

When We Wound Ourselves — August 27 & 28, 2016
Follow-up Bible Studies

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Day One: Genesis 3

- Describe the serpent and his conversation with Eve (1-5). Imagine the serpent's tone of voice; what did he sound like? After talking to him, how did Eve shift her outlook on the forbidden fruit (6)?
- Think about how rebellion usually begins to manifest in your own life. When and why do you cross God's good boundary lines and usurp his authority? How does such rebellion wound you?
- What did Eve do next (6)? Summarize the aftermath (7-13). What respective long-reaching consequences would the serpent, the woman, and the man now face (14-19)? What else encompassed God's reaction to Adam and Eve's sin (21-24)?
- Our first parents' sins didn't happen in a vacuum; they wounded others, even to this day. Consider this: your sins wound others, too. Which of them weigh on you at this moment? Repent and ask the Lord to bring renewal both for you and for anyone you've hurt.

Day Two: Ezekiel 37:1-14

- What did the "hand of the Lord" do to Ezekiel (1-2)? What is your initial impression of this valley of dry bones? What did God ask Ezekiel about the bones, and how did Ezekiel respond (3)? What did the Lord then tell him to prophesy (4-6)? As Ezekiel did so, what began to happen (7-8)?
- What second prophecy did Ezekiel then speak (9)? What happened (10)? Sin zaps life away, making us like the dry bones. But thanks to Jesus, he can make what's been damaged whole and usable again! Take a moment to thank God for breathing life back into you. Maintain this posture of praise throughout the week.
- Summarize the Lord's explanation of this prophetic vision (11-14). Meditate on the phrase, "I have done it," found at the end of verse 14. How do those words make you feel? How might they apply to Jesus' capacity to renew and redeem us no matter what our sin?

Day Three: Luke 15:11-32

- Describe the family in this parable (11-12). What did the younger son say to the father (12)? What happened next (12-16)? What do you think was going on in his heart to cause this son to turn away from his father? Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal whether such things lurk in your heart. If so, repent and pray that the gaze of your heart would shift back to the Lord.
- Note the transformation in the younger son's mind and heart when he "comes to his senses" (17-21). Meanwhile, what about the father: what's going on in his mind and heart (20, 22-24)? How are his actions symbolic of the grace Jesus offers to us?
- Lastly, describe the older son's perspective (25-30). How did his father attend to his objections (28, 31-32)? If you ever feel bitter when a repentant person is met with grace, renewal, and redemption, talk to the Lord. What response do you sense? What heart-level changes will help you celebrate as the father in this parable does? Ask God for such a transformation.

Day Four: Hebrews 10:1-18

- Describe the shortcomings of the law (1-4). What is one purpose of it (3)? What do you think the emotional and spiritual state of those under the law was like? Do you share any of those emotions or spiritual thoughts? If so, perhaps you have not accepted the gift of

God's grace. Imagine opening a box containing the beautiful garment of Jesus' grace and healing. Try it on. How does it feel? What will it take in order to continue wearing it?

- What did Jesus have to say about the law and sacrifices (5-7)? What is the author's explanation of this statement (8-10)? How does Jesus as priest compare to all prior priests (11-14)?
- Via Old Testament prophecy, what did the Holy Spirit testify regarding the new covenant and Jesus' power to forever forgive (15-17)? In verse 18, the author proclaims that sacrifice for sin is no longer necessary. How does this compare to David's confession and plea in psalm 51, especially verses 11 and 17-19?

Day Five: Revelation 7:9-17

- In this vision of Jesus' second coming, what does John see (9)? What markers of both unity and diversity do you observe? Who is the Lamb? What did those in the white robes cry out (10)? In the ancient Near East, palm branches symbolized victory, triumph, peace, and eternal life. For what specific reasons would you wave a palm branch while worshipping the Lord in eternity?
- Where were the angels (11)? What did they do (11)? What did they say (12)? What did one of the elders ask John (13)? What was John's reply (14)? What did the elder go on to say (14-17)?
- Re-read verse 14. Washing a garment in blood in order to whiten it may seem like complete nonsense, but what does this symbolic image mean to you? Finally, meditate on verses 15-17. In this glimpse of ultimate renewal, picture yourself there. Talk to God about how this makes you feel.