being too busy to care for me
- Playing favorites with siblings
- Not speaking words of blessing and love to me
- Not protecting me
- Making me feel I wasn't good enough
- Not loving me
- Making me feel stupid
- Not nurturing me
- Love based on performance
- Making me keep family secrets

Write out a prayer to ask God to release this pain and anger.

STEP THREE

Strengthen Your Sense of Identity and Knowledge of Your True Self in Christ

Ask Jesus to reveal the truth about who you are. As Jesus affirms your sense of being, He provides an assurance of worth and helps you know the True Self that He created. Then, look to your success stories to see the outworking of your True Self in real life.

As you connect with Jesus' profound love for you, the need for other attachments reduces your need to be loved and allows you to look outward at loving relationships with others. Living with your new self and being open to affirmation will free you to grow in your own story instead of constantly striving to attach to your mother or the substitute for your mother.

- I am accepted
- I am chosen
- I am loved
- I am God's creation
- I am precious in His sight
- I am forgiven
- I have been redeemed
- I will never be left or forsaken
- I have an eternal inheritance
- Nothing can separate me from the love of God

As you understand the truth about God's love and come to know your True Self in Christ, it will free you to let go of the pain and forgive your birth father/mother. This new perspective created in you will now enable you to see your parents through different eyes, and allow you to live in freedom and forgiveness.

STEP FOUR

Forgive Your Father and Mother

Choose, as an act of your free will, to forgive your mother/father and let go of all the resentment, bitterness and anger. Jesus' transforming love will change the perspective of the trauma and free you to accept the circumstances with grace and mercy.

Write out a prayer of forgiveness for the ways your mother/father hurt you through words, actions, not blessing you, or affecting your image of God.

STEP FIVE

Remember the Ways Your Mother and Father Loved You Well

Take some time to think of the ways your parents did love and bless you well and brought wholeness to your life. Check all that apply below.

The thoughts that identify the positive things your parents did:

- You spoke words of love/blessing to me
- You held me
- You told me you were proud of me
- You came to my activities
- You showed genuine interest in me
- You didn't play favorites
- You encouraged my independence
- You recognized and valued my gifting
- You made me feel good about myself
- You were always there for me
- You nurtured me
- You protected me
- You encouraged open communication
- You gave me love that was unconditional

Write a prayer of thankfulness for the ways your mother/father cared for you well.

This inventory and steps toward healing is based on an article written by Alfred C.W. Davis is founder of Agape Healing International and Lovehealstv.com. Used with permission.

STUDY

Read through the passages below. Circle the parts you fully believe.



PSALM 139:13-14

¹³For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.

¹⁴I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

ISAIAH 43: 1, 4

^{1b}Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine.

⁴Since you are precious and honored in my sight, and because I love you...

I JOHN 3:1

¹See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!

ZEPHANIAH 3:17

¹⁷The Lord your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing.

2 COR. 1:21-22

²¹Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, ²²set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

I JOHN 4:16

¹⁶And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them.

DISCUSSION



How has your parenting been different than what you received?

How has your parenting been the same?

Name a good gift you received from your father.

Name a good gift you received from your mother:

MINISTRY



Music

Soaking prayer CD

Goodbye Letter

Consider writing a goodbye letter as described in the lesson on grief/ loss. Name the gap in what you needed from a parent and what was received. Accept it as a loss and express that emotion in a letter. Leave goodbye letters at the cross.

Good Questions

1. Tell me about your story.
2. What defines you as a child/ adolescent/ adult?
3. Who told you who you were?
4. Introduce me as your family.
5. How was conflict handled in your family? How do you handle conflict?
6. How have you experienced love?
7. What do you know/ think about the love of God?
Or what do you believe/feel about the love of God?
8. Is there room for grace and forgiveness in your life?

Letting Go of the Past

Listen to Christine Caine talk about the courage to let go of your past. The video can be found online by searching for the title below at YouTube:

The Courage To Let Go Of Your Past | Christine Caine at Saddleback Church

Jot down couple of things you will remember about this talk:

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RESOURCES

Books

The Blessing: Giving the Gift of Unconditional Love and Acceptance

by John Trent, Gary Smalley, Kari Trent Stageberg

The Power of a Parent's Blessing: See Your Children Prosper and Fulfill Their Destinies in Christ

by Craig Hill

Healing for the Father Wound

by H. Norman Wright

Abba's Heart: Finding Our Way Back to the Father's Delight

by Neal Lozano and Matthew Lozano

The Will of God

by Leslie D. Weatherhead

Safe in the Father's Heart: Finding the Father's Love You Always Wanted

by Sylvia Gunter, Elizabeth Gunter

Fathered by God: Learning What Your Dad Could Never Teach You

by John Eldredge

Prayer Toolbox

Video

Healing the Orphaned Spirit - Leif Hetland

by Pure Passion Media [YouTube]



Notes

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes, spanning the width of the page.