

MESSAGE TRANSCRIPT //

I WILL FIND HEALING FROM MY PAST | SET LIKE FLINT

KYLE RILEY | FEBRUARY 16, 2025

Traders Point, how are we doing? Well, it's good to be with you. Hey, I want to welcome everybody at all of our campuses, those who are joining us right here at Northwest, and everybody tuning in online. Glad that you are here.

If this is your first time joining us, we are in a series right now called Set Like Flint. Set Like Flint is not a phrase that we use every day, at least not me. Interesting—growing up the only time I heard flint was one: a city in Michigan, and secondly, it's the name of my favorite pair of Air Jordans. If you know, you know.

But, where we got it from is from an Old Testament book of the Bible. It's found in the book of Isaiah. In Isaiah, chapter 50, this is what he says. He says:

“Because the sovereign Lord helps me, I will not be disgraced. Therefore, have I set my face like flint. And I know I will not be put to shame.”

That word flint just means stone, or it means rock. Believe it or not, this is actually a prophecy. It's a prophecy about Jesus, hundreds of years before He would come to earth. And it was talking about one thing in particular, Jesus' obedience.

Jesus would come to this earth on a mission. He would be set like stone. There would be nothing that could stop Him from completing His mission, even though He would face difficulty and discouragement. He was going to be set like a rock in pursuing His mission and completing it. Going to the cross for you and me so that He could redeem us from our sin.

And we, as a church, are saying, “Hey, we know that we also have been given a mission. We know that it's a mission that is full of difficulty and discouragement—life happens. But we want to take our cues from Jesus, and we want to be set like flint. We want to be durable. We want to be disciplined and pursuing the life that God has called us to live and the mission that He has called us to accomplish. We want to be set like flint.

And so, if you've been with us you know that this has come with a series of declarations. Each week has been an I Will statement. We've been saying things like: I Will Choose Joy and I Will Seek Wisdom, I Will Declare War On Temptation, I Will Not Stay Offended. How are we doing with that one? You all too. Alright.

These haven't been easy topics. They've been challenging. And Pastor Aaron and Pastor Ryan have done an incredible job of walking us through these difficult topics and helping us learn how we can live them out. In fact, can we just take a moment to celebrate right



now Pastor Aaron and Pastor Ryan for who they are and what they are doing? So grateful. So grateful.

Today we decided to let our foot off of the gas a little bit and kind of throw a soft ball, an easy one, out there. Today we are saying:

I Will Find Healing From My Past

No, it's a heavy one. Don't everybody leave at once. It's a heavy one. It's not easy at all. But believe it or not, this topic wasn't given to me, it wasn't assigned. I volunteered to take it. So, here we are.

Before we jump in I want to give a little bit of a disclaimer. One: Man, I am not a mental health counselor. I am not a licensed therapist. I'm not a life coach. This isn't an episode of: I'm going to fix my life. Alright? This is a pastor of Traders Point offering some perspective. And, as a pastor, I want to help us do two things today if you are taking notes.

One: I want to help us acknowledge our past. This is key. Because if we are going to heal from our past, we first have to face it. The second thing that I want to help us do is, I want to embrace the Savior who redeems our past. Okay? Because Jesus not only wants to meet us in the pain of our past, but He wants to lead us to be healed and made whole. And I believe that He wants to do that today. Alright?

Now, before we jump into healing, because I know that's what all of us want to do, just to get to that, first we've got to do some leg work. Alright? Because in our microwave society it's easy to want things to happen instantly. Sorry, that doesn't really apply here. We can't chat GPT Healing. Right?

No, it's a journey. It's a journey that requires some work. It's a journey that actually begins with us facing a hard but a very obvious truth. And here's what that truth is: Our world is messed up and life is hard. Can I get a good Amen?

Now, as I was thinking about that this week, I actually thought that some of the best songs in history have come from that truth. Alright? John Lennon said, Imagine. Marvin Gay said, What's Going On? He asked: What's going on? Tupac said, Keep Your Head Up. Alright? And Michael Jackson said, "I've got the solution. Here it is. I'm Starting With the Man in the Mirror. Alright? That's what Michael Jackson said.

All of these songs, man, they really stem from this truth: Our world is messed up. Our world is sinful. There is something going on around us. It is very obvious. It's very evident. And if we're going to face our past, we need to start by first acknowledging and accepting that. Here's a simple way to put it:

Our Past Includes the Fact That We Live in a Broken World



Point and blank, period. That's the truth. Our past includes that fact. Man, we live in a broken world. Your past, my past, our pasts are the result of us living in a world of sin. And this has happened since the moment that Adam and Eve disobeyed God in the Garden—Genesis, chapter 3. Sin entered the world attempting to ruin God's plan for human flourishing.

