

The Hidden Half of the Gospel

INTRODUCTION: WHY WE NEED *THE HIDDEN HALF OF THE GOSPEL*



I need something more! For if I know the law but still can't keep it, and if the power of sin within me keeps sabotaging my best intentions, I obviously need help! I realize that I don't have what it takes. I can will it, but I can't do it. I can decide to do good, but I don't really do it; I can decide not to do bad, but then I do it anyway . . . Something has gone wrong deep within me and gets the better of me every time . . . I'm at the end of my rope. Is there no one who can help me?

—The Apostle Paul (Rom. 7:17–24, *Message*)

Life is messy. Whether we walk in the world or walk in the church, we all have struggles. Take some of the people you'll meet in this book, for instance.

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Amber is consumed by anger because her husband cheated on her. Amber's husband, John, suffers from overwhelming guilt and shame because of his affair. Anna, who was sexually abused, hates men; and Lindsey, who was a straight-A student all her life, dropped out of college to commit suicide. Rick is addicted to porn, and Keith can't lay off drugs. For these and others, religion has brought forgiveness of sins, but not freedom from suffering. For those who have tried it, medication and counseling have brought some relief, but not lasting healing. For Diana—who is afraid of small spaces, public places, and just about everything else—Bible studies and baptism have brought redemption, but not recovery. Along with the Apostle Paul, they all cry out, “I need something more!”

How about you? Can you relate to the Apostle Paul's experience of always trying harder, yet never making it? His need for “something more”?

Unfortunately, statistics show that believers and non-believers alike struggle with the same kinds of brokenness, including: alcohol, drugs, money trouble, food addiction, sex addiction, sexual abuse, depression, and domestic violence. In the cases of divorce and pornography addiction, statistics say Christians struggle every bit as often as the rest of the world. But as I have found through over twenty-five years of pastoral ministry, there's one main difference between the two groups: Christians carry more guilt.

Because the “good news” of the gospel hasn't been good news for us—i.e., hasn't offered much power over sin, suffering, or negative patterns—we feel like bad Christians. We know our lives are not exactly testimonies to God's grace and glory. And that leaves us crying out along with the Apostle Paul, “I need something more!” Twenty-five years ago, as a new pastor faced with all of this messiness and more in my own congregation, the cry of my heart was the same. As I came to see the disconnect between the “freedom”

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Christianity promised and the slavery so many Christians faced, I began my own search for “something more,” and so began my journey to *The Hidden Half of the Gospel*.

I NEEDED SOMETHING MORE

I first discovered just how messy the church family could be soon after becoming a youth pastor. At first, I thought we would be doing a lot of fun activities, outreaches, and Bible studies, which we did. But as a new pastor, I was finding that the gospel message I preached, even though it offered forgiveness for sinners, had very little to offer the victims of sin and suffering staring me in the face. Not only did I encounter teenagers struggling with alcohol and drugs, rape, rejection, and other challenges, but in working with these kids, I also encountered single parents struggling to get by, parents who were alcoholics, parents who were rage-a-holics, parents who were divorced with blended families, and more.

My partners in youth ministry and I, along with other church members, could offer love, support, a listening ear, and healthy boundaries, which were all helpful, but I had not been trained to really deal with this brokenness staring me in the face. And despite having master’s degrees in religion as well as marriage and family therapy (and despite having faced many similar struggles in my own life), I did not know how to deal with all of the pain, loneliness, and confusion I now saw in these teens and their families.

Like most pastors, I had taken one class in counseling, with just enough information to encourage members to go to a professional counselor. Unfortunately, this wasn’t an ideal solution, because many cannot afford counseling, and many counselors are not Christians. (I have also found that some Christians counselors and/or pastors like myself have not known how to bring Christ into the process of healing and freedom).

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As far as using religion as a solution, I knew the cross of Christ had changed millions of lives, including mine. I had accepted the gospel that Jesus had died for my sins and risen again so I could receive His gifts of repentance, forgiveness, and eternal life. Yet now that I had seen the daily realities of my church members, I had no idea how to present the cross in a way that could help people when they had been sinned *against*. What's more, I didn't know



what else to offer people who had confessed their sins yet were still living within what I call a cycle of sin-and-forgiveness, a pattern in which people confess their sins, then receive forgiveness, only to return to sinning and then asking forgiveness—over and over again. For some people, this cycle repeats itself every day of the week.

I didn't know what to offer those struggling with all kinds of emotional and physical wounds (whether self-inflicted or not), including depression; guilt and shame; broken relationships; or addictions like anorexia, bulimia, pornography, cutting, bingeing, overworking, dieting, gambling, and anger/ rage. What could I share with people who had accepted Christ as their Savior yet were still carrying pain from the past? What could I share with those who were sincerely trying harder, only to fail time and again?

At that time, I didn't know the answers to these questions. What I did know was that the world needed a gospel strong enough, relevant enough, powerful enough, and yet gentle enough to bring comfort, healing, and wholeness to the messiness and brokenness I saw in the lives all around me.

As I searched the Bible for answers (and as I asked God to search me, as King David asked in Psalm 139:23–24), God led me to the amazing discoveries that I have been applying to my ministry for the past twenty-five

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years. These are the same discoveries that include all of Jesus' words about His story. After speaking to and training audiences across the country, these are the same discoveries I have witnessed making a difference to hundreds of others, not only healing and freeing people from their brokenness and messiness but also moving them into ministry with a testimony—naturally, joyously, and spontaneously. And if you're willing to read on, this whole gospel can do the same for you and your ministry.

WHAT IS THE HIDDEN HALF?

What is the hidden half of the gospel, and how could it make such a difference to so many lives? In twenty-six chapters filled with the stories and testimonies of those mentioned in the opening paragraph, this book offers the results of what I have found since those early questions in 1987. In a nutshell, *The Hidden Half of the Gospel* tells the story of how Jesus came to earth not only to die to offer us salvation from our sins, but also to suffer and be tempted “in every way” like we are tempted, to offer us freedom from our suffering and all our patterns of sin (Heb. 12:2; 2:17–18; 4:14–16).

As you can read on the “About” page on my website, www.straight2theheart.com, this message is also what healed me from my own unresolved brokenness and messiness as I discovered the truth about the whole gospel. What's more, this message brought deep healing to my cowriter, Lindsey, after she heard one of my seminars and completed the prayer and discipleship training we offer at Straight 2 the Heart (See chapters 5, 6, and 7).

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Because Jesus suffered in every way that we ever have or ever will, yet He was “without sin,” and because He buried all this suffering and temptation in the grave, and then rose again, He can offer us:

- Hope for the present and future
- Healing for the ways we have suffered or been sinned against
- Freedom from the patterns of sin or self-protection we have developed because of our suffering (Heb. 2:17–18; 4:14–16; Mal. 4:2)

BEGINNINGS OF THIS BOOK

As this message developed, and as I started sharing it with others, I saw how hearts would soften, opening people up for deeper healing as they connected their stories of suffering with Jesus’ story of suffering. I was first able to share this message in 1990 at churches, and was later invited to share at the National Association for Christian Recovery Conference in 1992, followed by teaching Christian counseling courses and speaking at other conferences, such as the annual Emotional Intelligence Summit sponsored by Dr. Neil Nedley. For the first time in my pastoral ministry, I was seeing the gospel—the whole gospel—transform hearts. The hidden half of the gospel had a way of reaching beyond just head knowledge to become heart knowledge. And as I have found through years of preaching head knowledge, when people are hurting it is not enough to receive Bible knowledge alone, whether a little or a lot.

That’s why, when I present the hidden half of the gospel, I teach mainly through stories (the same method Jesus used), because my target is not the

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head but the heart—or that place where true transformation must take place (Matt. 5:18–19; Rom. 2:28–29). Of course, this method has evolved a long way from its beginnings.

When I first started questioning what part of Jesus' story I had been overlooking, the Lord directed me to think more and more about Jesus' experience from Gethsemane to Calvary. As I did so, I started drawing a cross on the whiteboard in my office while counseling others. On the left side of the cross I wrote the word "Sins" to illustrate how Jesus had paid the price for our sins, along with a list of sins below it. On the right side of the cross I wrote the word "Suffering." Then I listed how Jesus had faced loneliness, abandonment, and betrayal in the Garden of Gethsemane to identify with us. It didn't happen in one "aha" moment but over the course of a few months. As a person shared his or her story of brokenness, I would write their fears, addictions, or brokenness in the left-hand column of the cross. Then I started to share Jesus' story from Gethsemane to Calvary step by step in the right-hand column, so individuals could compare their story with His. *See* cross comparing examples of human brokenness with Jesus' story.

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Jesus Dying For Our Sins, and Our Suffering	Jesus' Experiences of Suffering On His Way To Calvary
<p>As We Experience the Pain Of:</p> <p>Illness, Divorce and Death, Grief and Loss, Being Betrayed, Abandoned, Abused, Judged, Rejected, Depressed, etc.</p> <p>We Seek To Numb Our Pain With Addictions Like:</p> <p>Porn, Food, Pride, Work, Drugs, Anger, Gossiping, Blaming, Worrying, Being Controlling or Abusive, Avoiding/Denying Problems, Performing To Gain Approval</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Being abandoned * Being betrayed * Suffering as He was: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stripped naked Verbally & mentally abused Shamed & humiliated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Authority figures who should have protected Him b. Satan who is the source of all suffering, sin and abuse * Being tempted to numb His pain as He hung on the cross * Crying out to His Father "Why have You left Me alone, forsaking Me, and rejecting Me?"

A picture is worth a thousand words;
a story is worth a thousand pictures.¹

As I shared with people how Jesus had suffered to identify with them, I saw hearts softening much sooner. I saw hope beginning to grow, and with that hope, trust. Jesus' story of suffering was giving people permission to be honest about their struggles. And more than one person said it was the first time they had known they could be honest about their negative thoughts and addictions.

Because this practical, "storytelling" method has touched so many hearts in both private prayer sessions as well as public workshops, I use the same approach in this book. Throughout *The Hidden Half*, in order to show

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how Jesus identifies with all of us, the major scenes of Jesus' suffering and temptation appear side by side with our stories, human stories of suffering, sin, and patterns of self-protection. Our hope is that through the testimonies of others who have applied the hidden half and experienced transformation, you will be inspired to begin letting Jesus transform your life and ministry through the same simple yet supernatural process. It won't necessarily all happen at once, but as a car transmission changes gears to move it along the road, so too will the hidden half help you shift through the stages of your journey of faith.

