

FREEDOM DEVOTIONAL

SOUL WOUNDS

AUTHOR

SETH PAULUS, Youth Pastor

SOUL WOUNDS

MEMORY VERSE

He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

Psalm 147:3

DAY 1

Today, we continue to explore the wounds and hurts that have been a part of our life's journey. As followers of Christ, we know that in this life, we will face trials, but we can take heart because we belong to Jesus, and He has overcome the world. Ignoring past hurts or trying to toughen up against new ones isn't the answer. Time alone doesn't heal wounds—it requires intention and God's healing hand. We must bring each hurt before the Lord and allow Him to care for them and speak truth over them.

PAUSE

I enter prayer by taking a moment to pause, breathing deeply and meditating on God's truth, allowing it to reach my mind, will, and emotions. As I slowly inhale, I focus on the goodness and faithfulness of our God. And as I exhale, I release anxieties, worries, and fears that have crept into this day.

As I still my mind, I pray:

"He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds."

REFLECT

If you are reading this devotion, you've lived long enough to experience wounds and hurts—it's a universal part of the human experience. Each of us has encountered pain in one form or another. The wounds we carry may have come from a variety of sources, and they may be numerous or few, deep or superficial.

Yet, every wound leaves its mark on our lives. The good news is that there is hope for every pain we've endured.

Let's look again at our memory verse from Psalm 147:3:

"He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds."

Many of us, especially in our culture, have been conditioned to brush off pain. We're told to "walk it off," "toughen up," or "push through." But these approaches ignore the fact that we've been hurt and cause us to compensate in unhealthy ways that twist our soul. This shifts the wound deeper into our core. The hope we have is that we don't have to figure out how to care for our hurts—God Himself will tend to each one.

ASK

We're often told not to live in the past. While we shouldn't dwell there, we also can't ignore it. The things in our rearview mirror still influence our present. If we want to move forward in a genuine, God-honoring way, we need to address them.

- *God, what hurts have I ignored or convinced myself don't affect me?*
- *What truth do You want to speak over those hurts today?*

YIELD

Walking through places of hurt can be emotional and challenging. But remember, you're not alone as you look into these places of pain—God Himself is with you, guiding and protecting you. He cares for you deeply and will walk alongside you as you invite Him to speak into these broken places. Today, take a moment to write down the memory verse.

Father, I am so thankful that You are with me. I'm blessed to know that I don't have to carry all my hurts anymore—that You want to and are willing to care for me personally. You are my great Healer and the one who loves my soul. I trust my life in Your hands, Jesus. Help me this week to let You reveal each hurt as I am able and to hand them over to You. Lord, I've been hesitant and afraid before, but with You, I'm ready to let You tend to each one. Give me strength and courage each day, Lord Jesus. Amen.

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DAY 2

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REFLECT

As we go through life, we may experience many hurts—some may seem so minor that they feel unworthy of mentioning. We convince ourselves that we should be able to get over them on our own. Then, we look around and see others facing serious trials, and they seem to handle them with ease, or so it appears. This creates a habit in us of holding things in and trying to manage them ourselves.

But that's not God's way.

“Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.” —1 Peter 5:7

Peter, who knew what it was like to fail and experience deep shame, encourages us to cast our cares on the Lord. It's not just a gentle laying down, but a heaving away from us and onto Him. We can do this because He personally cares for us so deeply.

The Lord God—the Creator of the heavens and the earth—cares for you. He will take your cares and hurts, no matter how great or small, no matter how messy, and He will tend to each one if we will just cast them to Him.

ASK

We are blessed beyond measure because the Lord is our God. He is not distant or impersonal, but a loving Heavenly Father who walks with us through every season. We can turn to Him in every moment and speak to Him about every burden that weighs on our heart. Let's turn to Him now:

- *God, what burden is on my heart that I have not given over to You?*
- *What truth do You want to speak over this burden to help me heal and release it?*

YIELD

When we cast our burdens onto the Lord, it can be tempting to pick them back up again, holding on to them as we wait on Him. But when we do that, we're saying that we trust our own ability to care for our hurts more than we trust God to handle them. Others may have let us down, perhaps many times, but your Heavenly Father never will. It may take time, but we must release our burdens and leave them in His hands.

Today, next to the memory verse, write down a burden you have been carrying on your own.

Father, I have tried to carry these burdens in my own strength, but I have not succeeded. I acknowledge the weight they place on my heart and my life. Help me to surrender them and release them fully to You. Help me to trust in Your goodness and love, believing that You care for my every need and concern. Thank You for being my Healer, my Sustainer, and my loving Father. Amen.

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DAY 3

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REFLECT

There are moments in life when we feel completely overwhelmed. It may be from emotional turmoil, physical struggles, or even the weight of past hurts. Often, it's a combination of factors that build up until we feel utterly weighed down. When we're healthy and secure, we can face challenges head-on. But as these weights accumulate, our ability to handle new challenges diminishes quickly.