And it started as this downward spiral of humanity. In a world of selfishness and greed and pride and ego, they all began to manifest themselves in some very damaging ways where people were just hurting others physically, emotionally, and relationally. You name it.

And what happened is that as this plays out, God sees what has taken place and He has some thoughts about it because a few chapters later, after Genesis 3, we see what God says. He looks at it in Genesis 6 and this is what He said:

“The Lord observed the extent of human wickedness on the earth, and he saw that everything they thought or imagined was consistently and totally evil. So the Lord was sorry he had ever made them and put them on the earth. It broke his heart.” (NLT)

Now, you may read that and say, “That's a little bit extreme.” But what it does is it points to the gravity of sin. God saw the damage being done to people. And the Bible says that it broke His heart. And it grieved Him. It caused God pain to see His people, His creation, living in ways that He never intended.

And the rest of the Bible tells a story of people who continue to choose their own way over God, finding themselves in very, very traumatic circumstances and dealing with painful pasts.

Now, this may shock you, but this is one of the things that I've come to love about the Bible. It is raw. It's unfiltered. There is messiness that is involved in the Bible. I think too often we try to sanitize the Bible and clean it up. No. It's messy. It's full of people whose lives are jacked up and sinful. People just like y'all. Alright? If I offended you, sorry I'm not sorry.

No, but here's why I love that. I love it because it offers relatability. You and I can look at the Bible, we can look at people in the Bible and see that it is not full of people who have clean, buttoned-up lives. No, it consists of people who live in a world of hardship and suffering and sin. People who make mistakes. People who have painful pasts. People who are not proud of the decisions they made.

And we can look at them and say, “If God can redeem them, if He can step into their story and their mess and redeem them, He can do the same thing for me.” We can find comfort in that.

Now, theologians have a word for all of this. As we look at the world around us and see how messed up it is, the word for it is simply: brokenness. The brokenness of our world.



It's an all-encompassing word. It's pretty much just used to describe our society and the people in it. We live in a broken world with broken systems, broken environments, broken relationships, and broken people—all which cause pain.

Why am I pointing this out? You're like, "Kyle, thank you for the Bible history lesson, but what does it have to do with me?" Everything. It has everything to do with you and everything to do with me. Here's why. The pain of our past can have a lot of different sources. The source of your pain in the past is different than the source of mine and different than somebody else's. But all of it is a result of the brokenness that we see around us or the brokenness that we see within us.

And what we first need to do is we need to understand that before we can move forward, we need to understand the root of our pain, understand what has caused it. It's kind of like when you go to the doctor. Right? A good doctor isn't just concerned about the prognosis. No, a good doctor wants to help you understand how you got here in the first place. A good doctor, he or she might provide some sort of treatment plan, but they also want you to know, "Hey, this is potentially what could have led to this. This is what has caused the pain."

The same thing is true with God. He doesn't just want to jump to healing. No, He wants to heal us but, like a good doctor, He first wants us to understand that there is a reason for the pain, there is a reason that it is there. It came from something. Even more, He wants you to know that it grieves Him. Like the Bible says: It breaks His heart.

Now, the rest of the Bible, the rest of Scripture, from that point on really tells the story of broken people choosing their own way but also this narrative of God relentlessly pursuing those broken people.

What God does is He says, "Man, this doesn't have to be your reality. This doesn't have to be your way. There is such a better way. And I want to help you rebuild what has been broken, if you would just come to Me. If you just turn from the way that you are going. If you would just come to Me and let Me rebuild what has been broken."

I think pastor and author Gordon McDonald says this so beautifully in his book *Rebuilding Your Broken World*. He says, "The God of the Bible is a God of the rebuilding process," and not enough broken people know that.

Man, that's so true. Somebody needs to hear that today. God isn't just aware of the brokenness that is in our world, man, He steps into it. He steps into the brokenness of our world, and He redeems the hurt. He steps into the brokenness of our world and restores the damage. He steps into the world and rebuilds what has been broken. He is a God of the rebuilding process.

I think Psalm, chapter 147 describes this so, so beautifully because the Psalmist says this. He says:

“How good to sing praises to our God! How delightful and how fitting! The Lord is, here’s the word, “rebuilding Jerusalem and bringing the exiles back to Israel.”