OVERVIEW OF *THE HIDDEN HALF OF THE GOSPEL*

PART 1: FOUNDATIONS OF *THE HIDDEN HALF*

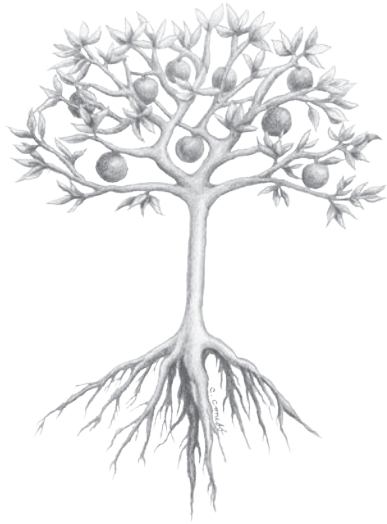
In the first four chapters, Diana's story of sexual abuse, agoraphobia (fear of public places), claustrophobia (fear of small spaces), and other fears helps to build the foundation of the hidden half message as well as the principles guiding my prayer and discipleship ministry, *Straight 2 the Heart*.

THE TWO PILLARS

Using Diana's story of brokenness and messiness, chapter 1 explains why and how our lives become so broken and messy in the first place. In a word, it's because of Satan, the father of lies, who seeks to "kill and destroy" us with his deceptions and strip us of our identities (John 8:44; 10:10). We begin by identifying the cause of our struggles so that we can spend our time fighting the real battle, or the root of the problem—not just the fruit of it (the negative behavior or pattern). In other words, since we don't want the weeds

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of our bad habits to grow back, we ask Christ to help us attack them at their roots. Although it can be easy to get stuck dealing with only the fruit, don't worry. As you progress through the book, you'll get better at identifying the roots and fruits of your own struggles, because we clearly identify these elements in every story we tell. It was through writing and rewriting these stories, in fact, that Lindsey came to recognize the roots underlying her bad behaviors, which is why her story, originally not part of this book, became the final story added.



In chapter 2, we explain the heartbeat of the message: how Jesus came to earth to undo Satan's damage by suffering and being tempted in every way that we are (Heb. 2:17–18; 4:14–16). In other words, we offer Jesus, the Suffering Messiah, as the One who can replace Satan's roots of suffering with His roots of healing. As we explain, Jesus came so He could rise again to heal our wounded hearts; and He came so He could finally set us free from Satan's deceptions, to restore us to our true identities as sons and daughters of God. These are the two pillars to *The Hidden Half of the Gospel*.

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THE TWO PILLARS TO *THE HIDDEN HALF*

1. The root of our sin and suffering is Satan, the father of lies (John 8:44).
2. The root of our healing and freedom is Jesus, our Suffering Messiah (Luke 9:22; Rev. 5:5; Col. 2:15; Isa. 53)

MORE FOUNDATIONS: TRUST AND DISCIPLESHIP

I started *Straight 2 the Heart* because I saw a need for the hidden half message with every audience I spoke to. Chapters 3 and 4 focus on how you can (and why you should) apply the principles of the hidden half to your own life and then spread the message to others. But what if people are not receptive? What if people are skeptical, or scared to open their hearts? (This includes you.) These chapters deal with these very questions and other common barriers I regularly encounter when speaking to audiences (large or small), training discipleship teams, and praying with individuals.

PART 2: PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE HIDDEN HALF

In chapters 5 through 25, the foundations of the hidden half are illustrated through the stories and testimonies of individuals like Amber, John, Lindsey, Anna, Rick, Keith, and more, who have received genuine healing and freedom from applying the principles in their own lives. Here's a quick preview of the topics and stories you can expect:

Stress, anxiety, and fear—Because she had been sexually abused as a child, Diana developed a variety of mental, physical, and psychological problems as an adult, including irritable bowel syndrome and panic attacks. Her fear

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of embarrassment and the unknown became so overwhelming that Diana barely ever left home. (See chapters 1, 2, and 3.)

Depression, self-protection, and abandonment—After her mom left the family, Lindsey struggled with abandonment issues and depression. Feelings of hopelessness led to her attempting suicide, developing an eating disorder, dropping out of college, and breaking ties with family, which only made life harder to face. (See chapters 5, 6, and 7.)

Betrayal and anger—Amber was betrayed by her husband’s unfaithfulness when she was pregnant with their second child. Because of John’s affair with another woman in their church, she ended up separated from him before and after their daughter’s birth. (See chapters 8, 9, and 10.)

Sin, guilt, and shame—When John was caught in the middle of his affair, he wondered whether he could ever be forgiven, ever rebuild his marriage, or ever show his face at church again. (See chapters 11, 12, and 13.)

Physical abuse—Sandy’s husband abused her for seventeen years. Feeling worthless and hopeless, Sandy ended up in the hospital numerous times, barely surviving with her life. Meanwhile, the longer she stayed in her abusive relationship, the longer she endangered her children’s lives. (See chapters 14, 15, and 16.)

Sexual abuse—Anna and Tim both experienced the horrors of sexual abuse, and their hearts and lives were scarred for years. Trying to survive by numbing the pain, Anna hardened her heart, and Tim turned to alcohol and drugs. (See chapters 17, 18, and 19.)

Addiction and numbing pain—Even though he was married and actively involved in church, Rick struggled with a pornography addiction for twenty years. (See chapters 20, 21, and 22.)

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Rejection—As a Japanese-American growing up in post-World War II California, Keith was rejected by his community, and his indifferent father only reinforced the message that he was unwanted. In an attempt to belong, Keith started using drugs at a young age, which only led to more losses, including lost education, jobs, and relationships. (See chapters 23, 24, and 25.)

What are the common denominators connecting all of the messiness and brokenness in these lives? First, all these people gained hope and meaning, healing and freedom as they learned how Satan had sabotaged them and how Jesus had suffered in very specific ways to identify with their stories. Secondly, since receiving healing, each of these individuals has moved into ministry with the testimonies they have shared for this book.

THE HIDDEN HALF IS READER-FRIENDLY

Here are some features we've included to help you apply the hidden half to your own life and/or the lives of others:

Key words in the glossary—These words are either common to Christianity or terms, sayings, or phrases specific to Straight 2 the Heart. Feel free to use the glossary as much or as little as you need. When we first mention terms used specifically by Straight 2 the Heart, we will include a definition right there on the page.

Discipleship Tips—These “coaching” moments explain the prayer and discipleship process described in the testimonies, giving you an “insider” view of what happens during prayer times with Straight 2 the Heart, and they also explain the biblical basis for what we do. (Discipleship as a foundation for Straight 2 the Heart and this book is explained at length in chapter 4.)

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Sample Prayers—These prayers provide a starting point for you to begin praying in the same manner described in the testimonies. We encourage you to use these samples not as formulas, but as templates for how you might begin connecting your unique story to Jesus’ story. Once you understand the simple yet supernatural idea behind the prayers, you can begin to personalize them using words and scriptures that mean the most to you.

AN INVITATION

Twenty-five years ago, the message in this book began with a search for “something more” to share with a few broken-hearted kids and teens in one church. But since then, it has grown to respond and reach out to many more people, including kids, teens, and adults in the U.S., Canada, England, Thailand, Australia, and India.

Finally, this book has become the result of all those years of searching the scriptures and searching my own heart. It was in 1992, when I was writing about this message for my master’s degree in religion, that one of my teachers told me I had some fresh perspectives and should consider writing a book. Twenty years later it’s probably too late to get extra credit, but the book is finally here—and in a world reeling from brokenness and messiness, the message is more relevant than ever before.

Now, Diana, Lindsey, Rick, Keith, Anna, myself, and others invite you to experience the same gospel that shined light into our darkness, both as broken people and as disciples seeking to reach other broken people. Today, whether you need “something more,” or whether you just know someone else who does, *The Hidden Half of the Gospel* is here for you. Now, we invite you to meet your Suffering Messiah, who has been here all along (Rev. 13:8).

PART 1



FOUNDATIONS OF THE HIDDEN HALF

Straight 2 the Heart offers a process of Healing, Freedom,
and Discipleship that is:

Christ-centered

Cross-centered

Word-centered

Prayer-centered

Overview of Chapters 1–4:

Pillar 1: The root of our sin and suffering is Satan, the father of lies (John 8:44).

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In chapter 1, you will learn God's truth about the source of our suffering, patterns of sin, patterns of self-protection, and the false identities Satan tries to create for each and every one of us.

Pillar 2: The root of our healing and freedom is Jesus, our Suffering Messiah (Luke 9:22; Rev. 5:5; Col. 2:15; Is. 53).

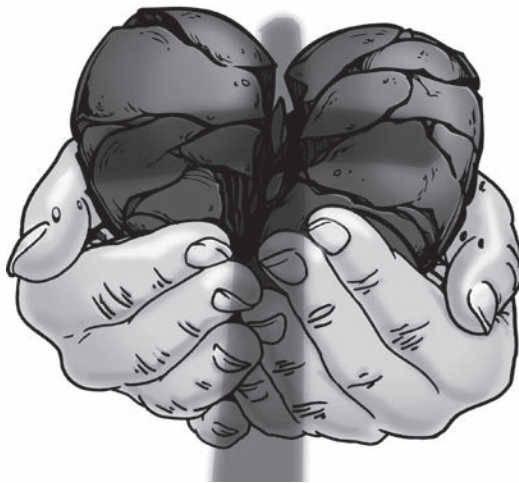
In chapter 2, you will learn God's truth about the source of our spiritual freedom and come to understand that each one of us can receive our true identities in Christ.

Chapter 3 adds an in-depth look at the two major principles (pillars 1 and 2) discussed in chapters 1 and 2, and chapter 4 provides a picture of how the church at large benefits when its members apply the two pillars of the hidden half to their own lives and ministry.

A BIBLICAL FOUNDATION FOR FREEDOM

Our first two chapters rely heavily on scripture, because Straight 2 the Heart is committed to offering a Christ-centered, cross-centered, Word-centered, prayer-centered discipleship process. In everything we do, as we move from information to application to transformation, we want to support the power of Jesus' gospel with Jesus' words and the words of His apostles.

**PILLAR 1: THE ROOT OF OUR SIN AND SUFFERING IS
SATAN, THE FATHER OF LIES (JOHN 8:44).**



CHAPTER 1



SATAN'S STORY OF SIN AND SUFFERING

A thief is only there to steal and kill and destroy. I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of. (John 10:10, *Message*)

She clutched the steering wheel, peering up at the church. The knots in her stomach were starting again.

“Diana, honey, what are you waiting for?” From the passenger seat her husband, Ron, leaned over and placed his hand tenderly on her arm. “Stomach got you again?”

“Never mind,” Diana snapped, snatching her hand away. “I– I guess I’m ready,” she added, nudging the door open.

