

Beneath the Surface, Going Back to Go Forward, the Power of Our Vows

I'm drawing heavily from scripture, Pete Scazzero's writings, Bridge to Life Ministries, Larry Crab, and the Freedom Curriculum.

Do you notice that people these days just seem to be on edge, even before the pandemic, but certainly since?

Emotions are at a very high level, over the top, disproportionate to the situation, beyond reason, people's reactions are shocking, surprising, unexpected.

We seem to argue about everything, there's lots of tension, conflict, even violence.

I'm trying to stop, trying not to react to their reaction and I ask myself:

- a. **What are they angry about** (betrayal, hurtful comments, a car breakdown, unanswered prayer, illness, poor health, , your job)
- b. **What are they sad about** (a small or big loss, disappointment, or a choice you or others have made)
- c. **What are they anxious about** (your finances, future, family, health, church, the world)

Is this God's plan for us? This is no paradise. Even as Christians, with grace, love and compassion, too often we too have frustration, anger, sadness, anxiety in our lives, and even in the church and among church leaders.

God, What is up with this?

(Prayer) God I'm asking you to talk to us, help us today to be drawn closer to you, speak now thru this humble, imperfect vessel, ..may anyone listening hear your word, your voice, and not me.

Here's what I think is happening to people today.

We live in a broken world, that means, nobody has been loved perfectly, and nobody loves perfectly.

We all have wounds. We are all broken hearted in some way. Broken hearted in many ways.

And what lives below the surface of our lives, the part of our lives that people don't see everyday, is driving our reactions, driving behavior, driving us crazy, damaging others. And we may not even recognize it.

Let me illustrate: **SLIDE: Show the IMAGE of the ICEBERG**

1. **Titanic ILLUSTRATION**

2. The majority, 90% of an ICEBERG, is below the surface.

3. ASK: What does that have to do with my life?

- a. We all live our lives with an iceberg, our history, our life experiences, being loved imperfectly, the hurts and WOUNDS.
- b. And from the WOUNDS from our lives, there are LIES we believe about ourselves and others and
- c. then we make VOWS to ourselves **never to be hurt again**,
- d. All this lives beneath the surface, an iceberg of stuff we've built ourselves, living below the surface of our everyday lives, hopefully unseen from view.

BUILD OUT HOW OUR PAST, THE STUFF BELOW THE SURFACE INFLUENCES OUR DAY TO DAY ACTIONS.

Ask:

What messages did you receive from your family or growing up experience?

- We carry deep scares, and negative impressions
- Maybe there was Abuse, things done to you, emotional, physical, or sexual, trauma
- You may have experienced, racism, sexism, feeling second class.
- Or other kids bullied you, teasing you about some physical trait
- Maybe you made some bad life decisions
- We are all effected by the media, beauty is defined for us, as only certain looks are OK, defined in unachievable impossible terms
- We may have religious wounds, Inaccurate biblical teaching, you are bad and you're going to hell. Or actually experiencing wounds from leaders in the church.

We ALL have been shaped, influenced by our past.

Look at biblical stories of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

I AM NOT GIVING EACH OF US AN EXCUSE, I AM NOT BLAMING THE PAST, NOT BLAMING FAMILY, NOT BLAMING OTHERS, BUT...

I DO WANT TO CALL ATTENTION TO OUR PAST and OUR UNHEALTHY REACTIONS FROM THE PAST THAT INFLUENCE OUR CURRENT REACTIVITY. DAMAGE DONE DAILY

There is damaging power in our past, the things below the surface in our lives and God wants to pursue us and heal our past

THE PROCESS

- our history, our life experiences, being loved imperfectly, hurts, we have WOUNDS.
- And from the WOUNDS, there are LIES we believe about ourselves and others and
- then we make VOWS to ourselves **never to be hurt again**,
 - o we hide,
 - o we protect,
 - o we stuff,
 - o we ignore,
 - o we avoid,
 - o we put up walls,

All this lives beneath the surface, an iceberg of dangerous damaging hurt.

