

## Chapter 8: Healing

We live in an imperfect world, where bad things happen to good people. So God intervened, and sent his one and only son to rescue us from all our mistakes and hurt. He made a great exchange, our brokenness for his life. This is not an ordinary life that Jesus offers us, but a life of love, joy, peace, and healing. Healing for anyone who will call out to him for help.

### Your Questions

#### Question 1

What do you do if you have already had sex in the past?

#### Answer 1

In today's society there is pressure to give up your virginity before marriage. Those who became believers later in life, didn't know God's design for marriage and sex, so it's not unusual to feel regret about things that happened in the past.

**But, no matter how bad your past is, no matter how fallen you feel, God will forgive you and give you a fresh start!** Even if your mistakes resulted in pregnancy, or you had sex with multiple partners, Jesus is the only one who can restore to you what was lost. He wants to bring purity back into your life through forgiveness and grace. Just ask Him.

#### 1 John 1:9 NIV

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sin and purify us from all unrighteousness.

#### Isaiah 1:18 NIV

"Come now, let us settle the matter," says the Lord. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool."

That means you can go into marriage feeling completely made new!

Now there is another group of people who had sexual experiences in the past that were imposed on them. These are the victims of sexual abuse. They don't necessarily need forgiveness because they were victims of things that were done to them. But they need healing because something was stolen from them that God wants to restore back to them.

Please read the story of Tamar in 2 Samuel 13:1 – 20:

#### 2 Samuel 13:1 - 20 (NIV)

- (1) In the course of time, Amnon son of David fell in love with Tamar, the beautiful sister of Absalom son of David.
- (2) Amnon became so obsessed with his sister Tamar that he made himself ill. She was a virgin, and it seemed impossible for him to do anything to her.
- (3) Now Amnon had an adviser named Jonadab son of Shimeah, David's brother. Jonadab was a very shrewd man.
- (4) He asked Amnon, "Why do you, the king's son, look so haggard morning after morning? Won't you tell me?" Amnon said to him, "I'm in love with Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister."
- (5) "Go to bed and pretend to be ill," Jonadab said. "When your father comes to see you, say to him, 'I would like my sister Tamar to come and give me something to eat. Let her prepare the food in my sight so I may watch her and then eat it from her hand.'"
- (6) So Amnon lay down and pretended to be ill. When the king came to see him, Amnon said to him, "I would like my sister Tamar to come and make some special bread in my sight, so I may eat from her hand."
- (7) David sent word to Tamar at the palace: "Go to the house of your brother Amnon and prepare some food for him."
- (8) So Tamar went to the house of her brother Amnon, who was lying down. She took some dough, kneaded it, made the bread in his sight and baked it.
- (9) Then she took the pan and served him the bread, but he refused to eat. "Send everyone out of here," Amnon said. So everyone left him.
- (10) Then Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the food here into my bedroom so I may eat from your hand." And Tamar took the bread she had prepared and brought it to her brother Amnon in his bedroom.
- (11) But when she took it to him to eat, he grabbed her and said, "Come to bed with me, my sister."
- (12) "No, my brother!" she said to him. "Don't force me! Such a thing should not be done in Israel! Don't do this wicked thing."
- (13) What about me? Where could I get rid of my disgrace? And what about you? You would be like one of the wicked fools in Israel. Please speak to the king; he will not keep me from being married to you."
- (14) But he refused to listen to her, and since he was stronger than she, he raped her.
- (15) Then Amnon hated her with intense hatred. In fact, he hated her more than he had loved her. Amnon said to her, "Get up and get out!"
- (16) "No!" she said to him. "Sending me away would be a greater wrong than what you have already done to me." But he refused to listen to her.
- (17) He called his personal servant and said, "Get this woman out of my sight and bolt the door after her."
- (18) So his servant put her out and bolted the door after her. She was wearing an ornate robe, for this was the kind of garment the virgin daughters of the king wore.
- (19) Tamar put ashes on her head and tore the ornate robe she was wearing. She put her hands on her head and went away, weeping aloud as she went.
- (20) Her brother Absalom said to her, "Has that Amnon, your brother, been with you? Be quiet for now, my sister; he is your brother. Don't take this thing to heart." And Tamar lived in her brother Absalom's house, a desolate woman.

Verse 18-19 describes Tamar's distress at her loss. Tearing the beautiful garment that the king's virgin daughters wore and putting ashes on her head (which was the traditional way that the Jewish people expressed their grief and mourning). Tamar's story is tragic because she isolated herself and lived in mourning the rest of her life.

But those who put their trust in the Lord can receive healing. The comfort, joy, beauty, and strength of the Lord can be yours.

Please pray for God's healing today, don't spend another moment lonely and in despair. This is God's promise to you:

**Isaiah 61:1-3**

...to bestow on them (you) a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They (you) will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor.

**Question**

What did you learn about the healing process?