This was the heart cry of the psalmist when he wrote these words:

"For my soul is full of troubles, and my life draws near to the grave. I am counted with those who go down to the pit; I am like a man who has no strength." —Psalm 88:3-4

His words are a raw expression of despair and a plea for help. Verse after verse, the psalmist describes how overwhelmed he feels. Our hurts can build up and press down on us, creating a weight that we don't even realize we're carrying because we've grown so accustomed to it. Yet, when new challenges arise, we may find ourselves more easily overcome than we would have imagined. However, David in Psalm 86 gives us the answer in his own pain:

"Because You, Lord, have helped me and comforted me." —Psalm 86:17

ASK

Our hurts and the weight they carry are very real in our lives. We may have gotten used to carrying them, but they leave us with little margin to handle new difficulties if we haven't tended to them. We must recognize the impact they have on our decisions, responses, and relationships.

- *God, show me how my hurts have impacted me and led to feelings of being overwhelmed.*
- *Would You remind me of the times I felt swamped by life and reveal what past hurt was contributing to those moments?*

YIELD

The writer of Hebrews tells us to cast off every weight and encumbrance that hinders us from running our race. We are all on a journey through life, and Scripture reminds us that some things weigh us down. It's up to us to recognize these weights and choose to set them aside. It's a willful decision on our part to let them go and trust them to the Lord.

As David reminds us, the Lord will help us, and He is ready to comfort us. Today, next to the memory verse, write down how your unreleased burdens have impacted you and weighed you down.

Father, help me to recognize the weights and burdens that hold me down, fatigue me, and eat away at my margin. Help me to release each and every one of them to You, to trust You to comfort my hurts, and to lovingly show me the way forward. Lord, I confess that I am tired of carrying these burdens. I want Your help in lifting them away. I know I can trust You to help and heal each and every one. Amen.

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DAY 4

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REFLECT

This week, we've explored how our wounds are not something we should simply get used to or carry as part of our identity. These burdens are not only exhausting, but they can also become openings for the enemy. Peter, writing to the early church, gives us this urgent reminder:

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.” —1 Peter 5:8

The enemy of our soul prowls around, looking for opportunities to undermine and destroy us, hoping to lure us away from the Lord. He is an ancient and cunning adversary, so we must never give him an opening or a foothold in our lives. The enemy will use anything he can—unresolved pain, deep wounds, or lingering bitterness—to wedge his way into our hearts and minds. Each of our hurts is an opportunity for him to whisper lies that distort our thoughts and steer us away from God's truth.

That's why it's crucial to bring our hurts to the Lord. Only He can bind up our wounds, guard our hearts, and shield us from the schemes of the enemy

ASK

None of us are strong enough to resist the enemy's tactics in our own strength. We need to rely on the Lord's strength and protection. Our wounds may be areas of weakness that the enemy seeks to exploit, but they are also opportunities for the Lord to demonstrate His power and grace in us. It requires us to acknowledge these vulnerable places and invite the Lord into them.

- *God, where are the wounds that the enemy has used to tempt me and cause me harm?*
- *Father, what lies have I believed from the enemy about myself, my past, and my hurts? How have I let these lies impact my life?*

YIELD

The Lord spoke to the apostle Paul, saying,

“My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” —2 Corinthians 12:9

We must come to a place we often avoid—the place of admitting our hurt and weakness. When we do, we find rest and allow the Lord to show His unending strength in our lives.

Today, next to the memory verse, write down the lies you’ve believed about your burdens and wounds and give them over to God.

Lord, You are mighty and You have promised to uphold me with Your right hand. Nothing can overcome You or catch You by surprise. I confess my weakness and the wounds that have weighed me down. I give them to You and trust You to care for them. Help me to be watchful of the enemy’s schemes and to run to You rather than try to face him on my own. You, God, are my shield and my strength. Amen.

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DAY 5

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REFLECT

Today we come to a difficult question on our healing journey: Do you want to be healed? This is the very question Jesus asked a man who had suffered from an infirmity for 38 years. John 5:6 tells us:

“When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been in that condition a long time, He said to him, ‘Do you want to be made well?’”

It’s the only place in Scripture where Jesus asks such a pointed question. Usually, others would cry out to Jesus for healing, desperate for His attention and His touch to make them well. But this man, sitting by the pool of Bethesda, seemed stuck. When Jesus asked if he wanted to be made well, the man responded with a series of excuses for why he hadn’t been healed yet. But Jesus, in His mercy, told him to rise, pick up his mat, and walk.

Sometimes we need to confront this same question within ourselves: Do we truly want to be healed? For some of us, our wounds have become part of our identity. We might feel that our hurts give us strength or purpose, and we’ve carried them like a badge of honor. These unspoken beliefs can prevent us from letting go and receiving healing. So, the Lord asks us today, Do you want to be made well?

ASK

We live in a culture that often celebrates carrying our wounds, hurts, addictions, or other afflictions with a sense of pride. We're encouraged to be "strong" and to push through on our own. But this is not the way of the Kingdom. God doesn't just want us to endure our wounds; He wants to heal and redeem them.

