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Truth Vs Lies: Which Do You Follow? (Part 6)

Intro: Video: Funny – painful clips. We all know that life can be a painful experience. Physical pain is bad enough (whether or not it's self-inflicted). But, the worse pain is emotional pain. Being emotionally wounded by life. (By others / by tragedy / by crisis or trauma.) These wounds tend to go much deeper than a physical wound. They wound our very soul. They also tend to take much longer to heal. Sometimes we delay the healing of emotional wounds (or stay stuck) because we believe a very common lie.

Lie #6: Time heals all wounds.

Ecc. 8:6 "Yes, there is a time and a way for everything, even as people's troubles lie heavily upon them." (NLT) Time alone does NOT make everything better. There is time, combined with a proper way. It is the proper use of the time that leads us down the road of healing not just time itself. Time alone can't "do" anything to you. Time is a very necessary component in healing, it's just not the active component that heals you.

When we are wounded, the time we have can be used in a positive way or a negative way. What we do with a wound over the course of time will determine if we experience healing or we stay mentally / emotionally / spiritually stuck. Believing this lie keeps us stuck!

- I know people who were wounded 20/30 years ago – They are still raw/ stuck / still in bondage to the wound. Time didn't heal them at all!

I. Negative Use Of Time

- 3 very common negative uses of time when we are wounded / in pain. If we believe time alone heals, we usually follow this path.
 - A. We try to manage the pain ourselves
 1. We try to ignore it: Pain is tough to ignore because it screams for attention. Therefore, we try to numb it / medicate it in some way / escape from it
Ps. 55:4-8 "My heart is in anguish...fear and trembling overwhelm me...Oh how I wish I had wings like a dove...How quickly I would escape..." (NLT) We've all wished we could just check out – run away – escape. People do this in a variety of ways.
 - **Workaholic** – too busy to ever think about it – If I just keep busy enough I never have to look at the pain I feel. I won't ever have to confront it. I'll

just throw myself into my work / parenting / activities. Just be too busy to think about it.

- **Drugs and alcohol** = This is how many people attempt to numb the pain. Life is so overwhelming, I just want to forget it. We medicate it.
 - **Pleasure** = Since life hurts so much on this area, I will explore pleasure (Sexual encounters / gambling / It could be something good that we do at the expense of something better) **Example:** Man who ignored his wife and kids because he was always fishing – Ignored the issues at home.
2. We try to hide it: We are very aware of the pain we feel therefore, we develop ways of covering it up / masking it / but this is just a superficial solution.
- Jer. 6:14 “They have healed the brokenness of MY people superficially...”*
(NASB) In other words, not dealing with the real issue. We try to hide our pain a lot. This is a superficial way of dealing with it.
- Develop facades. We present an image for others to see that is not real. We hide behind a false front fearing exposure.
 - We can hide behind our accomplishments / possessions / money / careers
 - Do you have friends where you can never have a deeper conversation? Where everything is shallow / superficial / safe / predictable /
3. We try to deny it: We simply deny that it’s a big deal. We deny the impact the wounding really has on our life. “It rolls off me like water off a duck.”
- I know I fall into this often. “Hey, it’s no big deal...just forget it.” I think men are very susceptible to this one. We have a great tendency to deny our feelings. To blow them off! Deny the pain.

Do you see yourself trying to manage your pain?

B. We internalize the pain

- This simply means we are keeping it safely protected inside our own mind and heart. Nobody really knows the depths of the wound. I’ll just keep this wound to myself. “It will get better with time.”
 - But like any physical wound that is not addressed, it gets infected. Emotional wounds get infected and affect other areas of our lives. (Just like a physical wound – explain) If we internalize our pain, it will negatively impact us in at least 3 ways...
1. It will affect our emotions
- Ps. 6:6-7 “I am weary with my sighing...My eye has wasted away with grief...”*
(NASB)
- Lam. 3:17 “...I have forgotten happiness.”* (NASB)
- Internalizing our emotions keeps us in this state. We all can feel this way at times, but we can’t stay here.

- Lose your joy / peace / increases stress and anxiety / Depression
- When we internalize our pain, it effects us emotionally like high blood pressure and high cholesterol effects us physically. (Explain) – Restricts the flow of blood – clogs the arteries – BUT, this happens emotionally. Internalizing pain restricts our ability to feel.

2. It will affect our relationships

Ps. 69:20 “If only one person would show some pity; if only one person would turn and comfort me.” (NLT) We’ve all felt isolated in our pain.

- Internalizing pain impacts our relationships in a negative way. We feel like no one understands / we tend to isolate ourselves / we withdraw
- We pull back emotionally from people. We don’t share feelings / we are not emotionally honest / we keep people at a safe distance / we’re hard to be with – we lash out at others (wounded people wound people)
- This often results from people withdrawing from us. They begin to perceive that we don’t want them / or their help / All this does is magnify the feelings of isolation.

3. It will affect us spiritually

Jer. 15:18 “Why then does my suffering continue? Why is my wound so incurable? Your help seems as uncertain as a seasonal brook. It is like a spring that has gone dry.” (NLT)

- We begin to question God / His goodness / His care / His reliability / God where are you? Why won’t this pain go away? I have had times when I have felt just like Jeremiah!
- Now we can begin to feel spiritually isolated. Not only do we see people withdrawing from us but we feel God is as well!

