

Seek Me and Find Me: The Hidden Heart Snag

TABLE OF CONTENTS AND CHAPTER SYNOPSIS:

The book focuses on clearing the barriers to deeper connection with the Lord because connection is the basis for transformation into His image, for healing, for effective ministry in His name, and for the church manifesting His presence and purpose in the world. The complexity and variety of the barriers, which all overlap, is addressed. I try to make a systematic declaration of how they work to distance us from God which is Section I: The Plight of the Captives. Section II addresses the question I have been asked for years: **how** do I get through the barriers and find God?

Section I: The Plight of the Captives

Preface

People long for more connection with God and have great difficulty finding it. Two large areas hold separation in place. The first area consists of five elements from the fall of man which still hinder our awareness of God: doubting God, knowing by our own faculties instead of by God's, listening to the serpent and then to each other, shifting the source of approval and authority from God to man, hiding from God for security, and holding Him responsible for the consequences of our choices. And the second large area is life experience and its wounds. Both areas are intertwined and well-explain our separation from God.

Introduction

God announced His concern and intent and invited me to join Him in it—the Church of His Spirit that is referenced throughout the book.

1 Church of His Spirit

Because the Church of His Spirit is the ultimate goal of connection with God, I review what it is, as reflected in the book of Acts. The aspects I address are: God's people in one accord, their preaching flowing from dependence on God, overcoming the fear of man, going where He sends, the priority and power of ministering to the Lord, weathering times of opposition, the power of comfort—these all rest on connection with God and dependence on Him.

2 The Heart of the Matter

It is all a heart issue—the battle plays out in our hearts. An initial illustration demonstrates reconciliation of the whole heart with God—mind, emotion and will. Trying to reconcile our whole heart uncovers the disconnect between mind and emotion, which prevents the deeper bond we need with God because that level of our hearts is often in hiding.

3 The Unspoken Bottleneck

This chapter addresses the specific problem of how we view our emotions. Trying to control feelings by ignoring them produces a bottleneck; we become imprisoned in what we ignore. The scriptural alternative is to reconcile our emotions with the Lord, just as we do our minds. We uncover and look head-on at emotions and exchange ours for His. It takes whole heart agreement to free us. David is the man after God's heart; he pours out his intense feelings to God, reconciles his heart, and comes away praising.

4 **Doubting God**

Diakrino, translated doubt, is a two part word, *dia*, asunder and *krino*, to judge—to judge ourselves asunder, to withdraw due to our mental reasoning. Doubt was introduced by accusing and misrepresenting God, causing us to withdraw from God and rely on our own understanding—we will not draw near to one we mistrust. Doubt is now so natural to us we scarcely know we are overruling God. The battle continues in every heart between doubt registering and faith overruling it.

5 **“Knowing”**

The serpent offered a different kind of “knowing” (you will be like God, knowing good and evil). It is defined as knowing by sight, experience, and chiefly in the mind—knowing by our own faculties, which has become the way we naturally operate. Living chiefly in the mind discounts heart qualities and ultimately silences them—as well as the voice of God. The alternative it deceitfully replaced is knowing *with* God, counting on His faculties more than ours. The difficulty of the return is formidable.

6 **Approval and Authority**

Approval and authority shifted from God to man, as Adam and Eve heeded first the serpent and then each other. Approval of man is one of the largest obstacles to agreement with God because the distorted knowledge derived from the limitations of man is a sizeable component of our internal prisons. Every heart is now clogged with many “truths” we did not get from God.

7 **Hiding for Security**

In their disconnected and diminished state, Adam and Eve went into hiding from the presence of the Lord. Hiding our hearts continues to be our form of security—afraid to be found, unwittingly maintaining the separation ourselves and holding the keys to our own prison. The influence hiding has on restoring connection with the Lord is one of the most difficult factors because we forget what we have hidden, are afraid of unearthing it, and do not realize it may contain the cause of our disconnect from God.