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She wasn't really ready, and Ron knew it. But he had forced her to come. Well, he'd finally convinced her to come by letting her drive. That had been her condition. But that was nothing new. She always had to drive, just like she always had to avoid small spaces and crowded places.

"Come on, honey," he coaxed, loping around the side of the vehicle and encircling her waist. "This will be good for you."

She bristled at his touch. In her mind a familiar voice was whispering, *It's useless. This won't work. I've already tried religion—I've accepted God as my Savior. And where has that gotten me? I'm still a basket case.*

She tried to shake off the thoughts, but it was no use. She couldn't stop these persistent thoughts that tormented her. Every time they came, she felt as helpless as she had at four years old when an older family "friend" had trapped her, invaded her, and crossed every boundary imaginable.

Even though that was far in the past, her fears had grown within her like a cancer, flaring into outward signs such as panic attacks and diarrhea anytime she faced the unknown. Or the public. Or small spaces. Or, frankly, anytime. The fact was she lived her entire life in fear, always trying to escape some foreboding doom.

Today, she wanted to escape from the appointment her sister had encouraged her to make with Pastor Paul Coneff. More than a year had passed since she'd been introduced to this man offering a prayer process that could supposedly help "people like her." And now, because he was speaking at a weeklong conference near her home, the time was right. But as Ron steered her into the building, she couldn't stop worrying.

What if something goes wrong? What if I start to panic? What if I need to use the bathroom but can't get out quickly enough?

"Let's meet in the mother's room," Paul suggested almost as soon as they walked in.

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Ron felt her body stiffen.

“I’m sorry, that won’t work,” Ron said, catching Paul’s gaze and inclining his head toward his wife. “Can we meet in the sanctuary?”

Paul looked at Diana knowingly. He had seen anxiety like this before. And even though he hated to see this kind of suffering, he couldn’t help but feel hopeful. Standing before him he saw not just a woman who had been abused and deceived, but also an opportunity for Christ’s story to do its supernatural work. Another goldmine of grace.

What happened next can only be described as amazing. But first, let’s see what got Diana into her mental prison of fear in the first place. . . .

SAVED BUT NOT FREE

Before I had a chance to pray with Diana, she understood the gospel the way many people do—as good information that didn’t yield much transformation. Like any informed Christian, she knew about the plan of salvation. She knew the traditional definition of the gospel, which is that Jesus Christ died and rose again to offer us forgiveness of sins. But unfortunately, like many informed Christians, Diana had gotten saved without getting freedom. Although I was grateful she had this knowledge, none of it changed the fact that she still needed “something more.”

But how could this be? Aren’t Christians supposed to know how to conquer their fears and phobias? Shouldn’t the church be a place of safety and healing for all people?

It should be, but in my twenty-five years of pastoral experience, I’ve found that often it’s not. Instead, here’s what I see happening far too often. Christians lead others to Christ with Bible studies and then we lead them into the church. But after they get baptized, baby Christians can still find

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themselves struggling with addictions to food, alcohol, or pornography, or they may still suffer depression or anxiety. In Diana's case, her phobias were handicapping her life, her marriage, and her ability to do ministry.

Of course, new Christians know these things are wrong, so they confess their sins, and then they receive forgiveness. But if they don't deal with the root beneath the fruit, or the real cause of their negative behavior, then it's not long before that weed grows back in their lives. As a result, they sin again, then they are convicted of their sin again, so they confess and receive forgiveness again . . . but then guess what happens . . . again? We all know the answer, because we've all been through the pattern. We sin, confess, and get forgiveness—again, and again, and again.

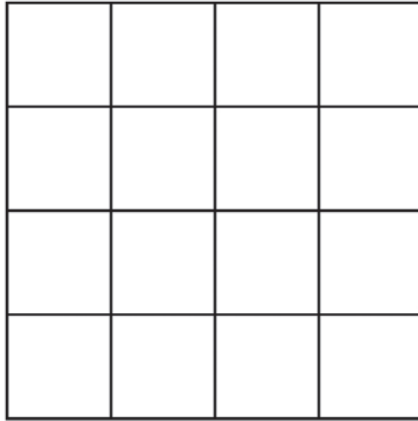
But what happens to our faith, and our security, after we repeat a cycle like this about fifty times? Obviously, it goes down. And this is why so many newly baptized church members end up leaving. That's really sad. But when we think about the cycle of sin-and-forgiveness just described (or in Diana's case, a cycle of suffering), it's not very hard to understand why Christians lose their faith.

So what is the answer?

Consider for a moment a simple question I often ask audience members when introducing the hidden half message. It only takes a moment, but it makes my point quickly.

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How many squares do you see here?



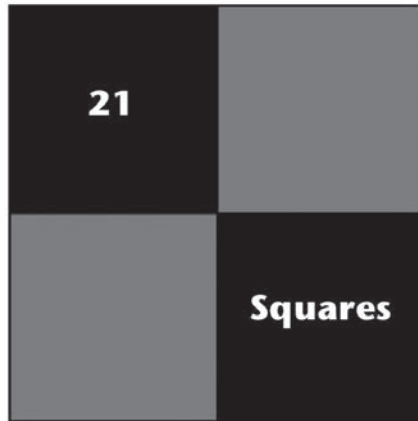
That's a pretty easy question. There are sixteen. And I'd like to suggest that that is what most people see when they look at the message of Jesus. Most people, in my experience, take a quick glance and go no deeper. They accept salvation in the present time, but they don't get the full strength, the full depth, of the gospel. . . .

Like the seventeenth square. . . .



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Or another four, bringing the total to twenty-one ($16 + 1 + 4 = 21$).



In fact, there are thirty individual squares in this box if you're willing to dig them out, which means there is a whole "hidden half" that most people don't see upon first glance. If we can agree that we may have also missed something in Jesus' story, then we have some digging to do. Starting right now, we're going to dig for more truth in the gospel because Jesus actually said we have to dig for it like buried treasure (Matt. 13:34–35, 44–45; Luke 9:44–45; 10:21; 18:31–34; Col. 1:25–27). Let's look at Diana's problems again, but this time, let's look under the surface—let's get to the bottom of all those negative fruits, so we can step aside and let Jesus dig out Diana's problems at their roots.

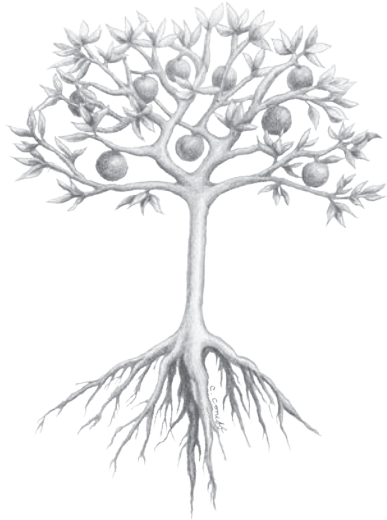
PILLAR 1: SATAN IS THE ROOT OF ALL SIN AND SUFFERING

Did Diana just wake up one day with all her problems? Or was there a source, some kind of negative root beneath them? When I present the hidden half, I lead my audience through a number of scriptures (you can find them on the resources page of my website) to help them identify the source of their

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ongoing problems, but here we will sum it up for you in one word: Satan. In Jesus' words, Satan is "the father of lies" (John 8:44), and understanding that is the first step toward gaining healing and freedom from all sins, addictions, and suffering.

We can find the beginning of Diana's problems in Genesis 3, because the first sin ever recorded laid the blueprint for all the sins and problems the earth has seen ever since. In the story of man's fall, it's obvious that the root of Eve's sin is Satan's lies, because Satan himself plays the starring role in Eve's temptation and sin. He slithers up to Eve and tells her God can't be trusted and that He's holding out on her. He flatters her a bit, and then she sins by eating the forbidden fruit God has



commanded her not to eat. That's pretty straightforward. But what many of us miss in this story is 1) what's going on beyond, or beneath, Eve's behavior and 2) the fact that Satan still plays the leading role when it comes to the roots of our problems.

“AS A MAN THINKS IN HIS HEART” — THE POWER OF FALSE BELIEF SYSTEMS

You see, Satan's lies cannot produce sins without first producing false beliefs in our hearts. As Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, said, “As a man thinks in his heart, so is he” (Prov. 23:7, NKJV; Rom. 1:25). In other words, our actions grow out of our beliefs, which means that the real problem

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with Eve was not her negative fruits (or negative behaviors) but her negative roots (or negative thoughts from Satan). And it is the same with all of us and our sins, addictions, and bad behaviors today. According to the Bible:

- Satan's lies are what led to the very first sin.
- Satan's lies are what still lead to all sin and suffering today.

In Eve's case, Satan distorted Eve's picture of God so much that she came to believe God was not trustworthy. For that matter, Satan also distorted Eve's picture of herself, giving her a false sense of entitlement to something that was not hers. Once these beliefs took root in her heart, bad fruit, or sinful behavior, naturally followed.

TOOTHPASTE TEST

Let's put it another way. If you are still wondering how our beliefs impact our behavior, try the toothpaste test. When you squeeze a tube of peppermint toothpaste, what flavor comes out? Peppermint. When you squeeze a tube of strawberry toothpaste, what flavor comes out? Strawberry. Whatever is inside the tube will flow out whenever squeezed. And it's the same with us. Like Jesus said, "But the things that come out of a person's mouth come from the heart, and these defile them . . ." (Matt. 15:18-19). "No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thornbushes, or grapes from briars. A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of" (Luke 6:43-45).

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HOW TO FIX NEGATIVE BEHAVIORS— FRUIT AND ROOT

Consider for a moment: if a man came to you struggling with pornography or an alcohol addiction, or if someone like Diana asked you for help with depression or anxiety, what would you say to him or her? When you think about growth or recovery, do you tend to focus more on behavior or belief systems? Unfortunately, I know that most people, including counselors, pastors, and church members, usually deal with the fruits, not the roots. That's what I used to do.

But as I've found time and time again in working to treat addictions and negative behaviors, no amount of positive affirmations or behavior management steps can really fix the problem if a person doesn't deal with the root issues. And a person can only cover up those surface problems (the fruit) for a while. I've even found that it's possible to change fruits, giving up one negative behavior for another, while leaving the same negative root intact. For instance, someone can give up smoking because he fears he will get lung cancer. But since his smoking is not his real problem—it is only the fruit of a negative belief system—his negative beliefs will find another way to grow out of him. Even if he has the self-will to stop smoking, he may try to fill his emptiness in some other way. For example, he could start overeating and keep going until he has gained fifty to seventy-five pounds. The fact is, Satan doesn't care if he dies from emphysema or an obesity-related disease (such as diabetes, heart attack, or organ failure). He just wants to destroy him in any way possible, and he knows that as long as a person believes his lies, he can produce all kinds of negative fruit—and any of it can eventually kill him.

