



STEP TWO TO HEALING

Step Two to  
Healing: Decide  
that You Want to  
Be Healed

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**I**n 2007, I conducted my first miracle-and-healing service as a guest speaker in Mount Vernon, Illinois. Prior to that day, I had never been bold enough to allow God's power to flow through me outside of the congregation that I pastor. But I visited the revival the night before I was scheduled to speak and I could sense the atmosphere would be ripe for miracles the next day. Those people under that tent were hungry for a visible sign that God was with them.

Since it was only an hour's drive, our praise team and band made the trip to Mount Vernon. They sang and ministered in a way I had never heard. I believe the Lord was confirming through them what He wanted me to do. After all, I was a little hesitant because conducting healing services outside of the church that I pastor was new territory for me. I was also fearful of being rejected by the people. Fear of rejection is a demon that has made frequent visits to my

mental residence over the years. It certainly made a visit that day, so I needed all of the confirmation I could get that would confirm the Holy Spirit was guiding me down this road.

I preached a sermon that was very well received, and I knew the spirit of faith was underneath that tent. This was the first tent revival I had been a part of. For some reason, not having four walls surrounding me helped dissolve my hesitancy about what I was going to do next. Everyone in the neighborhood could see and hear what was going on, and the Spirit of the Lord was telling me they all would witness Him that day.

Following the sermon, I cued the band to begin playing soft music. No one knew what was planned. I explained to the audience the Lord told me in last night's worship meeting His power to heal would be present underneath this tent. I opened the area where I was standing to anyone who had a physical ailment and wanted God to heal them. People started coming up from all over the tent. It was an amazing sight! Just as fast as they could get to me, God was healing them all. One man hobbled up to me in a walker. God healed the man, and he took the walker and threw it in the trash bin next to the tent.

A woman approached me and said her doctors told her she would not be able to speak after the stroke she suffered. I put the microphone up to her mouth and asked her to repeat what she just said to me. She said, "I had a stroke, and the doctors told me I would not be able to talk, and I want the Lord to make me talk again." I asked her to repeat what she just said again. She repeated it, and I started laughing. She looked at me strangely, as if she thought I was laughing at her condition. Before she could get offended, I said, "But

sister, you are talking right now. Your speech was clear, and not only me, but everyone, could hear you perfectly!” She started weeping, and the audience rejoiced with her.

These types of miracles went on for another thirty minutes or so. As the crowd started to thin out, I noticed a woman in a wheelchair at the back of the tent. I locked in on her immediately because I could not understand with all the power of God flowing, why hadn’t she come up to receive healing. The more I focused on her, I noticed she was crying. Since the microphone I was using was wireless, after I signaled for the band and praise team to keep ministering, I decided to approach this woman to see if I could convince her to trust God to heal her. The closer I got to her, the more things I noticed. I saw she was tightly clutching her wheel chair with both hands. I knew this meant she was mentally pacing back and forth wondering if she should or could receive healing.

I grabbed a chair and sat down in front of her. I took her hands in mine, making sure I was looking softly at her. I did not want her to think I was going to embarrass her in any way. In fact, to make sure she knew my intentions were loved-filled, I turned the microphone off and gave it to someone standing nearby. I asked her, “Sister, why didn’t you come up front for healing?” She looked at me with tears streaming down her face and motioned for me to come a little closer. She looked around the room then pointed towards my ear indicating that she wanted to tell me something, and she wanted to make sure no one heard her. I stood up and leaned toward her.

With sobbing and tears, this woman softly said, “Sir, I want to be healed, but if I start walking, I am afraid they

will cut off my disability check.” I knew this nice, older lady was totally sincere. I didn’t believe she had a conning spirit at all. I believed her chief concern was her monthly expenses. I attempted to persuade her to trust God and to know that the same God who could heal her is the same God who could financially provide for her.