TALK ABOUT THE POWER OF THE VOWS WE'VE MADE. my story

God wants to pursue us and heal our past.

- God's helping me realize, I WAS WORKING FROM LIES, lies I believed as a child, God has healed me of the HURT and PAIN,
- AND, he's healing me of the VOWS I've made, the defenses I've built,
- He's released me from my past, what lives beneath the surface of my life.
- what I thought was natural defense to protect myself was an unhealthy reaction that creates damage to my wife, to my daughters, to whoever happens to lay innocently in my path or who crashes into my iceberg.

Share the Process we all go thru, like my story

We all have a story

- 1) **The lies we believe,**
 1. I am not worthy of being loved
 2. I am defective
 3. I am a bad person
 4. I am not competent
 5. I am a failure
 6. I am undesirable
 7. I am ugly
 8. I am the black sheep
- 2) **Vows we make, not to hurt again**
 1. I will never trust anyone again
 2. I will never put myself in a vulnerable position again
 3. I will never be exposed as not enough
 4. I will find a way to numb my pain
- 3) **Vows are actually a way to protect ourselves ...apart from trusting God**
 1. Our vow leads to a self protective style of relating to others, whether that/s our co-workers, friends, family our spouse.

Jeremiah 2:13

"My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water."

4) **ASK:**

1. What VOWs have you made?
2. What ways have you tried to deaden your pain?
3. What does your vow to deaden your pain **cost you?**
4. Do you see how we remove God in our lives and trust only ourselves. That doesn't work well.

Genesis 3:6-11

⁶ When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.⁷ **Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.** ⁸ Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ **But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?"** ¹⁰ He (Adam) answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid." ¹¹ And He (God) said, **"Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"**

- 1) All of this is not God's plan, God pursues us, God wants to heal our woundedness, and break the VOWS that hold us in bondage
- 2) What should they do in response?
 - a) **Allow God to heal our past**
 - b) **Accept forgiveness of what's happened to us, breaking the bonds of our VOWS not for others for ourselves.** Removing the obstacles between us and God.

God is a loving God

GOD wants a relationship with us, like Adam and Eve they walk with God in paradise "in the cool of the day".

God heals, scriptural stories

God wants to heal us, remove the destructive impact of our past, of what lies below the surface. Let's look at scripture:

- 1) The leper (wounds that come along). Mark 1:40-44. Jesus if you are willing you can make me clean. Jesus said, I am willing and said be clean, immediately he was clean.
- 2) The paralytic cripple (wounds that your "born with/family sin) Mark 2:1-12, a man crippled from birth, lowered thru a roof by friends and Jesus says, "son, your sins are forgiven" and he was healed.
- 3) Mary Magdalene (wounds done to her) Mark 16:9 "he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from who he had cast out seven demons". We don't know what happened to Mary but 7 demons came about from horrible things and created great pain in her life. Jesus changed her, she was the first person he appeared to after His resurrection. He pursued us, her.

God wants to heal our wounds, the below the surface iceberg, if we look back, trust God., HE can re-write our stories.

God knows our story what's below the surface better than we do.

God is looking for us, he wants to walk in the cool of the day, in paradise.

He has Kingdom work that fills our souls, AND he knows who lied to us and wants to heal us from our past, and how it is an obstacle between us and God, between us and those we love or want to love.

SALVATION PRAYER

Romans 5:8, ⁸ But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

PRAYER TO BREAK OUR VOWS AND AGREEMENTS

Hebrews 12:1

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, **let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles.** And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5

³ For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. ⁴ The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they (WE) have divine power to demolish strongholds. ⁵ We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Prayer for recognizing our wounds, lies, vows and giving our past over to God to heal
Pray to break the agreement of your vows that keep you from knowing what God has for you, His authority and direction.

- God, we are willing, we want healing, we want healthy relationships, we want your purpose.
- Acknowledge that our agreements are contrary to God's truth about us.
- Confess that our agreements have caused us to live a life independent of God.
- Ask God to break the bondage that these agreements have had on our lives.
- Accept God's forgiveness.