The truth is, if we don't want Satan to sabotage us, we have to ask God to reveal the lies behind our negative behaviors. Unfortunately, the natural

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response for most of us is to bypass dealing with the lies in our hearts, because doing that can bring us face to face with our pain. In my experience, Christians especially want to paper over their negative beliefs with truth (without first uprooting the lies). But after more than 10,000 hours of counseling and praying with people, I haven't seen this work. As long as there's a root system, that fruit will keep popping up. If we want to find real healing and freedom, we need God to identify and uproot our negative belief systems, because we can't do it in our own strength—but we'll get to that later.

SATANIC PING-PONG— UNDERSTANDING HOW SATAN'S LIES WORK

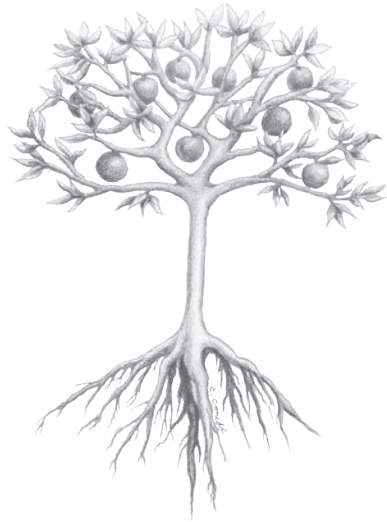
Because healing starts with identifying Satan's lies, we will use each story in this book to review Satan's three-step process for planting lies, or what I like to call Satanic Ping-Pong. Satanic Ping-Pong is simply a game that involves Satan hitting us with his lies from every angle before, during, and after we are hurt. (Picture Satan sending two demons with Ping-Pong paddles hitting a ball. Their paddles represent their lies and attacks against us, the Ping-Pong balls.) In other words, he leads us into sin, then he condemns us, and finally, he tries to trap us in our pattern of hopelessness forever. Let's see how this demonic game plays out with Diana.

STEP ONE—SATAN SETS DIANA UP TO BE HURT

As we will see in each story in this book, Satan likes to begin his deceptions early in our lives, while we are too young to possibly understand or fend off his attacks. And it always starts with a setup. For Diana, the setup was sexual abuse at the tender age of four.

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After she was abused and left vulnerable, the devil whispered into Diana's heart that if she could not be safe with family and friends, she could not be safe with anyone. But that wasn't all. As he fed her these thoughts, he was also deceiving her into thinking they were her own by using first-person language, such as, *I cannot be safe* and *I cannot trust anyone*. And because she was so vulnerable, these first-person thoughts took root in her heart. Now, negative fruit was sure to follow.



STEP TWO—SATAN SETS DIANA UP TO HURT DIANA

Once Diana had accepted the lie that she was unsafe, Satan played on Diana's fears to convince her that she had to protect herself from more pain—never letting on that her own efforts would only add to the problem.

Because it is human nature to distrust God (Rom. 8:6–8), this “solution” appealed to Diana; and she soon began to “take control” of her fears. Now Diana lived life constantly scanning her environment for threats to her safety. But the more Diana tried to protect herself from past pain, the more she reinforced it. Worse yet, this process brought new pain, including fear, depression, and anxiety—with the anxiety growing into panic attacks, the panic attacks resulting in diarrhea, and the diarrhea, fear of embarrassment. Ironically, the more Diana tried to create safety around her, the less safe she felt.

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And this was just what Satan wanted. But he still had one fear: that Diana would discover how Jesus had already entered into all her pain and earned the right to set her free. To try to prevent this from happening, Satan began step three.

STEP THREE—SATAN SETS DIANA UP TO LIVE WITHOUT HOPE

Now, Satan whispered his third set of lies, seeking to lock in the false identity he had for Diana: a woman who couldn't trust anyone or anything, least of all her own body, because at any moment it could betray her with panic attacks or diarrhea. Building on this false identity, Satan added the thought that she was bad because she could not keep herself safe. As she accepted these lies as truth, he was thrilled because she was blaming herself and/or God for what he (Satan) had done to her.

Finally, Satan moved in for the kill shot, whispering words of condemnation to Diana because she was not trusting God. Now he wanted to make her believe she was so bad she was not worth anyone's time, including God's, and including mine. And he was successful for a while—it was a whole year before Diana finally accepted my invitation to pray with her.

IDENTITY THEFT: SATAN'S GREATEST ATTACK

Because Satan has been studying humans for as long as they've been around, he knows that the deeper his lies penetrate, the more influence he gains. In other words, he knows whoever a person believes he or she is inside will become a self-fulfilling prophecy. And that's why all his lies are designed to attack our truest, deepest identities as sons and daughters of God.

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Because Satan has been so successful with this approach for so long, it might not surprise you to know that this is how Satan tried to get Jesus every time, as well. That's because Satan knew it was Jesus' true identity that qualified Him to heal us and set us free. If Satan could get Jesus to doubt His identity as God's Son, he could ruin the whole plan of salvation. However, if Jesus could trust His Father during every attack and through every temptation, He could offer us His freedom, His victory, and His purity when we are attacked in the same ways (1 Cor. 2:16; Heb. 4:14–16). Let's see what happened when Satan attacked Jesus at the roots of His identity.

ATTACKS ON JESUS' IDENTITY

First of all, the Bible is clear about Jesus' identity: It says that He was, He is, and He will always be the Son of God (Rev. 1:8). According to scripture, God the Father called Jesus His "Son" at least three times during Jesus' earthly ministry: at Jesus' baptism, during His transfiguration on the mountain, and just before His crucifixion (Matt. 3:17; 17:5; John 12:20–33). But notice the pattern in the wilderness and throughout Jesus' life of ministry.

Every attack against Jesus was an attack against
His true identity as God's Son.

As soon as Jesus was baptized (signaling the beginning of His ministry), He was tempted by Satan three times to prove who He was. If you're not familiar with the story, you can read it in Luke 4:1–13 or Matthew 4:1–11, but the short version goes like this: Jesus is baptized, God the Father publicly

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affirms His identity, then the Holy Spirit leads Him into the wilderness where He stays for forty days with no food or drink, and finally Satan attacks Him with the following temptations (directly and indirectly):

- IF You are the Son of God . . . turn these stones into bread . . .
- IF You worship me, this earth will be Yours . . .
- IF You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here . . .

Notice that each of these temptations tested Jesus' divine identity by implying that He could not work miracles or by tempting Him to give up His power. But this was just the beginning. If we continue on in the life of Jesus, we see that He was continually tempted to doubt His identity as God's Son and to:

- Prove who He was
- Protect Himself from pain
- Provide for Himself instead of trusting His Father

At His trial, Christ was mocked, tested, and tempted—by Satan, the Jewish leaders, the mob, Pilate, Herod, and even the thief on the cross—to use His own strength and power to defend Himself and to prove that He was the Son of God. Repeatedly His identity was mocked and tested with the precise words, “IF You are the Son of God tell us who hit You . . . come down from the cross and save Yourself.” (See, for instance, Luke 22:64–65, 67; 23:3, 7–10; Matt. 27:38–43.)

But the attacks on Jesus' identity did not just come from His enemies. Incredibly, Jesus' own brothers even tempted Him to prove who He was (John 7:1–5), and in some ways, so did His disciples (see chapter 2 for more on this). Truly, every attack on Jesus tested His true identity as God's Son. But why is this important to us?

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YOUR TURN: LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON AND DAUGHTER: ATTACKS ON OUR IDENTITIES

William Ralph Inge has said, “It is the image of God reflected in you that so enrages hell; it is this at which the demons hurl their mightiest weapons.”² Have you ever thought about it? The Bible says we were created in God’s image, but Satan hates God. And if we are God’s children (Acts 2:17; Rom. 8:15–19; 9:26; 2 Cor. 6:18; Eph. 1:4–5, 11–12), then Satan must hate us, too.

This is a critical point to understand. If every attack against Jesus was an attack against His identity, which it was, then it exposes the truth that every one of Satan’s attacks against us is against our truest and deepest identities as God’s sons and daughters. Since Jesus indeed suffered these non-stop attacks on His identity, we can be confident of the Bible verses telling us that Jesus was “made like us in every way . . . suffered like us in every way . . . and was tempted like us in every way” (Heb. 2:17–18; 4:14). Or, in other words, just like Satan tempted Jesus, he tempts us to prove ourselves, provide for ourselves, or protect ourselves—temptations pointing us back to the identity issue.

BUT WHAT IF I CAN’T SEE HOW JESUS IDENTIFIES WITH ME?

Before we go any further, I need to address a question I sometimes get in my seminars, because it’s likely you have the same one. The question is: How can you tell me Jesus was made like me, suffered like me, and was tempted like me if He did not go through the same life experiences I have?

I keep running into men and women who tell me that Jesus was not made like them in every way, because He was not tempted like them in every way. What if you were abused by your mother or father (see Sandy, Anna,

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and Rick's stories)? Or what if you were abused by a grandparent, aunt, uncle, sister, or brother (see Tim's story)? And what if you believe that Jesus did not suffer like you because He was abused by men, not by women? Some women argue that because Jesus was a man, He could not possibly identify with their experiences as women. Others who struggle with "un-Christlike" addictions to porn or drugs (see chapters 20 through 25) also sometimes argue that Christ cannot identify with them because He was perfect.

While I wholeheartedly agree that Jesus did not suffer the exact details of each human being's story, I also wholeheartedly believe that He went through every experience we do, in principle, for two reasons:

1. The Bible clearly and repeatedly says He suffered "in every way" like us, and
2. I'm not willing to change God's word just to fit my own, human understanding.

Thankfully, there is a way to resolve these concerns. We can ask God to reveal the biblical truths and principles that will resolve any differences we run into (see sample prayer below).

Dear Jesus, What do You want _____ (person's name) to know about the difference between the way she sees You as sinless, perfect, and unable to identify with her, and God's Word sharing how You were made like her, suffered like her and was tempted like her in every way?
(Heb. 2:10; 17-18; 4:14-16)

If the person is unwilling to ask God about her questions, we honor where she is at, and wait until she is ready to pray about them.

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WHY WE WALK BY PRINCIPLE, NOT PICTURE-PERFECT SIMILARITIES

While at first glance it may not seem accurate to say that Jesus was made like us “in every way,” or that He was “in all points tempted as we are,” we need to understand the difference between a literal likeness and a likeness in principle. We also need to distinguish, again, between the fruits and roots of human struggles. If we only look at the fruits, we will never see the real issues behind our own suffering, and the suffering Jesus went through for us; we will never see that just as Jesus died for all the sins of everyone in the world, He also experienced the suffering for everyone who would ever live (1 John 2:2; Rev. 13:8).