- *Lord, are there wounds in my heart and mind that I have not been willing to release to You?*
- *Father, have I allowed these wounds to become part of my identity, shaping how I see myself or how others see me?*

YIELD

We are living testimonies of the power of God and the glory of His Kingdom. As we allow Him to heal and redeem each broken place in our lives, His glory shines brighter in us, and the light we carry in His name becomes more powerful. It all begins by surrendering to Him and allowing Him to heal what we've been carrying on our own.

Today, next to the memory verse, write down your desire and prayer to be healed from the burdens and hurts you have carried in your heart and mind.

Lord Jesus, I want to be healed. I confess that there have been areas in my heart that I've held onto tightly. I don't want to be defined or marked by my hurts or wounds anymore. May I be seen through the love and grace You have shown me. Jesus, You are faithful, loving, and gracious; I trust You and know that You can heal every hurt in my heart and mind. Lord, I release this pain to You so that I may be made whole. Amen.

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DAY 6

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REFLECT

As we walk with the Lord, we long to live in the freedom and fullness of life that He offers. But sometimes, we still feel held back. We may search and search, trying to identify the source of this barrier, only to come up empty-handed. We might even feel that God Himself is distant. But the problem is that we don't always know what we're looking for. Some of our soul wounds can be so deep or so well-hidden that we can no longer see them clearly. When that happens, we need God's help even to recognize what needs healing.

King David acknowledged this in Psalm 139:23-24, saying:

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

David understood that God's knowledge of us is far beyond our own. The Lord has witnessed every hurt and every encounter that has wounded us. He alone understands perfectly how each wound has settled within us and affected our hearts. So it is to the Lord that we must turn, inviting Him to search the deepest places of our hearts and minds.

ASK

We can try to search within ourselves, but we must remember that our hearts can deceive us. Jeremiah reminds us that

“The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure” - Jeremiah 17:9.

We need to acknowledge our vulnerability and ask God to search every part of our lives, granting Him full access. Only when we fully surrender and submit to the Lord will we find true peace and freedom.

- *Lord, I invite You to search me. Show me what is in my heart, reveal the burdens and grief that I’m carrying—even those I’m unaware of.*
- *Father, expose the hidden wounds and hurts that I’ve not yet surrendered to You. Show me how to release them completely into Your care.*

YIELD

Trusting someone else with the most hidden parts of ourselves can feel frightening. Vulnerability is uncomfortable, and it can make us anxious. But God is the One who formed us in our mother's womb and knows our every thought. He has seen and remembered every moment of our lives. He alone is our best and only true hope for healing. When we allow Him to search and restore us, we can walk freely.

Today, write next to the memory verse your personal invitation to God to search you each day.

Father, I invite You to search my heart. I trust You to speak into and reveal anything that You see. I know that You love me and care for me more deeply than I can fully understand. Show me, Lord, what You see and lead me forward, hand in hand with You, so that I will be able to walk in freedom and healing. I am tired of trying to find my own way and want to follow Yours, Lord Jesus. Amen.

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DAY 7

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REFLECT

Throughout our journey this week, we've focused on inviting God to reveal the hurts and wounds in our hearts and minds, and surrendering those burdens into His loving hands. As we take these steps, the Lord enables us to walk in the fullness of life He has prepared for us. And while God provides healing, we must remember that the journey itself can be of great value.

Romans 5:3-4 says,

"And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope."

The same Lord who heals is the One who also redeems. As we walk through the process of being healed, we can see that the tribulations we face may work in us for good and not for evil.

When we walk through trials in our own strength, or under the influence of the enemy, we will experience hurts and wounds. Yet, when we trust God to lead us, those same tribulations can produce endurance and godly character within us.

Walking with Him through our trials and experiencing His faithfulness deepens our faith and hope in our Savior. God can take the moments that were once wounds and transform them into a powerful witness of His glory and goodness.

ASK

With the Lord at our side, we can become more Christ-like through each trial. They need not produce deep wounds or lingering hurts in our souls. Instead, they can produce glory for God because His Spirit enables us to persevere and forms us into the very image of Christ. When we keep our eyes fixed on Jesus in every storm, we can walk out stronger and more confident in our Lord and Savior with each new trial. It's not easy, but it's possible when we focus on Him.

- *Lord, help me keep my eyes focused on You in every circumstance as I go through my day.*
- *Father, when I find myself in trials and hardships, remind me to turn my gaze from my fears and anxiety and direct it toward You.*

YIELD

Our God not only heals the wounds of our soul, but He also guides us through each new encounter to prevent future wounds from taking root. It takes intentionality on our part to invite Him into those moments and walk according to His truth, rather than listening to our circumstances or the lies of the enemy.

Today, write next to the memory verse a few ways that God has worked good in your life through trials and how He has faithfully delivered you in the past.

Father, I need You. I don't want to walk forward on my own. I confess my complete dependence on You. Walking beside You, I know You will see me through. Even though the walk may be hard and the valley dark, You will never let go of me. Help me to hold tightly to Your hand, knowing that I am safe with You and that Your strength will help me to overcome. I look to You, Lord Jesus. You are my hope and my firm foundation. Amen.