Have you been internalizing your pain?

C. We blame other people for our pain

1. We embrace a victim mentality. Others are to blame for the way I feel. Others are the cause for the pain I am experiencing.
2. We then get cynical / sarcastic / we lose hope of ever feeling good again. Enough time has gone by and you still hurt. Time is not making this thing better. We have to blame someone for the ongoing pain.
3. The wound may have been created by a person, but now we are blaming the offender and others for the fact that the wound is still open. You have developed a long list of excuses why you can’t change.

How are you dealing with the wounds in your life? Do you see any similarities? If so, God has a better way for us to utilize time...one that leads us to freedom.

Biblical Use of Time

D. We must acknowledge the pain (to God and others) Honesty!

Ps. 69:29 "I am suffering and in pain. Rescue me, O God, by Your saving power."

(NLT) I love the emotional honesty in the Psalms. There is nothing held back – no pseudo spiritual jargon – just gut wrenching pain poured out to God.

1. First, we acknowledge the wound to God. He is the Great Healer. WHY?

How can we expect God to heal what we refuse to acknowledge?

Acknowledging our pain to God is the first step in emotional honesty and healing.

Ex. 15:26 "...for I, the LORD, am your healer."(NASB) Do you believe this?

2. We have to stop all the negative uses of time (ignoring / hiding / denying / internalizing / blaming – and get brutally honest before God about how bad we hurt.

3. How? Find a time when you are alone / uninterrupted / Then, remember the offense / the wounding / realize what was lost / allow yourself to grieve it – to be angry – to feel it. NOW, tell God about all those feelings.

4. Be prepared for a floodgate. WHY? You've built an emotional dam = reservoir to keep your feelings back. You're now destroying the dam and the feelings will flow! Don't be afraid of them. Give them to God. (This takes time – it's a process – not just a one time activity)

5. The second step in acknowledging pain is being willing to share it with someone else. WHY? Because this is part of God's use of time.

Gal. 6:2 "Share each other's troubles and problems, and in this way obey the law of Christ." (NLT)

6. God knows that we don't heal in isolation but in the context of loving relationships. We have to choose to stop hiding / covering up / wearing a mask / Pain can cause us to withdraw. We must choose NOT to do so.

7. As Fall begins, can I encourage you to put yourself in a context where these relationships can happen. (Home groups / TNT classes / Ministry) Allow people to get to know the real you and love the real you.

E. We must forgive the source of the pain

Col. 3:13 "You must make allowances for each other's faults and forgive the person who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others."

(NLT)

- Most people have heard the fact that we need to forgive. Forgiveness is the only way to be free from an offense / wound / from pain. But often people forgive superficially. I see three distinct levels that need to be considered.

1. We must forgive the offender. This is the obvious one. Who has caused you harm or pain? Can you release them from that offense? Will you release them from any debt you feel they owe you?

2. We must forgive ourselves. Often when we are wounded, we've lashed back / wounded others / used time in negative ways – drugs/alcohol – other ways to escape or numb the pain.
 - We can't live our lives under a cloud of guilt and shame. We need to be willing to apply God's forgiveness to ourselves.
3. We must forgive God. Please understand that God doesn't need to be forgiven because He has done something wrong. Sometimes though, we have been blaming Him for painful events in our lives.
 - Can you release God from your anger directed towards Him for being treated unfairly. Can you release God from whatever you think He owes you? (apology / explanation /
4. Here are 3 distinct levels of forgiveness. Where do you need to forgive today in order to be healed?

F. We must move forward again despite the fear of pain

We must put ourselves back into the main stream of life again. Back into a positive use of our time. Using our lives and time in a way that honors God.

- Yes, there is the risk of more pain; this is why it requires faith.

Heb. 10:38 "But my righteous one will live by faith, and if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him." (NIV) We choose live by faith; to move back out in relationships and trust again. We choose not to shrink back.

1. When we are wounded, fear controls our lives. We withdraw from people / from church / ministry / taking any risks whatsoever. We pull back and try to make our life safe and predictable. BUT God did not call us to this!
2. Some of you won't get involved in a home group because of fear. Some of you won't get involved in serving / ministry because of fear. Some of you are very reluctant to make a commitment to Foothills because of fear. You've been wounded and you don't want to get wounded again!
3. Some of the deepest wounds people experience have happened in churches!
4. I want Foothills to be a safe place where people can learn to trust God and others again. Where they can move past their fears / their wounds / and experience an environment where healing is a reality.
5. This is one of the reasons God has placed Foothills in this area. God wants to bring healing to this geographic area. He wants to bring healing to you! Will you trust Him?
6. Where is God asking you to move back out into the mainstream and trust again? To not shrink back but to move forward, trusting God so that your healing can be complete. For some of you, this is your next step!

7. Here at Foothills, you are on the outside looking in. It's not because we have placed you there. You are keeping yourself there. Will you take a step of faith? This Fall would be a great time to do so. There are so many places to step into.

We all experience wounds from this life. Are you believing the lie that time alone heals all wounds? Are you tired of feeling stuck, trapped by the pain you feel not knowing how to move forward? Are you ready and willing to embrace what God says about the proper use of our time? It's what we choose to do in time that brings healing to our wounds. Will you trust God today instead of trusting time. Time can't do anything, but God can do anything! Where are you putting your trust today?