What this means is that Jesus did not have to be abused by His grandmother to be tempted with the same negative thoughts as a woman who has been abused by her grandmother. When we apply scripture in the context of principles, we can know that Jesus did not have to be beaten or abused by a person of a certain age, gender, race, or religion to identify with us when we are subjected to abuse.



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In summary, though the outward appearance of the suffering and temptations may vary from Jesus to human beings, inwardly He was attacked with the same core issues. Though He did not produce the same negative feelings, behaviors, or addictions in response to Satan's attacks, He still felt what we feel when Satan attacks us. And He was tempted to believe the same negative thoughts we are (as we will see in every story shared in this book).

THE ONLY DIFFERENCE THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

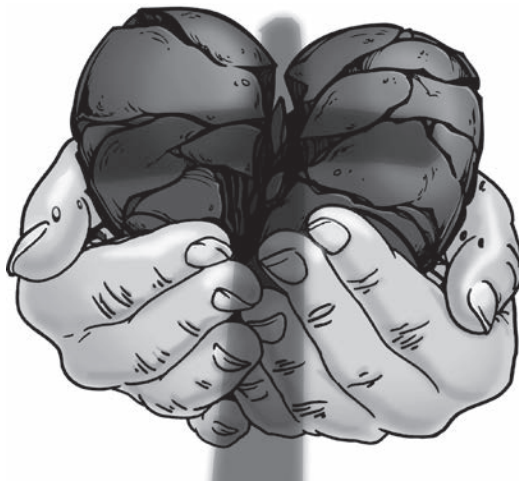
When we consider Jesus' story in the context of principles—or the negative messages Satan sent Him—the only real difference between Jesus' temptations and ours that should matter to us is their degree. In other words, because Jesus was both God and man, He had power available to Him that we do not. Even though we can't always “save ourselves” from unpleasant circumstances, Jesus could. Even though we could not have accepted some of Satan's temptations to Jesus—like the temptations to turn stones into bread or to come down from the cross—Jesus could have. Unlike us, Jesus had the power to turn stones into bread when He faced real hunger pains. He also had power to save Himself when He was sweating real blood in the garden, when He was bleeding from a real whip tearing muscles from His back, and when He had real nails driven into His hands and feet. Through all of His suffering, Jesus had the power to save Himself, but He did not act on His power. And this means Jesus actually suffered greater temptation than we do. More importantly, this means that He can offer more than enough power to help us overcome our temptations (1 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 2:17–18; 4:15–16). This is great news!

But in case you, like Diana, are thinking, *I've heard all this before and it sounds too good to be true*—don't close the book just yet! Now that we've

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described the root of all problems, we'll turn to the root of all solutions. In chapter 2, we'll begin to unfold that crucial part of the gospel that has escaped so many of us (including Jesus' own followers). You'll see how and why the hidden half provides that "something more" we all need. And in chapter 3, you will see the hidden half's life-transforming power in the conclusion to Diana's amazing story.

**PILLAR 2: THE ROOT OF OUR HEALING AND FREEDOM
IS JESUS, OUR SUFFERING MESSIAH
(LUKE 9:22; REV. 5:5; COL. 2:15; ISA. 53).**



CHAPTER 2



JESUS' STORY OF HEALING AND FREEDOM

He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces He was despised, and we held Him in low esteem.

Surely He took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered Him punished by God, stricken by Him, and afflicted.

But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on Him, and by His wounds we are healed (Isa. 53:3-5).

DIANA'S FRUIT AND ROOT— PAINFUL PAST, PAINFUL PRESENT

When we left Diana in the last chapter, she was suffering from a severe case of identity theft. Satan had stolen her identity as a happy, healthy, secure, and safe child of God and replaced it with lies, such as *I'm unsafe*, *I can't trust anyone*, and *I have to protect myself*. Then, as we saw, out of those negative beliefs, or bad roots, negative fruits such as anxiety, panic attacks, and depression had grown. To make matters even worse, the more she tried to control her environment, the less in control she felt.

No doubt, those of us with track records like Diana's have reason to be skeptical of the gospel's power, just as she was skeptical of my prayer ministry. After all, for someone like Diana, what good is a gospel that offers forgiveness for our sins but no healing for wounds from the ways others have sinned against us? And what about those of us who have received forgiveness but continue to struggle with the same sins day in and day out?

Cases like Diana's clearly show the need for “something more” than what we get with the traditional gospel. And now, just as we did with the negative fruits in our lives, we want to dig beneath the surface of the gospel to find the real roots of our healing, and the answers to the following critical questions:

1. What part of Jesus' story have we missed (or neglected)? What is that part of the gospel that Jesus and the Apostle Paul both said was hidden from us (Matt. 11:25; 13:34–35, 44; Luke 9:45; 18:34; Col. 1:24–27)?
2. Did Jesus have anything to say about the gospel, or the “good news,” He came to earth to bring?
3. Did Jesus give us any words that His own disciples rejected—words that His church has neglected?

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4. And finally, most importantly, is there some power in the gospel that can help people like Diana? That can help us with every problem in our lives, even those problems that have become patterns of sin or suffering?

To begin answering these questions, we will start with a Bible story about Jesus, because it not only covers the two pillars of the hidden half (the roots of sin and roots of healing), but it also shows the Great Teacher in action, providing a picture of both the Role Model and the model for ministry that Straight 2 the Heart follows.

THE WOMAN AT THE WELL— THE HIDDEN HALF IN A STORY

Jesus [said], “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” (John 4:13)

Our story, which you can also find in John 4, begins with a Samaritan woman drawing water from a well outside of town. The “backstory” is that she has a pattern of five broken marriages, and now she has finally settled for living with a man outside of marriage. At the point when Jesus comes along, she is all by herself at the well, risking her personal safety to avoid meeting other judgmental women from town. Like Diana before she accepted prayer for her problems, this woman is trying to protect herself from the pain of her

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past by avoiding others, but she can't outrun her shame or her hopelessness—because she carries it inside her heart.

When Jesus looks at her, however, He doesn't see a hopeless woman. Instead of seeing an outcast or a sinner, like everyone else sees, Jesus sees a precious child who has been deeply hurt. Beyond that, *because* He knows He will suffer and die for her, He also sees a goldmine of grace—or a wound that has the potential to bring great joy when it becomes her most powerful tool for sharing the gospel.

Sitting down dusty and tired, Jesus strikes up a conversation by asking her for a drink of water from the well. As they get to talking, Jesus builds on their conversation by offering her “living water” (a symbol for His truth), which He says will quench her thirst forever. But when she becomes interested, asking, “Sir, tell me where I can get this living water,” He gives her an action step—and delves into a touchy subject—to see if she is really serious. He tells her, “Go get your husband” first.

“I don't have a husband,” she says, notably leaving off her pattern of divorce. Why bring that up?

It's a good question. Why would Jesus offer this woman hope, but then bring up her past before explaining the meaning of His “living water”? Why would Jesus target this woman's negative patterns before unfolding His truth? Why even go there at all? For that matter, why is Jesus even talking to this broken woman in the first place?

In fact, all throughout His earthly ministry, we see Jesus walking and talking with the rejects of society, including bums, cripples, prostitutes, thieves, and individuals like this woman, a five-time divorcée. Did you know that Jesus even began His ministry with a mission statement targeting such people?

JESUS' MISSION STATEMENT

The Spirit of the Lord is on Me, because He has anointed Me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, [and] to set the oppressed free . . . He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” (Luke 4:18, 21; See also Luke 1:78–79)

The fact is, Jesus came to earth to heal people just like the woman at the well. As He said Himself, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick” (Luke 5:31–23). And that’s why He was often accused of hanging out with sinners, diseased people, and outcasts. All throughout the gospels (the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John), we see Jesus reaching out to people’s hearts more often than preaching to their heads, and we even see Him healing their physical diseases (Matt. 4:23; Luke 9:2, 11). No doubt about it, Jesus purposely hung out with broken people so that He could make the biggest impact on human suffering. But that didn’t mean He made it easy for them. To get back to our original question, Jesus talks to this woman about her pattern of brokenness because He knows that if she doesn’t admit her problem first, she will only continue to try to fight in her own strength and continue to fail. He also knows that in order to receive victory, she needs to surrender her pattern to the power of His grace.

And this is the sticking point. A lot of us get stuck when Jesus asks us to surrender, not only because it’s hard to look at the ugliness in our lives, but

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also because it's hard to admit that we can't fix it ourselves—and that we need help.

This is why this woman tries to avoid talking about her pain. Like Diana, she is already used to covering up her pain (or trying to cover it up), and now, because this conversation has suddenly gotten too personal, she changes the subject, calling Jesus a “prophet” and trying to launch a theological discussion about the true place of worship.

Of course, Jesus isn't fooled by her attempts to distract Him from her sin and shame. And that's why He chooses to steer the conversation back to her pattern of brokenness, finally convincing her that He is the Living Water she needs.

Notice how her story ends. As soon as she realizes who Jesus is and what He has done for her, she runs back to town exclaiming, “Come and meet a man who told me everything I ever did!” Suddenly, her story of brokenness has turned into her goldmine of grace, her greatest opportunity for ministry. Suddenly she is not hiding from her past; instead, she is using it to tell others about the good news of Jesus. And this is the power we have seen at work in many others who receive the “living water” of the hidden half of the gospel. Now, let's see why Jesus was qualified to offer “living water.” Let's look at the part of His story that gave this woman a new lease on life, the part that makes Him the perfect solution for all our patterns of sin and suffering.

THE PART OF JESUS' STORY WE HAVE MISSED

What is it that qualified Jesus to minister to this woman's broken heart and identify with her pain? In my seminars, I take my audience through many scriptures that you can find on our website, but here, we will sum up the roots

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of our healing in a few words: It was the suffering of Jesus that “perfected” Him to offer us His “living water,” or a new life in Christ (Heb. 2:10).