After not moving the needle at all with convincing her, I closed my eyes and whispered softly, “Lord, how can I persuade this woman to receive your loving touch?” The Spirit of the Lord answered and said, “Son, this is indicative of so many of my children. Deep down inside they really don’t want to be healed. There is a small benefit they receive from being in their condition, and they would rather hold onto that than be free of what ails them.” With those words, I hugged the woman and whispered in her ear that God loves her so much and I would continue to pray for her.

As this story demonstrates, *Step Two* for taking your life back is simple, but not easy. You must decide you *want* to be healed. Yes, Jesus paid for your healing, and yes, by His stripes, you are indeed healed. But healing will never manifest in your life until you make the decision to receive it. Healing is a benefit, a gift that comes with salvation, but it is only activated when it is received. Allow me to give you a Biblical illustration of this principle.

There was a man who had a physical “infirmity” for thirty-eight years, who laid by a pool. At a certain time, an angel would visit the pool and stir up the water. Now many other sick, lame, and paralyzed people were also at the pool. Whenever the angel would stir the water, the people would rush into the pool. Whoever was first to enter the pool was healed. Now Jesus came along, and he noticed the man with

the infirmity, laying there, and Jesus knew the man had been in that condition a long time.

Now, here is where we—as Bible students—have interpretive liberties. There are some biblical translations that interpret Jesus’s knowledge of the man’s condition to mean that He knew how long the man had the infirmity. Other translations take the statement to mean Jesus knew how long the man had been at the pool. I choose to go with the second interpretation. Either Jesus passed the gate daily and saw the man, or He received the information from a local. He may have even received the information from the Father Himself. In any case, He knew the man had been lying at the gate for a long time.

Jesus approached the man and asked, “Do you want to be made well?” Immediately, without giving a yes or no answer, the man went into his, what seems to be, well-rehearsed and repeated story. “Sir,” he said, “I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me.” Jesus didn’t respond to the sad story the man was telling. The Lord simply said, “Rise, take up your bed, and walk.”

There are a few things about this story I think we should all pay close attention to, because they will help us in our journey to manifest healing from our traumatic pasts. The first thing Jesus asked was, “Do you want to be made well?” My friend, you have to really ask yourself that question, because in most cases, our mouths say one thing, but our actions betray us. When you truly want to manifest healing in your life, you have to align your words, thoughts, relationships, and actions. They must be in perfect unison. For instance, you can’t truly claim you want to be healed of heart

disease and continue to eat sodium-rich foods. Your actions reveal your true desires.

By saying “another steps down before me,” the man in the story indicates he did get close to the pool. But Jesus was sensing something else coming from this man. Was He discerning the man wasn’t putting all of his efforts into actually getting into the pool? I mean, by the looks of things he got awfully close on several occasions. By not acknowledging the man’s story, did Jesus sense the man grew to enjoy the shot of attention injected into his emotions by others who felt sorry for him after he told his sad tale of not making it to the water? Did Jesus know that the same strength the man used to scoot close to the water and not make it in, could be the strength that he could use to simply rise up and walk?

When you read the story, you will notice that Jesus didn’t lay hands on the man. Neither did He stretch forth His hand and grab the man to help him stand up. He simply said to him, “Rise, take up your bed, and walk.” And the man walked. It seems as if Jesus wanted the man to use his own mental and physical strength.

One more point I want to pull from this awesome story is this: When we read further, we come to realize the man didn’t know that it was Jesus who gave him the order to rise up and walk. Jesus slipped through the crowd prior to revealing His identity. Now, we know it was the power of God that healed the man, so please don’t misunderstand what I am about to say.

I believe Jesus initially concealed His identity because He wanted the man to know that he had the power to rise up and walk all along. The man needed to see he didn’t have to wait for this big event of stirring of the water in order to

be healed. All he needed was enough “want to.” As I type these words, my mind reflects back to a powerful message I heard John Osteen (Joel’s father) preach in 1995 or 1996. The title of the sermon was “How Big Is Your Want-To?” I don’t remember the Bible passage he used. I just remember the title and the big idea he was conveying. You have to want it bad enough in order to receive it. Many of us would like to manifest healing in our lives, but our “want-to” isn’t big enough.