8 **Responsibility Lines**

This chapter observes that all the elements of the fall have disastrous impact—the worst outcome being how they all intertwine. There are two bottom lines: the choice to blame God, which is the coup de grace, and we tend to think of ourselves as our own person and obey as we choose. Clear responsibility lines must be restored—we are all responsible to God for who we listen to and believe, and for the attitude, perspective, and choices of our own hearts.

9 **Broken Hearts**

Heart is defined as the center of our being, including mind, emotion and will. *Broken*-hearted is the biblical diagnosis of man—the center of our being is broken. The word used for broken in the OT has a range of meaning: broken down, broken off, broken in pieces. Thus with one word the Lord describes the spectrum of our condition. The NT word means to be closely associated with things that crush or wear a rut, which describes the patterns imprisoning us; we embrace them as true and do not know how to unravel them. To help visualize the severity of the problem, several illustrations demonstrate the many ways our hearts are wounded, learn false approval structures, and take on guilt. Heart wounding creates such vulnerable territories that we are open to demonic attack in ways below our conscious awareness. The good news is that demonic activity cannot effect destruction without uncovering places in need of healing.

10 Get Your Spirit Involved

The spirit of man is the aspect of man through which God most directly encounters him. Psalm 77 describes how Asaph works through his distress; he engaged his spirit to search his heart and found the source of his anguish. Spirit and heart need to be united with the Lord, but the first difficulty is getting in touch with our spirit. Examples of accessing spirit are given and the need for mind to relinquish appropriate influence back to spirit is discussed.

11 Isaiah 61

Isaiah 61 lays out the progression of biblical healing as the basis for empowering those the Lord heals. It specifically states that a primary credential for effective ministry is having moved through the healing process He lays out in this chapter. It states *how* the Lord turns breakdown to restoration and the role mourning and comfort play because of the exchanges with Him that happen there. The Church of His Spirit is manifest in those who emerge from that heart work.

Section II: Setting Internal Records Straight

Section I laid out the problem; Section II addresses
how to intervene and recover the losses.

12 How God Means to get us Back

This chapter identifies the means by which God restores us: 1) repentance—which means to reconsider, to think differently, to turn around; 2) reconciliation—to which there are two aspects: a. God reconciling us to Himself by His atonement, b. the work and ministry of reconciling the contents of our hearts with Him; and 3) discipleship—defined as “total attachment” to Him—the outcome of a reconciled heart. Both repentance and reconciliation involve uniting our whole heart with God; which includes mourning and comfort, the exchanges described in Isaiah 61.

13 Listening with God

Everyone on a journey to God needs a helper in whom the progression of Isaiah 61 has been accomplished. Many helpers are needed; they are those who have listened to and followed God through their own healing and can help others do the same. Listening with the Lord for someone has two purposes: 1) is to dismantle the barriers blocking connection with God so they can hear Him for themselves and rebuild trust; 2) once that is accomplished, the purpose shifts to learning to live with the Lord in more constant interaction.

14 The Helper's Heart

The condition of heart of the helpers is of utmost importance. Personal transformation is a primary credential for those who will help others through the maze which is our legacy from the fall. A helper must know the way, having been through it himself. The fruit of the Spirit and the beatitudes are scriptural credentials which need to be worked in and operating through the helpers in order for them to be trustworthy and healthy guides—in clear partnership with God. A storehouse of knowledge is a good thing, but it is most effective when put at the disposal of the Lord, letting Him be the One to select from it.

15 Unraveling Snares: Of Doubt

Four words used for doubt in the NT are defined which all link to counting on our own judgment and reasoning instead of believing God. People will recognize them as familiar ways of operating and their serious outcome in distancing us from God's purposes. Four specific forms of doubt are addressed in terms of freeing people: 1) God's perspective vs. ours; 2) doubt as a protection in itself; 3) Intellectual vs. operational theologies; 4) approval snares—believing man and doubting God. With each area examples are given of how people got through that snare.

16 Unraveling Snares: Of Knowing

We must first discover what kind of emotional knowing distances the person's heart from God; then teach the person to be in touch with and bring the emotional and will levels of heart to the Lord to reconcile them. The goal is a return to knowing with God and then learning to tend our hearts with Him consistently, until it becomes a way of life.

