



Processing the Issues of Your Heart

Participant Guide

Part 4: Pour Out Your Heart

"Go vertical"

"Prayer to the Lord"

It's time to get real. Get all those thoughts, dreams, hopes, and unmet desires out of your heart and onto paper! What do you really want? What is the true desire of your heart? What could have been different? What has been missing? God cares about these details.

Start by praying through the scripture and asking the Lord to reveal to you anything He wants you to know. What does the scripture say to you?

"Trust in Him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to Him, for God is our refuge."

– Psalm 62:8 (NIV)

"...I pour out my complaint before Him..."

– Psalm 142:1-2 (NIV)

A. Pour out your heart to the Lord. Write out exactly how you feel.

Lord, this is how I feel...

Include any and all complaints, how the ongoing effects of pain are hurting you, and share any poison in your heart. Don't hold back. If you don't get it out here, talking to God, it will still allow bitterness to fester in your heart. Don't be afraid to be vulnerable and share it all. *This part can be done by anyone, but the process seems awkward and is incomplete if you do not have a relationship with the Lord. You are now shifting your focus from just telling your story to others to pouring out your true heart before your Heavenly Father. You are going vertical. Once you have repented of your sins and surrendered your whole heart to God, asking him to be the Lord of your life and Forgiver of your sins, you have received what we call the "Ultimate Fresh Start." You can be confident that your sins can be forgiven. Go to: www.stepuptolife.com for more information. And be sure to see the video, "The Ultimate Fresh Start: You Can Be Forgiven" on the Fresh Start website or app.

B. Keep going-Express your unmet desires to the Lord.

Lord, this is what I'm disappointed or upset about, or wish would have happened (or not have happened)...

This is your chance to be totally honest. Tell the Lord in writing what you are disappointed about, what you wish would've happened, or not have happened. Don't hold back. You are worthy of love and affection. God wants to hear your heart. He cares about you and all the big and small things that are impacting you. This is your time to sit before God and get it all out. There is nothing too foolish, too small, or too dark to share. He can handle your sadness, anger and pain. He already knows and sees. And, He cares deeply. He is waiting for you to come to Him, maybe for the first time in a long time, or ever.

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C. Express your current desires to the Lord.

Tell God what you want in this relationship, along with your "best case or ideal scenario." Think BIG! Don't hold back. You can trust God with your dream, even if it seems unattainable. Don't let 'reality' or 'expectation' keep you from expressing to God the desires of your heart. When pain comes in, dreaming can get shut down. This is your permission to begin to dream again. Yes, it is scary, but it is time. There are no limits when it comes to sharing your desires and dreams. What has been hidden or lost for so long, or seems impossible, but is still the desire of your heart, write that down. It matters.

D. Choose to give Sacrificial Thanks to the Lord (VITAL PART to FREEDOM).

Tell the Lord in writing you are giving a sacrificial thanks for the situation and the circumstances, and that you are willing to submit to however He wants to use it in your life for His purposes, for your good, and for His glory.

Spend some time meditating on these scriptures. You may need to take a break. Go for a walk. Turn on some worship music. Do not skip over or rush this part. Let the concepts settle into your heart. This is a pivotal point to your freedom. You are giving a SACRIFICIAL thank-offering for all the offenses, hurts, and losses that have occurred. This is different from being grateful or feeling thankful for the hurt. This part is choosing to submit to the sovereignty of God. Yes, the 'silver lining' and the good that did or could come from the situation is okay. But, we are, 'Going for the Gold', which means, even if you don't see any good that comes from this GAP, will you still offer a sacrificial thanks to the Lord? The world will call this part foolish. This may even feel like a death in your heart, because it is. You are surrendering your ways, your plans, and the way you wish things would have gone or will go. This part is about obedience to the Lord. Offering to God a sacrificial thank offering means it will cost you something.

A sacrifice in the Old Testament was a blood sacrifice (example: the lamb). The sacrifice we make is dying to what we wish would have happened or not have happened. Jesus shed his blood for us. He paid the ultimate price and sacrificed His life for our sins. God is asking us to sacrifice by putting our desires, dreams and the way we wish things would have turned out on God's altar. When you choose to give sacrificial thanks, you are dying to the way you wish things would have turned out in this situation, relationship, or your life. It doesn't mean God doesn't care, but He's asking you to release control of all these areas and give them back to Him, the only One truly in control.

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Up until this point, you have been getting all the poison out. You have been detoxifying yourself of all sin and trauma's poison. It has been impacting you emotionally, physically, and spiritually. You are choosing to make an active statement of trust as you step into offering sacrificial thanks.

John 12:24 says, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."

When we are willing to die to the ways we wish circumstances would have turned out, there WILL be a resurrection. God loves to bring new life out of ashes.

So let's look at how to practically give a sacrificial thank offering:

Start by turning back to the list of offenses, hurts, and losses you wrote down in Part One. You will now go through each one and offer a sacrificial thanks. Remember, this is not feeling thankful or grateful. It is not saying it is okay, and it is not excusing the offender. You are taking away the power these offenses, hurts and losses have had over you and reclaiming ground from Satan. You are getting the poison out of your heart. It does feel foolish, backward, and like a death in your heart. But, remember, you are being obedient to the Lord, not your feelings! You can do this. It is hard. You may not feel like it, but you can still move forward in obedience. Ask the Lord to cause your feelings to catch up with the act of your will. He is faithful. He will do it.

Sacrificial Thanks IS "Going for the Gold:"

Ex: "Lord, I choose to give sacrificial thanks for being pushed in a corner at age 4."

Ex: "Lord, I choose to give You sacrificial thanks for being abandoned by my Dad."

Ex: "Lord, I choose to give You sacrificial thanks for my spouse choosing an affair."

Sacrificial thanks is NOT 'Silver Lining' Thanks:

Ex: "Lord, thank You that I am stronger and more empathetic for those going through addiction."

Ex: "Lord, thank You that I now see the importance of not abandoning my children."

*These are good to recognize and thank the Lord for, but they are not the goal.

Write down each one, using the list of offenses, hurts, and losses in Part 1 as your list and guide for what you are offering as a sacrifice of thanks.

- Sacrificial thanks positions you for the grace, peace and power to forgive.
- Sacrificial thanks is your verbal surrender to the sovereignty of God.
- Sacrificial thanks is proclaiming trust in God to use your circumstances for your transformation and His glory!
- We cannot be thankful or forgiving, until we give up control and put God back in His rightful place as Lord of our lives.