

Emotional Pain Is Real Too

I am often surprised by how often people minimize emotional pain and its impact. Society has taught us to lie about this pain. We have been conditioned to respond, "I'm just fine!" We are expected to tell everyone that we are "fine" regardless of what is going on in our lives. We falsely think that we can cover our problems, often by perfectionism and other addictions. Unfortunately deep emotional pain which is merely covered begins to smell like the forgotten kitty litter box.

As children we were taught to recite another lie to cover pain. "Sticks and stones will break my bones, but words will never hurt me." Nothing could be further from the truth. Words have great power. Scripture is full of all sorts of references to the power of words. In all actuality some physical injuries heal faster than the unseen emotional damage caused by words. Sometimes those spoken words become emotional cancers, strongholds, in our lives. These strongholds attach themselves to our thoughts and act as a filter for all subsequent thoughts and actions until they are removed.

Oft times our current life's issues are rooted in the past. We can act like the past is behind us, but in all reality emotional pain remains like a rooted dandelion. Picking the pretty flower doesn't destroy the plant since it has a root. As if the root structure were not enough they also have those cute little puffy seeds which blow about spreading everywhere creating new pains. Unfortunately the impact of emotional pain spreads throughout many other aspects of life too.

Sometimes the stronghold, emotional cancer, stays hidden. These hidden strongholds can be as destructive as any other hidden physical cancer or tooth decay. Just as we must be on the look out for tooth decay or cancer, we must be on the lookout for strongholds. Strongholds can often be identified by patterns of negative thoughts and actions which dominate our lives. These strongholds are just like tetanus. They look for any puncture in our being and they welcome the opportunity to invade our bodies and minds.

Strongholds can attach to us at any age. Sometimes they even attach to us while we are still in the womb. Research is constantly finding that babies in the womb can respond to the stimuli. Deep pain can be experienced even before a child learns to speak. Strongholds can continue to form as a reaction to deep emotional or physical pain throughout our lives.

Strongholds are often sometimes unexplained feelings which dominate our lives. They are frequently feelings of being abandoned or rejected. Often an identity of worthlessness and inferiority looms. Sometimes roots of rage and bitterness grow. These roots keep us in an inner turmoil which often forms pus pockets which drain onto those in our vicinity.

In our society we are used to going to the doctor or the dentist. We expect them to remove the decay and infection. In other instances we want the cancers and warts to have their roots destroyed. Wound care is required for emotional pain too. "Truth First Aid" must be sought so that the emotional infection does not persist. Fortunately through Christ true healing is available for these wounds, but like the "lady with the issue of blood" we must seek the healing.

There are many Christ-centered resources to help you in your journey. Christian counseling may be the answer. I also encourage you to read *Healing of Damaged Emotions* by David A Seamands. You may also want to join the 2010 Celebrate Recovery step class at the Vineyard, Wheeling, WV which will be forming in the next few weeks. The Formational Counseling Inner Healing Retreat offered by Ashland Theological Seminary, Ashland, OH is a worthwhile endeavor too.

I hope you will allow Christ's light to radiate on your emotional cancers and false beliefs about yourself. True healing will help you to keep the resolutions you have made for 2010.