Often we settle for the intoxicating highs we get from behavior that lets us remain in our pain. Sometimes pain can become our addiction. We’ve been hooked on it so long that we fiend for destructive behaviors that have become rather normal. Below are some addictive things we may get out of circling the drain of our pain. I will list these so you can easily identify them and determine if you fit in any of these categories:

### **Excuse #1: You enjoy telling your sad story**

There is a difference between exposing your wound for the sake of a testimony (we will cover that in the next chapter) and exposing your wound because you love the attention it draws. Many are addicted to the latter. Each time you share your story of abuse, in some twisted way you think having people feel sorry for you is beneficial. On some level you feel as though the only way you can keep their attention or care is by drawing them into your pain.

Once again, in the story of the man with the infirmity, after he told Jesus about how the sick people who were much faster would reach the pool before he did, Jesus never

acknowledged what He'd just heard. He just commanded the man to get up. Now that may seem harsh, but the Lord knew that his well-rehearsed, sad story was not going to move the man to health.

I mean, think about it. Have you ever met a person who— every time you see them—somehow gets the conversation to circle back to how difficult their life has been, or they go into the woe-is-me tales from their childhood? They are addicted to their story! On some level they feel as though they will not be accepted or have value without people feeling sorry for them.

I know, because to a certain extent, this was me. There was a time in my life I'd share my story, not for the sake of being transparent or for the purposes of helping people like I am doing right now by writing this book. I use to share my story because I knew it would garner sympathy. During those earlier years, I knew if I shared my story with the right people, I could yoke up with them and receive benefits from that faux friendship. Little did I understand that when you put liquid toxin into a barrel with cracks, eventually it will leak. That's exactly what happened, time and again.

Although my story captured the sympathy of a few, my toxic behavior would eventually leak out. This is why it is so important that you stop using your story as a calling card to garner compassion. The cream of your past will rise to the top, and soon enough, those who were exposed to your web of deceit will realize your story was just a ruse to lure them. And those who by chance will remain because of your story, are probably in need of manifested healing in their life as well. There is a small chance that you may attract someone different than you. However, those who remain are most



likely your soul twins, people who wallow in the sad tale of their victimization. You must make a decision right here, right now, that either you are going to walk in victory or continue to walk in victim-me. Only victims tell their story for the sake of attention.

### **Excuse #2: You enjoy mingling with people of like fates**

There is an old saying: *If you show me your friends, I will show you your future.* This is so true. Especially when it comes to people who claim they want healing to manifest in their life. Remember what I said earlier. Your mouth may say one thing, but your behavior reveals your true desires. Your friends and family associations reveal your true desires as well. Some people enjoy the fellowship of brokenness. They feel safer because some of their family and friends are familiar fellows in the same sinking ship.

Let's deal with the family first—since that's a slogan many of us love to throw around: “family first.” Listen, if your family members, including your parents, are toxic, and you are in need of manifested healing, RUN—FOR—YOUR—LIFE! Yes, your life. Because that is literally what's on the line. I know you love your family members. They have always been there for you. But being there for you and helping you become the best version of yourself are two totally different things. I have often found that family members are the best button-pushers around, and they know the exact right—or, rather, wrong—buttons to push. When you are trying to manifest health, you may have to say goodbye to them for a season, at least until you are emotionally healthy enough to hang around them. Again, I know this may sound harsh. I

am not saying have zero contact, and I am not saying be rude or mean to them. But I am saying, as much as possible, make yourself conveniently absent.

Now your friends are a different story. You can't divorce family members; they may require just a simple separation for a season. However, you can divorce your friends. I do realize soul ties to friends can be stronger than many familial relationships. For many people, their friends know more about them and have been through more wars with them than most of their family members. But you must not allow that to cloud your judgment when it comes to making the decision about your friendships.

Let's go back to the story of the man with the infirmity. Now, it doesn't say if the man was paralyzed or not, and we don't know if he crawled slowly to the pool or if some of his friends helped him to the pool. Let's just assume for a moment he had friends to help him to the pool. My question to them would be, if you knew the waters would get stirred, and there was no set time for the stirring, why didn't you stay around until the waters became troubled? And if you were there on time, why didn't you pick him up and move fast enough to get him into the water?