In fact, Jesus as our Suffering Messiah is the strongest pillar of Straight 2 the Heart’s message, as well as the underlying foundation for this book. At Straight 2 the Heart, we teach that the suffering of Jesus is the part of the gospel that Christianity has neglected. To be crystal clear, even though Jesus suffered all throughout His life and ministry, when we refer to Jesus’ suffering, we will maintain a laser beam focus on the last twenty-four hours before Jesus’ death on the cross, when He was:

Alone

Abandoned

Betrayed

Stripped Naked

Physically Violated

Shamed and Humiliated

Verbally and Mentally Abused

Tempted to Numb His Pain

Rejected and Forsaken

When I present this message or do prayer trainings, I repeat this list early and often. I describe the agony Jesus went through in gory detail, including how Jesus was severely beaten with a whip studded with glass, lead balls, and sheep bones that ripped His flesh out and threatened to tear out His intestines. I point out that many men suffering the same kind of abuse never made it to Calvary (this was because if the abusers missed the back, the whip circled around the man’s body, ripping his guts out and killing him). I talk about how Jesus was stripped naked and paraded around like a toy, and how the soldiers and religious leaders mocked and taunted Him and physically

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violated Him in every way possible. I talk about how He hung on the cross with His nerves on fire from the nails that had been pounded into His hands and feet; how He was thirsty, weak, and tired after not sleeping, eating, or drinking for so many hours; and how He felt abandoned by God as He hung, “forsaken,” on the cross. At times the audience will cringe and ask, “Why would we want to focus on that?” I even had a pastor tell me once that it was “gross” (which shows me just how little we like to focus on this part of Jesus’ story).

But what that pastor said is true. This part of Jesus’ story *is* “gross.” It’s ugly and unappealing, and we don’t like to think about it. We’d much rather focus on what happened after the beatings and abuse, when Jesus was resurrected, clean and healthy, strong and victorious. Understandably, we don’t like to see our Savior in His weakness, because it makes us sad. And that may be why this part of Jesus’ story has been missed or minimized—so we don’t have to deal with how uncomfortable His suffering makes us.

How much do we really talk about Jesus’ suffering? Perhaps, more importantly, how much did Jesus and other Bible writers talk about it? To address these questions, let’s see if there’s anything Jesus’ followers (past or present) might have overlooked in scripture, especially in Jesus’ own words.

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WORDS THE DISCIPLES MISSED— WORDS *WE* HAVE MISSED?

Jesus' Words about His Suffering *Before* His Death (All emphases mine):

And He said, “The Son of Man must SUFFER many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and teachers of the law, and He must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.”
(Luke 9:22)

While everyone was marveling at all that Jesus did, He said to His disciples, “Listen carefully to what I am about to tell you: The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men.”

But they did not understand what this meant. It was *hidden* from them, so that they did not grasp it, and they were afraid to ask Him about it. (Luke 9:43–45)

When the hour came [at the last supper], Jesus and His apostles reclined at the table. And He said to them, “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I SUFFER.”
(Luke 22:14)

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Jesus' Words about His Suffering *After* His Death and Resurrection (All emphases mine):

He said to them, “How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe ALL that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Christ have to SUFFER these things and then enter His glory?”

And beginning with Moses and ALL the prophets, He explained to them what was said in ALL the scriptures concerning Himself. (Luke 24:25–27)

He said to them, “This is what I told you while I was still with you: EVERYTHING must be fulfilled that is written about Me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms . . . This is what is written: The Messiah will SUFFER and rise from the dead on the third day.” (Luke 24:44–45)

After His SUFFERING, He showed Himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that He was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. (Acts 1:3)

The Bible is pretty clear. All throughout Jesus' ministry, especially right before His crucifixion and after His resurrection, He repeated the idea that He had to suffer. Yet, over a period of three and a half years, with Jesus repeatedly saying that His mission on earth was to “suffer, die, and rise again,” his disciples didn't believe Him. Instead of trusting His words, they trusted their own preconceived notions about how their Savior should be.

THE HIDDEN HALF OF THE GOSPEL

Instead of a Suffering Messiah who would be “crucified in weakness” (2 Cor. 13:4), they wanted a Militant Messiah who would overpower the Romans and set up thrones so they could rule with Him.³ They were so stubborn in their beliefs that even when He appeared to a second group of disciples after the resurrection, they actually thought He was a ghost! (For more on this, See chapter 26.) Is it possible that we have also put Jesus into a box that can’t quite contain all that He really is, all that He came to do, and all that He came to preach?

SIN AND SUFFERING: EQUALLY EMBRACED BY JESUS, EQUALLY NAILED TO THE CROSS

Interestingly, I never receive opposition to the statement that Jesus embraced all the sins of all the world on the cross, and, because of this, Jesus can forgive all sins. But when it comes to Jesus embracing all our suffering, as Isaiah 53 and other writers such as Luke, Peter, and the author of Hebrews clearly say He did, I do receive opposition. For some reason, some people like to separate Jesus’ dying for our suffering from His dying for our sins. But the truth is, unless we are comfortable with ignoring scriptures like Isaiah 53, Hebrews 2:10, Hebrews 2:17–18, and Hebrews 4:14–15, Revelation 13:8—and all the New Testament verses stating that part of Jesus’ mission and plan of salvation was to suffer—we can’t ignore the fact that, on the cross, Jesus embraced not just our sin but our suffering, too.

CHAPTER 2: JESUS' STORY OF HEALING AND FREEDOM

On our website, you can find a list of many more scriptures testifying to the importance of Jesus' suffering. You can also find the full text of Isaiah 53, sometimes referred to as the "Suffering Messiah" or "Suffering Servant" chapter because it clearly and repeatedly emphasizes Christ's suffering. Did you know that Isaiah 53 is the most quoted chapter in the New Testament? We believe this says something about the importance of Jesus' suffering. Throughout the rest of the book we will talk more about Isaiah 53 and what it all means. But for now, based on the scriptures we've shared here and on our website, we can now answer the first three questions raised earlier in this chapter. We know:

1. Jesus' suffering was an important part of His gospel that was "hidden" from the world in Bible times; and it is the same part missing from most definitions of the gospel today.
2. Jesus clearly and repeatedly said that His mission to free humanity included suffering (along with dying for our sins and rising again).
3. Jesus' disciples clearly and repeatedly misunderstood what He said about His suffering to the point of not believing He would suffer and even rebuking Him for talking about it.

With those questions answered, now we can get to the last and most important one: What in the world does Jesus' suffering have to do with Diana's struggles—or ours? But first take a moment to look at the cross table that follows. It compares the traditional gospel with the hidden half (i.e., the gospel according to all of Jesus' words) for a visual representation of what we're talking about here.

THE HIDDEN HALF OF THE GOSPEL

The Traditional Gospel Christians Emphasize As Good News	Hidden Half of Jesus' Gospel Based On Prophecies He Fulfilled As Our Suffering Messiah
<p>We tend to emphasize Jesus dying for our sins with the result that people often repeat a pattern of sinning and seeking forgiveness with little or no victory:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Christ died for our sins 2. We repent 3. We accept Him as Savior and Lord 4. We receive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forgiveness • Eternal life - <i>and a cycle of sin and forgiveness</i> <p>This gospel is true and important <i>as far as it goes</i> – and it is not the whole gospel Jesus taught His disciples with His own words.</p>	<p>Jesus emphasized healing and freedom in addition to the traditional gospel many Christians emphasize:</p> <p>The Sovereign Lord has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To heal the broken-hearted 2. To set the captives free 3. To walk us out of our prisons of darkness or blindness. Isaiah 61:1; Luke 4:18 <p>The Son of Man <i>must suffer...</i> must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. Luke 9:22</p>

HOW JESUS' SUFFERING RELATES TO US

As we end this chapter, please take a moment to mentally circle any items on the following lists that could be used to describe Diana's experiences. Then, see if any of them describe your experiences.

Alone

Abandoned

Betrayed

Stripped naked

Physically violated

CHAPTER 2: JESUS' STORY OF HEALING AND FREEDOM

Shamed or humiliated
Verbally or mentally abused
Tempted to numb the pain
Rejected or forsaken

Tempted to:
Protect herself in her own strength
Prove who she is in her own strength
Provide for herself in her own strength

Now think back to Jesus' story, using the same lists. Do you see how Diana's story relates to Jesus' story? Are you beginning to relate to Jesus' story as well? (In part 2 of the book you'll have many more opportunities to connect your story to Jesus' story.)

Can Jesus understand Diana's fears? Does He know what it feels like to be unsafe, to be physically, verbally, and mentally abused? Did He ever have a reason to be afraid of public places? Do you think He was ever tempted to control people or events? To try to avoid scary situations? Or to not trust God or men because of how He was treated? If anyone could understand being mistreated, abused, or threatened, don't you think Jesus could?

Once Diana accepted the biblical truths that Jesus, in His divinity, embraced all her suffering and all her sin, she discovered a Savior who could identify with her and connect His story with her story. And as we went through a prayer process based on connecting Jesus' story to Diana's story, amazing things started to happen. In Diana's testimony in the next chapter, read how she, like the woman at the well, allowed Jesus to heal her heart so that she could also become a powerful witness for the gospel.

CHAPTER 3:



TRUSTING JESUS TO RECEIVE HEALING

The only ones who truly believe this unbelievable message are those who come to realize that their infirmities, sorrows, transgressions, iniquities, and wounds were taken up, experienced, and carried by Isaiah's unattractive Man of Sorrows.⁴

I first met Diana at a pastor's retreat where she was giving her testimony about getting "saved," but when I learned that she was still having panic attacks and other debilitating problems, I knew she wasn't "free." How did I know? Because it took Diana a year to accept my offer to pray with her. Why did it take so long? Because she felt she wasn't worth anyone else's time. And

CHAPTER 3: TRUSTING JESUS TO RECEIVE HEALING

this told me that her issues ran far deeper than the fruit of panic attacks and anxiety, because I had never counseled or prayed with anyone who didn't have negative thoughts behind their negative behaviors.

Fortunately, Diana became more and more dissatisfied with being Satan's Ping-Pong ball day after day, and this led to that initial meeting we described in chapter 1. Because I was doing a series of meetings near her home, Diana was able to receive prayer every day for a week and receive several follow-up prayer times as well.

