

SERMON NOTES

Dealing with our Past
1 Timothy 1:12-17

Ways we try to deal with our past

- Glorifying our past – “Uncle Rico”
- Burying our past – “No, I won’t go to the doctor!”
- Stuck in the past – “Marty McFly”

How we need to deal with our past

- Be honest about your past
- Let the gospel renew your past
- Let the gospel build a new future

Applying the Gospel to Our Story

1. God’s good news for our past
 - a. Grace for messy people
 - b. Grace greater than all our sin
 - c. Grace that cancels all our failures
2. God’s good news for our present
 - a. Grace covers shame with honor
 - b. Grace begins a new chapter in our story
 - c. Grace allows for progressive healing of our wounds
3. God’s good news for our future
 - a. Better than our past & present
 - b. Eternal life not eternal regret
 - c. Brighter than we expect

Learning to tell our stories redemptively

1. Formerly, I was a mess..... (1 Timothy 1:13)
2. But I received mercy..... (1 Timothy 1:13)
3. Because Christ saves sinners like me (1 Timothy 1:15)
4. To show you that you can get in on this (1 Timothy 1:16a)
5. And so we could see our future is bright (1 Timothy 1:16b)

INDIVIDUAL EXERCISE

Receiving God's Healing for the Past

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. - **1 Peter 2:24**

Our God is a God of healing--He longs to speak to the wounded places in our lives and heal them with His love (see also: Psalm 147:3, Psalm 103:2-4). Opening the wounded places of our hearts is an emotional and difficult process, but until we allow God into the harmful events of our pasts, we will never experience true freedom and restoration from them.

Start today by reading Psalm 147:3, Isaiah 53:5, and Matthew 11:28. Meditate on God's desire to heal your wounds. Allow Scripture to fill you with courage to open your heart to the Spirit and let him provide healing today. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you what He wants to heal. What wound, past experience, trial, hurtful word, or person is still harmfully affecting your life today? It may be a specific experience, season of life, or a particular relationship. Where do you need God to speak His truth and love over you?

Open your heart to the Lord, share your honest feelings about this pain. Ask Jesus to speak truth and love to your wound. Allow Jesus to take the burden of pain from you and give you strength to walk in true freedom. Pray that Jesus would remove any shame or guilt from your heart and would give you the grace to offer forgiveness to yourself or someone else. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you believe and give you patience to wait for complete healing. Spend a few minutes in silence listening to God's response. Give thanks to God for his unending love.

**What is the next step that you feel invited to take on your own journey of healing?
How do you respond to the invitation to take that step?**

In some situations, it may be necessary to find a professional person--pastor or counselor--to help you in your journey of healing. Do not hesitate to seek the care you need. Please speak with one of the Bridge elders--they will help you begin the process (church phone: 573-518-1131)

MISSIONAL COMMUNITY

PREPARE BEFORE THE MEETING

As you look ahead to your meeting this week, prepare to share personally about where God has been at work in your story and ways He has healed and restored you using this format

1. Formerly, I was a mess..... (how?)
2. But I received mercy..... (what did that look like?)
3. Because Christ saves sinners like me (how does that make you feel now?)
4. To show you that you can get in on this (why is this good news for others?)
5. And so we could see our future is bright (Tell everyone why your future is bright with Jesus)

START THE MEETING WITH PRAYER

As you begin, remind yourself and your group that there is power in Jesus' name and that He came to bring healing to us. Pray in faith that every member of your group would be open to Jesus healing and redeeming their stories. Pray specifically for healing in each individual's: marriage, family, thought life, habits, and sense of worth. Remembering that not all of the past is negative, thank God for the work He has done in the lives of individuals in your group.

READ THE WORD

I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life. - 1 Timothy 1:12-16

DISCUSS

- Paul did not glorify his past. Paul did not bury his past. Paul did not stay stuck in his past.
- Paul was honest about his past. Paul let the gospel speak to his past. Paul trusted the gospel for his future.
- Question #1: How does shame effect the way we relate to God and others?
- Question #2: How does the gospel cover our shame?

TELL YOUR STORY

Take turns sharing your story redemptively using the format from the “PREPARE BEFORE THE MEETING SECTION” section. If this is confusing to you, let someone else share first.

PRAY – CELEBRATE ALL THAT GOD IS HEALING, RENEWING, REDEEMING, AND RECREATING!