

## ***“Our Stories, Redeemed”***

### **Life, Love and Family Daily Fact Sheet**

**Dr. Tim Clinton, President - AACC**

**American Association of Christian Counselors**

- **4 Steps for Overcoming a Traumatic Past** (Clinton & Hawkins, 2009):
  - **Understand the Nature of the Trauma**—understand that you did not deserve the hurts that happened to you. You did not cause them. Depending on the nature of the trauma, recognize that you may need to erect some boundaries with particular people so that you will not be hurt again.
  - **Express Your Feelings**—express your real feelings. If you have anger at the perpetrators or your trauma, express it. If you’re angry at God, express that as well. He can handle it. If you are grieved over a loss you experienced as a result of the trauma, express it. Voicing these feelings is one of the first steps toward healing.
  - **Know That You Will Heal**—healing from your past will come with God’s help. It is important that you engage in a process through which this will be possible, either in individual or group counseling.
  - **Know That You Will Have Victory**—beyond just healing, you will have victory over the trauma. Begin to consider some of the positive strengths you will have in your life as a result of healing from this trauma. Know that you will eventually be able to forgive to set yourself free. This is the ultimate spiritual victory. You will also be able to be of great comfort to others who experience similar traumas.
  
- **Hope for Healing** (Langberg, 2001):
  - To be abused or traumatized is to be touched by evil. Evil, like good, has an impact.
  - It is important to understand how the abuse or trauma affected you. What has it taught you? Where has it harmed you? Healing is applied knowledge only when a wound is understood.
  - No matter what the extent of the damage, no matter how badly you have been wounded, there is hope for healing.
  - Abuse and trauma results in damage to the emotions—fear, grief, anger, and guilt often govern the lives of those who have experienced such pain. It will take hard work to learn to deal with these emotions. But, it can be done. Nothing is outside of God’s power to heal and control.
  - The person of Christ and the Word of God teach the truth about who God is. Though those who have been abused or traumatized may struggle to understand why God allowed the pain to occur, as they are able to learn more about God’s power and ability to heal, they can place their past and their future in God’s hands.
  
- **Quotes:**
  - *“The strength of patience hangs on our capacity to believe that God is up to something good for us in all our delays and detours.”—John Piper*

- *“One of the marks of spiritual maturity is the quiet confidence that God is in control—without the need to understand why He does what He does.”—Unknown*
- *“Never judge God by suffering, but judge suffering by the cross.”—Father Andrew*
- *“Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, ambition inspired, and success achieved.”—Helen Keller*
- *“Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented.”—Elie Wiesel*
- *“God had one Son on earth without sin, but never without suffering.”—Saint Augustine*
- *“God will never permit any troubles to come upon us unless He has a specific plan by which great blessing can come out of the difficulty.”—Peter Marshall*
- *“Suffering is part of the human condition, and it comes to us all. The key is how we react to it, either turning away from God in anger and bitterness or growing closer to Him in trust and confidence.”—Billy Graham*
- *“God wants you to be delivered from what you have done and from what has been done to you—both are equally important to Him.”—Joyce Meyer*
- *“We could never learn to be brave and patient if there were only joy in the world.”—Helen Keller*
- *“In the greatest difficulties, in the heaviest trials, in the deepest poverty and necessities, He has never failed me; but because I was enabled by His grace to trust Him, He has always appeared for my help. I delight in speaking well of His name.”—George Muller*
- **Key Thoughts** (Clinton & Hawkins, 2009):
  - Some events in life cause pain that goes deep and lasts a long time. These are called “traumas.”
  - A trauma would be considered a situation beyond control, one that shakes a person to the core. A trauma can lead to mental disorders or to suicide. Recovery is often slow; flashbacks are common.
  - Traumas may not even be remembered but can still influence people in certain unhealthy ways or cause them to make unhealthy decisions.
  - Those whose traumas do not get healed may grow up to damage others, even their own families.

- Traumatic events overwhelm the person's ordinary adapting or coping mechanisms to life.
  - With trauma, each component of the ordinary response to danger continues to persist in an altered state long after the actual danger is over. There are profound lasting changes in psychological arousal, emotion, cognition, and memory.
  - Symptoms of trauma include anxiety and panic disorders, depression, intense fear, anger, loneliness, attachment disorders, flashbacks, helplessness, loss of control, and threat of annihilation.
  - Panic, anxiety, flashbacks, and anger are sometimes labeled under the diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
  - Traumatic memory becomes encoded in an abnormal form of memory, which breaks spontaneously into consciousness, both as flashbacks and as nightmares.
  - Traumatic memory is not a verbal linear narrative but can have a frozen, wordless quality. When high levels of adrenaline and other stress hormones are circulating, the memories are deeply imprinted.
  - Traumatic memory may also be suppressed. The intrusion of the memory and the constriction form a dynamic that does not provide a way to resolve the experience of the event and achieve balance.
- **Verses:**
    - *"Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."*—**Isaiah 41:10**
    - *"A father to the fatherless and a judge for the widows, is God in His holy habitation."*—**Psalms 68:5**
    - *"Therefore the Lord longs to be gracious to you, and therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you. For the Lord is a God of justice; How blessed are all those who long for Him."*—**Isaiah 30:18**
    - *"Behold, God is my helper; The Lord is the sustainer of my soul."*—**Psalms 54:4**
    - *"For He will deliver the needy when he cries for help, the afflicted also, and him who has no helper."*—**Psalms 72:12**
    - *"The righteous cry, and the Lord hears and delivers them out of all their troubles. The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves those we are crushed in spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all. He keeps all his bones, not one of them is broken."*—**Psalms 43:17-20**

- *“And He has said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.’ Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.”—2 Corinthians 12:9*
- *“For nothing will be impossible with God.”—Luke 1:37*
- *“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”—Joshua 1:9*
- *“As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive.”—Genesis 50:20*
- *“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”—Romans 12:21*
- *“‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.’”—Jeremiah 29:11*
- *“And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.”—Romans 8:28*

#### **Endnotes**

Clinton, T. & Hawkins, R. (2009). *The quick-reference guide to biblical counseling*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

Langberg, D. (2001). *Hope for healing*. The Bible for Hope. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.