17 Unraveling Snares: Of Approval and Authority

Several prevalent forms of approval and authority breakdown are identified and specific examples for unraveling each one are given. They are those: 1) who suffer from lack of approval; 2) whose approval is based on perfection; 3) whose approval is based in performance; 4) whose approval is based on being strong and courageous; 5) whose approval is based on a negative identity.

18 Unraveling Snares: Of Hiding

Our form of hiding distances us from God and buries significant aspects of our being so deeply that we are no longer in touch with them, meaning we do not have them to use in bonding with God and others. Hiding is one of the most difficult aspects because people are not fully conscious of the hidden material and are unaware of how influential it really is. God knows that we *need* to hide at times and counsels us to hide in Him, hide *in* the light as opposed to hiding from it. An illustration is used to visualize the process of retrieving hidden heart material and learning to value it appropriately. I give personal examples of becoming aware of hidden material, the Lord's activity in lighting it up, what it looks like to be willing to take hold of those moments with Him, and what comes out of them.

19 Unraveling Snares: Of Responsibility

To restore responsibility lines we must have God functioning as the primary line of authority, meaning we obey Him. Obedience is defined as attentive listening to God, with the implication of carrying out what we hear. Once people can hear Him they can hold up responsibility demands and sort them out with him, and have His peace and authority with which to stand in healthy responsibility lines.

20 Healing Life's Blows

Healing life's blows calls for many levels of intervention, but the deepest and most significant level is the damage done to the bonding core in the heart of man. A case study reflects the bonding core being restored for a woman who needed God's authority to make decisions and choices in the face of strong pressures and get through them without extensive losses to herself and her family.

21 First the Natural, then the Spiritual

Erikson's eight stages of natural development are used to indicate how natural influences support or restrict spiritual healing. In 1 Corinthians 15 it says: However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual. This chapter alerts believers to natural factors and exhorts

ministers not to ignore them, as doing so derails progress and confuses those seeking to understand what blocks their life with God.

22 Imprisoned by Childhood Conclusions

Conclusions set in place in childhood without adequate means to evaluate events have tremendous and often mysterious impact on healing and freeing from captivity. Childhood conclusions affect one's view of self and God; they are often distorted or inaccurate, but they are *believed*. The process of accessing and updating those conclusions is described.

23 Let This Mind and Spirit Be in You

Letting the mind of Christ be in us (Philippians 2:5) and the indwelling of the Spirit of God (John 14:16, 17) are the Lord's perfect solutions for our dilemma—broken and blind to it. Unity in the body depends on these means functioning widely—individual deference to God holds the possibility for corporate unity.

24 The Emergence of Shepherd-Warriors

An excerpt from Philip Schaff's *History of the Christian Church* is used to describe the ministry priority of the early church: “raising the mass of believers from infancy and pupilage to independent and immediate intercourse with God, to that prophetic, priestly, and kingly position, which in principle and destination belongs to them all.” People who move through healing and uniting with God emerge as shepherd-warriors. It is the heart of those brought into union with God. They act to shepherd restoration, and they discern and resist the incessant works of darkness which seek to prevent the emergence of such shepherds. A bridge vision closes the chapter; it symbolizes worshiping one's way all the way across and into the kingdom.

25 Implications for the Church

Everything described in this book is the province of the church—deliberately gearing up to make provision for the whole journey of every believer who wants to get all the way through to God—to being the church of His Spirit. I discuss five primary implications:

1. The Importance of Healed and Prepared Hearts: especially how that priority impacts pastors and their vitality to face the demands of ministry.
2. The Provision for Healing and Preparing Hearts—MANY helpers are needed to accompany the number of seeking travelers.
3. Raising Up the Helpers
4. Forging the Partnership Between Knowledge and Anointing
5. The Work of the Ministry: Unlock and Fill the Church of His Spirit

Appendices

- A. A dream that symbolizes the journey out of the world, through the opposition and into the City of God—which He offers throughout Scripture.
- B. The relationship between anger being ignited and its root cause—lack of regard—is described.