Could it be that on some level they were afraid if the man received healing, he would not need them to that degree any longer?

I have a question for you, dear reader. Take a look at your friends. Are they helping you manifest healing in your life or are they allowing you to stew in your current condition? Since we've already established that we attract and keep around us people who are our soul twins, then we must at least consider that if one of the twins show signs of mani-

fested healing, then the twin who hasn't walked in healing may feel displaced in the relationship. Unwilling to take the chance they may be left behind, they will not encourage their friend toward accelerated healing—or any healing at all—because of their fear of being displaced.

Too many times we struggle with being grateful to our friends for their past heroic acts of loyalty. We think being grateful means we have to repay them for all eternity. Now, I am all for gratitude and loyalty. I am a fiercely loyal friend. But have you ever considered some friends didn't rescue you because they loved you so much? Some of them showed up "heroically" because their broken spirit knew they could rescue you only to capture you, only to hold you emotionally hostage for an infinity-sized ransom later on.

Let me help you right now to determine your friends' motives behind their loyalty. If they have (time and again) taken you back to the scene of where they found you—in other words, if they have constantly thrown in your face how they helped you—then their motives for helping you weren't pure.

Now, as you walk away, don't leave exuding any hostility towards them. I have seen people leave their friendships and blame the friend's dysfunction as the sole reason behind the departure. Remember, we attract and we keep people in our lives who are just like us. The part of you that had not manifested healing attracted them and chose to keep them around. You make the decision to walk away only because you can't carry their emotional load and yours too.

*Remember, show me your friends and I will show you your future. You must walk away for your health's sake.*

I remember platonically befriending a young lady a few years ago. She heard from social media about me being a survivor of childhood sexual abuse. She inboxed me, informed me that she too was a survivor, then asked me to give her a call. Within the first ten minutes of the call I knew, in the effects of the sexual abuse, our stories were nearly identical. She shared how she had zero self-confidence; how her demon was not sexual identity or promiscuity but rather, self-hatred. I could totally relate because that was my struggle as well. I knew this was a soul twin when she confessed she felt more comfortable pretending to be someone else than being herself. This woman was describing me.

I mentioned in Chapter One how after the abuse on Audubon Terrace, I went outside and played with my brother and cousins as if nothing had happened. Well, there was a reason for that. I slipped into the Superman character and played in the field with my relatives, and in my mind I was Superman himself. This became a pattern for me for many years. I will talk about that a little later. But for now, let's just say whenever I felt that I'd lost control and couldn't bail out, I would slip into the intricate role of "characters."

This could happen over time, and I'd remain in character for months or even years. Or I could temporarily slip into a character on the spot so I wouldn't have to experience the pain of rejection. Now, I was fully conscious and fully aware. So it wasn't a case of Dissociative Identity Disorder. I was very much present. I just felt safer (for instance) hiding behind a T.D. Jakes impersonation when I felt like my sermon wasn't connecting with the audience.

With the trajectories of our pain—mine and the woman caller's—seemingly rising to equal heights, I decided

to befriend her, only to discover we were on two totally different paths. After a few more conversations, I realized she was comfortable with her life being driven by excuse-making. She refused to grab the bull by the horns and make a decision to win regardless of the hand she had been dealt. She also displayed a propensity to act out very irrationally. This young lady was actually contemplating crashing a wedding! Uh-oh! I knew I was way too old and had accomplished way too much even to entertain such conversations.

Therefore, without hesitation, I abruptly ended the budding friendship. My reason wasn't just because of her low level of maturity; I could not take the chance of something in me being drawn to her victim mentality. I was determined to win in my life, and I knew a friendship with this woman was not healthy for me.

My friend, I cannot stress enough how aggressive you must become in choosing yourself and your manifested healing over anyone else. Even those kinships and friendships that are healthy will not fully blossom until you manifest health. Right now, I am imagining a cloud of witnesses in the heavens looking down upon you and dulcetly chanting, "Choose you! Choose you! Choose you!" Give yourself permission to obey those voices. Doing so will demonstrate that you are serious about deciding to be healed today.