At every session, we read key scriptures about how Jesus was made "in every way" like us, and then I gave Diana the opportunity to connect her experiences to Jesus' experiences. Finally, we would pray, thanking Jesus for how He had suffered for her, and like her, in order to give her victory over her struggles. Some of the ways Diana identified with Jesus included how He:

- Struggled with the overwhelming pressure of darkness, similar to her depression, "to the point of death." (Matt. 26:38; Luke 22:44)
- Put Himself in a position where He was not safe when He was overpowered, stripped naked, and physically violated by men who should have been protecting Him.
- Was tempted to protect Himself from His surroundings. *See cross connecting Diana's story with Jesus' story.*

THE HIDDEN HALF OF THE GOSPEL

Diana's Story of Abuse, Depression, and Panic Attacks	Jesus' Story Connecting With Diana's Story
Diana was physically violated	Jesus was physically violated
Diana was filled with fear, shame, and panic attacks	Jesus was tempted to be filled with fear and shame that could lead to panic attacks
Diana suffered from depression	Jesus felt "overwhelmed with sorrow in His soul" as darkness surrounded Him in Gethsemane
Diana tried to control her environment to stay safe	Jesus was tempted to control His environment to stay safe
Diana was being defined by fear and not being safe	Jesus was tempted to be defined by fear and not being safe
	Jesus rose to heal Diana's broken heart, and set her free to receive her truest, deepest identity as God's daughter so He could move her into ministry

At the first prayer session, I also gave Diana a prayer card that contained everything she needed to continue praying on her own—key scriptures, lists of human sins and struggles, a list of Jesus' experiences, and a sample prayer. And after we had finished our prayer sessions, Diana shared how she carried that prayer card with her in the car "for the longest time" because it helped her to focus on Christ every time she would "start to feel the panic coming." Read Diana's words, below, sharing how her healing came through a process that was painful at times, yet well worth it in the end.

CHAPTER 3: TRUSTING JESUS TO RECEIVE HEALING

DIANA'S TESTIMONY

“The daily visits after the first prayer time were very emotional for me. Even though I was able to be in the mother’s room at the church now, I still wasn’t comfortable. Every day I was tempted to call and cancel our prayer times, but I always ended up going. And Paul could tell by looking at me that I wasn’t doing real great. But we continued praying, dealing with different lies and praying for forgiveness for people who had hurt me. It wasn’t easy, but it was helping little by little.

“We continued to meet every day that first week, and by Friday I was able to tell Paul that, for the first time since I could remember, I had had a good night’s rest and was feeling peaceful. That same morning, my husband, Ron, mentioned my struggle with irritable bowel syndrome [IBS] and how it was a trigger for anxiety and not wanting to go out of the house much. [When the body is unable to digest food into solid waste, it turns it into liquid form, creating diarrhea, one of the key symptoms of IBS]. So we asked the Lord to reveal the negative thoughts behind it. And we prayed again about another layer of the lie: If I can’t make myself safe, no one can make me safe. By the end of that particular prayer time, God had brought me to a place of deep peace.

“After that week, Pastor Paul had to go overseas to do some training, but when he got back, we were able to pray a couple more times. When we met up again, I shared with him how I had looked up every key word in Isaiah 53 in the dictionary, and I showed him the meanings of all the words in this ‘Suffering Messiah’ chapter of the Old Testament. By this point, God’s Word had come alive to me, and it was speaking to the deepest parts of my heart. Soon I started a small group [Bible study] in my home so I could share the message with others as well.”

THE HIDDEN HALF OF THE GOSPEL

TESTED BY UNEXPECTED EVENTS

“A few months later there was a police raid in my neighborhood. I woke up in the middle of the night surprised to hear police bull horns calling us to ‘come out of our houses with our hands up.’ Normally, this would have created instant panic. But even as I was surprised, there was no panic. As we found out [later], the police were making a raid on a home nearby where marijuana was being grown.

“The next day a newsman from one of the largest TV stations in Seattle wanted to interview my neighbor and my husband, but each of them said no. Then he asked me, and without thinking I said yes. After realizing what I had just agreed to do, I felt nervous, but again, not panicky. So I prayed, asking the Lord for His help, and I received His peace. Not only did I complete the interview with peace, the story ended up being on the national news. I was actually laughing about it when I called Pastor Paul to let him know what had happened and how the Lord was still helping me to grow in His amazing grace.

“Six months after we had prayed together, my husband was hit head-on by a drunk driver going the wrong way in traffic. After bouncing his car off other vehicles, he crashed into the front of Ron’s car, killing himself and almost killing my husband. Fortunately for us, Ron’s car was brand new, with modern designs to spread out the impact of the accident.

“While I was worried about my husband, just like any wife would be, I was able to face the situation without panic attacks or diarrhea. And I know this victory is directly connected to spending so much time praying about the ‘roots’ of my panic attacks before the accident and [my time] praying after Ron’s near-fatal accident.

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“I also know that, without healing in my life, I wouldn’t have been able to handle everything that happened after his accident without prayer, especially since he lost his job of thirty-two years due to brain damage—this meant that I had to do almost everything now! I’m so thankful God already had a small group Bible study in my home that could provide built-in support during this incredibly difficult trial.”

THE FRUIT OF HEALING

“Now, as a result of my healing, I’m the church secretary and the head deaconess for my church, something that would never have happened before. I’ve also done other things that I never ever would have even attempted to do, such as talking in front of a group of thirty people at our church during meetings and other events. I’ve helped my pastor with classes on healthy cooking as well.



“That doesn’t mean these steps always come easily, though. At one point I was about to help Pastor Greg with Dr. Nedley’s series, ‘Depression the Way Out,’ and all of a sudden my old fears started to come up. I went to his house with thoughts flying through my head such as, *I’ve got to leave, I’m worthless, I don’t have anything to share, I shouldn’t be here, Why am I here?, This is stupid, I’m stupid for being here, and I don’t belong here.*

“Because I know that Satan is the father of lies, I was able to pray to the Lord in the midst of the devil’s attacks, ‘taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ’ [2 Cor. 10:3–5 NAS]. And God shifted my thinking to:

THE HIDDEN HALF OF THE GOSPEL

I'm okay. Everything is fine. I'm safe here; nothing is going to happen. I can leave when I want to leave. And suddenly, everything was okay.



“But before we combined ‘prayer and ministry of the Word’ with Jesus’ story [Acts 6:4], I never had that experience. Before I really learned how to pray to Jesus, my Wounded Healer, I was never able to stop the [negative] thoughts [and] feelings. Now I had freedom to pray on my own, to have a more personal relationship with God,

and to move through these attacks with the Lord. Instead of trying to push them down, which just increased the battle, I was asking Jesus to release them from me. I was identifying with Him and allowing Him to replace them with His peace that passes understanding through the power of His Holy Spirit [Acts 7:54–60; Phil. 4:7; John 14:26–27; also see the discipleship tip in chapter 10 for Biblical truths on praying to the Father or to Jesus]. Even better, despite unexpected challenges, I’ve never had any more panic attacks, depression, or irritable bowel symptoms. Ever since receiving prayer and beginning to pray on my own, I have been able to ride as a passenger not only with my husband, but also with my daughter, my sister, and my son.

“Before receiving prayer ministry, I was afraid of day and night. I was afraid of nighttime coming. It even got so bad that I was afraid of the seasons changing. I worried about getting stuck in snow. I worried about becoming too hot to cool down. I worried to the point that no one but me could drive

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me anywhere. I even avoided intersections for fear of traffic and getting pinned in. Worry consumed my life, and I was miserable.

“But now God has changed that. God has set me free from my habit of worrying; He has shown me that worrying and trying to keep myself safe all the time were attempts to protect myself in my own strength. They were also ways I tried to avoid facing all those painful, shame-filled feelings and fears that I had no idea how to handle.

“I can’t say this healing has been easy, but I can say it has been a process. I can say God has brought blessings to my body, mind, soul, and life. And finally, I’m so thankful that God showed me that even as I could never have faced my fears alone, I could face them [with Jesus] because my Savior has already faced them—and He has already embraced them so He can offer me His life, His victory, and His peace.”

DISCIPLESHIP TIP: PRAYER MINISTRY IS NOT COUNSELING

As we end Diana's testimony, we want to stress that Straight 2 the Heart offers a prayer and discipleship process, not counseling or medical advice (even though we guard confidentiality as closely as counselors or other medical professionals). For this reason, before someone receives prayer from us, they must first:

- Agree to make NO changes to medication without a doctor's consent.
- Sign a consent form agreeing to receive prayer ministry, not counseling.

Although some people like Diana have been able to reduce or stop medication as a result of our prayer ministry, we are never the ones to advise such a change—instead, we let a person's doctor make that decision with him or her.

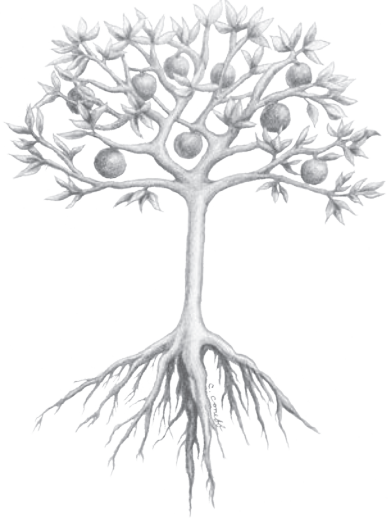
GOOD ROOTS PRODUCE GOOD FRUIT

If Diana's testimony sounds amazing, you need to know that a couple of things set her up for this remarkable healing. First, she was desperate and willing to learn when she came to me. Second, she also had a willingness to pursue healing. And third, she had enough faith to trust Jesus one step at a time. All of these factors made Diana "good soil" for sowing the seeds of God's truth (Matt. 13:23). But it wasn't easy. Diana's healing was definitely a process, a battle, or what I like to call a "spiritual root canal." And because she stepped out in faith, she eventually received the joy of freedom from her

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mental prison, and I received the joy of seeing God’s truth work that miracle as she received her truest, deepest identity as God’s daughter.

How did I know that Diana was receiving this true identity deep in her heart? It’s quite simple. Do you remember the fruit and root principle from chapter 1? Well, the same thing we said about bad fruit growing from bad roots is true in reverse: when we see a person producing good fruit on a solid and consistent basis, we can know that God’s truth has taken root in that person’s heart. Galatians 5:22–23 says that when the Holy Spirit is controlling our lives, He produces the fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (these are commonly referred to as the “fruits of the Spirit”).



After Diana received prayer and applied what she was learning, she demonstrated the spiritual fruit of Bible study, prayer, joining Christian community, and moving into ministry—the same fruit Jesus’ disciples eventually produced (see chapter 26 for their story of ministry). And these fruits are how I like to test my own ministry. If I can see a person developing the fruits of the Spirit and moving into ministry, that’s how I know we are on the right track.

But it all has to begin with a person’s willingness to receive healing, and that requires at least some level trust in Jesus, and trust in God. Without trust, we cannot even begin to seek healing. If nothing we’ve shared up to this point has convinced you yet to trust God, the poem we are about to share just might.

THE HIDDEN HALF OF THE GOSPEL

YOUR TURN: TRUSTING JESUS, THE SUFFERING MESSIAH, AND GOD, THE FATHER

“The Long Silence” is a poem I often share early in my seminars, because it describes a group of people who doubt God, yet who have the faith to honestly confront God. If you’re still having trouble trusting God, please consider “The Long Silence.” Its author is anonymous. Its impact is tremendous.

THE LONG SILENCE

At the end of time, billions of people were scattered on a great plain before God’s throne. Most shrank back from the brilliant light before them. But some groups near the front talked heatedly—not with cringing shame, but with belligerence.

Can God judge us? “How can He know about suffering?” snapped a pert young brunette.

She ripped open a sleeve to reveal a tattooed number from a Nazi concentration camp. “We endured terror—beatings—torture—death!”

In another group an African American boy lowered his collar. “What about this?” he demanded showing an ugly rope burn. “Lynched—for no crime but being black.”

In another crowd, a pregnant school girl with sullen eyes. “Why should I suffer?” she murmured, “It wasn’t my fault.”

Far across the plain there were hundreds of such groups. Each had a complaint against God for the evil and suffering He permitted in His world. How lucky God was to live in heaven where all was sweetness and light, where there was no weeping or fear, no hunger or hatred.

CHAPTER 3: TRUSTING JESUS TO RECEIVE HEALING

What did God know of all that man had been forced to endure in this world? For God lives a pretty sheltered life, they said.

So each of these groups sent forth their leader, chosen because he had suffered the most. A Jew, an African American, a person from Hiroshima, a horribly deformed arthritic, a thalidomide child. In the center of the plain they consulted with each other. At last they were ready to present their case. It was rather clever. Before God could be qualified to judge, he must endure what they had endured.

Their decision was that God should be sentenced to live on earth—as a man!

Let him be born a Jew.

Let the legitimacy of his birth be doubted.

Give him a work so difficult that even his family will think him out of his mind when he tries to do it. Let him be betrayed by his closest friends.

Let him face false charges, be tried by a prejudiced jury and convicted by a cowardly judge.

Let him be tortured.

At last let him see what it is like to be terribly alone.

Then let him die. Let him die so that there can be no doubt that he died.

Let there be a great host of witnesses to verify it.

As each leader announced his portion of the sentence, there was a long silence. No one uttered another word.

No one moved. For suddenly all knew that God had already served his sentence.⁵

THE HIDDEN HALF OF THE GOSPEL

ARE YOU WILLING TO JUDGE GOD?

As you journey with us, our prayer is that each of you will judge Jesus, as God, as already having served His sentence for you, so you can trust Him enough to accept that “something more” you’ve been looking for. Certainly it can be scary to face the truth about ourselves. It can threaten our sense of security to admit we may need help—to admit we may need to go to some scary places and wash some painful wounds. But when we see the truth about Jesus—that He opened Himself up to become vulnerable in every way to suffer and die for all humanity—suddenly, our task doesn’t seem so big.

It’s an interesting thing. When I start praying with people, and I lead them through the suffering, death, and resurrection, not just the death and resurrection, they report feeling lighter and more peaceful. And as we pray these truths, I see people digging deeper into God’s Word and moving into ministry naturally, joyously, and spontaneously, just like the woman at the well, and just like Diana.

This is what I call discipleship—people experience the power of the cross for salvation and freedom, then they are prepared to multiply that power with others. Sadly, many churches have a problem with discipleship—or sharing the power of the cross with others—because so many Christians lack healing and freedom in their own lives. Who’s excited to share good news if it really hasn’t been that good for them? In the next chapter, read how the hidden half can transform not only your life, but also your ministry.

CHAPTER 4:



MOVING INTO MINISTRY— WHAT CAN HAPPEN AFTER HEALING

In no way is the gospel story sentimental or escapist. Indeed, the gospel takes evil and loss with the utmost seriousness, because it says we cannot save ourselves. Nothing short of the death of the very Son of God can save us. But the “happy ending” of the historical resurrection is so enormous that it swallows up even the sorrow of the cross. It is so great that those who believe it can henceforth fully face the depth of the sorrow and brokenness of life.⁶

THE HIDDEN HALF OF THE GOSPEL

Have you ever thought about the impact our brokenness and messiness has on our ability to witness to others? What happens in our churches when we have brokenness and messiness inside and all around us, sitting on the pews at church?

When I present the hidden half in person, early on I show the squares illustration you saw in chapter 1, and then I'll ask my audience: Does it seem like many churches have a thirty-square gospel, offering *complete* healing and freedom from Satan's lies? Or is it possible that Christianity as a whole could be offering more to those inside and outside the church? Let me pause here and put this another way: How many churches are accused of the same thing Jesus was accused of—hanging out with alcoholics, prostitutes, and druggies? In other words, how much light is the average “follower of Christ” shedding on the world's darkness? How much light *can* the average Christian shed on the world's darkness, if he or she is living in the same darkness?

To put it bluntly, I don't find too many men struggling with pornography who are excited to share the good news of “freedom in Christ” with others. And I don't find too many women struggling with eating disorders who are excited to share Christ's healing power (the most common problems I see in men and women, respectively, by the way).

I also joke with people and ask all the grandmothers in the audience, “How many of you had to go through a witnessing class to tell people you were going to be a grandmother for the first time?” They all laugh because, obviously, they didn't need a class to share their good news.

My next question, then, is this: “Why do we have to train Christians to share good news about their Savior?”

The answer is really very simple. If the gospel were good news for us, we wouldn't need training to share it.

What's my point? Until we experience healing and freedom for ourselves,

CHAPTER 4: MOVING INTO MINISTRY - WHAT CAN HAPPEN AFTER HEALING

we're going to be like the woman at the well before her healing, or like Diana before hers, avoiding people and not going out to share the good news. But once it becomes real to us, we will become like the woman at the well and like Diana after their healing. It's quite simple. When we keep Jesus' method front and center, we can't help but see results.

DISCIPLESHIP TIP: BROKENNESS IS OUR GREATEST OPPORTUNITY

How did Jesus win hearts, and where did He start? The answer is that He started right where people were, bringing them relief and healing in the middle of the problems they were facing at the moment they met Him.

Instead of talking, He listened. Instead of preaching to sinners, He offered forgiveness of sins. Instead of ignoring suffering and pain, He soothed it. Only after Jesus had responded to people's emotional or physical needs did He try to preach to them with words—but He had already preached with his actions! Then, by the time He had forgiven sinners or healed the sick, He often didn't have to say anything more—He had already won their hearts—and they were already moving into ministry with a testimony! Time and time again we read it in the Bible, and that's why Straight 2 the Heart sees brokenness as our greatest evangelistic opportunity.

- Because brokenness was central to Jesus' gospel
- Because brokenness is inside and all around us
- Brokenness is our greatest evangelistic opportunity

THE HIDDEN HALF OF THE GOSPEL

SEEKING GOLDMINES OF GRACE: GOALS OF THE HIDDEN HALF

When I present the hidden half or pray with someone, I really want to see Jesus do two things for the person, and we saw both of them in the story of the woman at the well and in Diana's story: Through the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the "Root of David," we want to offer broken people healing and freedom that will lead to discipleship—we want to see the good "fruit" of a person moving into ministry with a testimony—just like the woman at the well and Diana moved into ministry.

MOVING INTO MINISTRY: BECOMING A DISCIPLE

To me, discipleship looks like this: Investing my life into the lives of others so that God can expand His kingdom of grace and truth in their hearts—until they naturally, spontaneously, and joyously repeat this process with others (2 Tim. 2:2; Matt. 28:18–20). The mission statement for my ministry is based on a similar promise in Revelation stating that God's everlasting gospel will impact everyone on planet earth: Our mission statement is: The Whole Gospel to the Whole World—One Disciple at a Time (Rev. 14:6).

From years of sharing the hidden half of the gospel through personal prayer ministry and public seminars and workshops, I know that when we invest our lives in sharing the gospel with others—especially through our own testimonies of how the gospel has freed us—the messiness, brokenness, and sinfulness of life become "goldmines" for God's grace for those willing to respond to God's goodness. As we connect the hearts of God's wounded children to the heart of Jesus, their Wounded Healer, He is the One who brings them healing and a heartfelt testimony to share with the world (John 12:31–33; 8:31–32; Mal. 4:2).

CHAPTER 4: MOVING INTO MINISTRY - WHAT CAN HAPPEN AFTER HEALING

For Diana and many others who have been touched by the hidden half of the gospel, the simple yet supernatural story of Jesus makes sharing the gospel practical, personal, and joyful. In other words, it makes sharing the gospel kind of like sharing the good news of a grandbaby!

THE POWER OF MULTIPLYING DISCIPLES

Dr. Dolores Jacoby's story is powerful not only because of the healing that has come into her heart and mind, but also for the way she's taken that healing to others. Although Dr. Jacoby already had a Doctorate of Divinity and a PhD in Christian psychotherapy, she realized she wanted something more, both to help herself and to offer help to others. At one of my trainings, she chose to receive prayer about a series of abandonments involving her father and other men in her life from which she had never fully recovered.

Because Dolores wanted more freedom in her life, and more tools to help others, she flew across the country for one of our five-day trainings. During training, she not only received prayer from Anna (whose story appears in chapters 16–18) regarding pain from her relationship with her mom, but she also prayed with and helped train others. Now, in addition to leading a whole group through Straight 2 the Heart's discipleship process, she has been able to bring Straight 2 the Heart's message to a local shelter called Samaritan Gardens (which offers food, health care, and support to 12,500 individuals every year). Now, on a weekly basis, Dolores and her ministry team help others experience salvation as they connect their stories to Christ's story—revealing how Jesus has turned her pain into His goldmine of grace!

At www.straight2theheart.com you can read more stories of discipleship resulting from Straight 2 the Heart's ministry to broken hearts.

THE HIDDEN HALF OF THE GOSPEL

YOUR TURN: PREPARING FOR A TREASURE HUNT

Do you have any patterns of brokenness or sinfulness isolating you today, leading you to hide from yourself, from God, or from others? Do you have any unresolved pain that is handicapping your faith, your joy, or your ministry?

Jesus invited His disciples to dig for His gospel like it was buried treasure, and in part 2 of *The Hidden Half of the Gospel*, that is what we will be doing. What you have already seen in Diana's testimony and "The Long Silence" is just the tip of the iceberg to the many ways Jesus can identify with and heal you. In the following pages, we coordinate seven more testimonies with four scenes from the end of Christ's life that will not only help you connect your story with Jesus' story, but learn how to connect other stories to His as well. In the next three chapters, read about how my co-writer, Lindsey, connected her story of abandonment with Jesus' story of abandonment, leading to the fulfillment of a lifelong dream—and major revisions to this book! We pray that as you internalize these stories, your sin and suffering can become your goldmine of grace that eventually moves you, like it moved Lindsey, to discover your truest, deepest identity and the calling Christ has for you.