### **Excuse #3: You enjoy being in that spot**

Sometimes the usual activities that have blended into our daily routine are actually hindrances to our decision to manifest healing. Let's again consider the biblical story of the man with the infirmity. I wonder ... could the reason

for him not doing whatever he could to make it into the water, be that he got a comfortable feeling just sitting around the pool every day? Sometimes it seems easier to live with an infirmity or problem than to do what is needed to get rid of it.

I am amazed at the number of people I see who've settled for undesirable jobs, neighborhoods—even being members of certain congregations—all because these allow them to stay in a comfortable spot. I am a pastor, so please allow me to speak to the church spot.

I have observed many people who are imprisoned by their past, become members of congregations whose ministry claim to focus on deliverance, or helping the congregant find freedom. However, the bus ride to freedom often makes stops down Condemnation Lane, Controlling Avenue, and Judgmental Court. Instead of the sermons being geared toward exposing the listener to the good news of Jesus, they are delivered in a manner which actually causes people to remember just how rotten they are.

Both the preacher and the congregations refer to these sermons as “whooping sermons,” suggesting the preacher is just telling the truth. Believe me, I am all for sermons that challenge the believer. However, delivering sermons week after week reminding you of the reality of hell, when in truth the believer never has to worry about hell ever, is not telling the truth. It is simply fear-inspiring, manipulative, and controlling.

What's amazing to me about those who attend these places of worship and have not manifested healing in their lives, is they enjoy hearing this type of sermon. One of the reasons for their enjoyment is the sermons speak against

some destructive behavior they have adopted as a result of their emotional trauma. For example, a common negative behavior for a person who was sexually abused is sexual promiscuity. When the pastor speaks to that, telling the congregation week after week all fornicators and adulterers will go to hell, the promiscuous believer thinks this type of preaching will keep him or her on the straight-and-narrow.

But in reality, the only thing it is doing is keeping them at the altar during the repentance portion of the altar call and placing them right back in their lover's bed. I often wonder why preachers of this sort haven't discovered the more you tell a person not to do something, and you keep that particular sin in their consciousness, the more the person is drawn to do it.

My advice to a promiscuous person in that type of church environment, is: make an honest assessment. You'll discover this environment has not brought about permanent freedom. I suggest you find a church home that's teaching the full word of God, and a preacher who does not just tell and yell at you to stop a behavior, but who gives you the practical steps, love, and grace that will help you manifest healing and walk away from sin forever.

Let's talk about jobs for a moment. Jobs that are not challenging can become hiding spots for those who have yet to decide to live healed. There are certain fears that wounded people figure they will never have to face as long as they stay on the safe career path. I remember one of the most frightening decisions I ever made was leaving my safe and secure job at United Parcel Service in order to serve in ministry full-time. Although I was absolutely convinced the timing was right and God was releasing me to leave, the fear of

failure loomed heavily in my heart.

The self-hatred demon rose up in that familiar, ugly tone of voice and had a sermon of its own. It wanted me to know there was no way I had what it took to become a successful, full-time pastor. It had no problem telling me that if I left this “good job,” the ministry would fail, and I would never find work like this again. Because of that demonic voice, I remained in the UPS spot for another fourteen months before I summoned the courage to take the risk and leave. My inner core-self knew as long as I remained in that risk-free spot, manifesting healing in my life would be delayed.

I’m sure you have noticed I have repeatedly used the words “manifested healing.” That’s because, as a believer, you must decide to be healed by first accepting the truth that by the stripes of Jesus you are already healed. Your healing is one hundred percent, absolutely real. Although it has yet to appear in this material world, spiritually you are healed, and the sooner you can totally trust Jesus and His finished works on the cross, the sooner healing will manifest in the outer conditions of your life. Therefore, you must never forget: you will manifest healing when you decide you want to be made well. That is the second step on the road of recovery.