Now, if you know anything about the Bible, you know that as these people continue to pursue their own their own way and do their own thing, causing a lot of hurt and pain and painful pasts, God allows them to be overtaken and taken away. The people are captured and there is a lot of hurt and brokenness involved in that process.

But here, the Psalmist is saying that God is also doing some rebuilding. God is rebuilding what has been broken. He is rebuilding Jerusalem. And we need to know about that Scripture. The Psalmist isn’t just talking about rebuilding the city itself. He’s not only talking about the roads and the infrastructure of the city, he’s not only talking about the houses and the buildings and the Temple.

No, the Psalmist is talking about the people. That is who God is rebuilding, people who have painful pasts, people who have been hurt, people who had something taken from them, people who have emotional damage—that is who God was rebuilding. He was rebuilding lives.

If you’re wondering how I know that, just look at the very next verse. That’s what the Psalmist is pointing to. Actually, let’s all read this next verse together, let’s read it at all of our campuses, let’s read it:

“He heals the brokenhearted and bandages their wounds.” (NLT)

Somebody—this needs to be your anchor verse this week. Somebody who has deep wounds and has walked through a painful past, you need to know that God heals the brokenhearted, bandages their wounds. Write that verse down. Maybe take a picture of it. Make it your screen saver on your phone this week because, for whatever reason, you don’t believe that. Or even if you’re reminded of it—that God heals the broken hearted. He bandages their wounds.

Now, what I love about that, that word heal in the original language isn’t just like a general healing. It’s not like the Psalmist is saying that God is like a parent from the 90s who just says, “Rub some dirt on it. It will be fine.” Alright?

No, that word heal means to mend. And it’s actually associated with stitching, like a surgeon who stitches something in a procedure. Which, to me, points to the fact that God is very, very intentional. He’s careful. He’s methodical. He’s precise. He sees the wounds in our lives, He sees the brokenness, He sees the pain. And like a good surgeon He then stitches what has been broken. He heals the broken hearted.

And, man, what I was thinking about this past week is that I know that there are people here at this church and at all of our campuses who have experienced that God. There are people all across our campuses who have a past, maybe that includes some pain,



they've got a past that includes some brokenness, they've got a past that includes some decisions that maybe they aren't proud of.

And if you find them and they've been walking with God for some time, they will point to a God who is compassionate, they will point to a God who is merciful, a God who is full of unfailing love. They will point to a God who heals the broken hearted and a God who bandages their wound. They'll point to a God who has been trusted. There are people like that right here in our church.

That's who He is. That's what He does. He heals the broken hearted. He mends the wounds. He bandages them up.

But I also know that there are a group of people who, at the very same time, say, "That's good for them. That's good that they have experienced that. But, Kyle, you don't know my past. Kyle, you don't know what I've walked through. Kyle, you don't know what I have experienced. Kyle, you don't know what has been done to me. Kyle, you don't know what I have done."

And I would just simply say, "No, I don't. I don't know. I don't know the wounds that you walked in here with today." Maybe it's a relationship wound. Maybe it is a painful divorce that you walked through. Maybe that divorce included young kids, and you are just devastated by the damage that it has caused. Maybe it's a child with some trauma—a mother wound or a father wound.

Maybe it's church hurt, generational sins, an addiction, dysfunction in your family. Maybe it's a decision that you made, or a series of them, and you feel like you blew everything up. You just made a mess of your life and a mess of the people who are around you that you left in the wake of that mess. I don't know.

Here's what I do know. I know that God wants to rebuild your life. I know that He wants to heal your broken heart. He wants to bandage your wounds. He wants to, like a surgeon, stitch together slowly and intricately. And in time, with patience, and with a period that will include some grief, some lament, He wants to fix the wound. And He wants you to find healing.

The question is: Do you want that? The question is: Do you believe that? Do you believe that God is One who heals the broken hearted? Do you believe in the One who wants to bandage your wounds—not just for the people in the Bible, not for the people around you, but for you. Do you believe that? And do you want that?

If so, man, I pray that you walk out of here knowing without a shadow of a doubt that that's the God who we get to serve, that's the God who loves you, that's the God who moved heaven and earth to have a relationship with you so He can heal you. I pray that you want that. If so, praise God. If that's you, man, I'm rejoicing with you.



But here's the truth I also want to share. You're not the only one who believes it. There is someone else who believes that. And guess what. It's not you. It's not God. There is someone else who actually believes it and doesn't want it to happen. The Bible says that we have an enemy and his name is Satan. And Satan is in opposition to everything that God stands for and wants to do in our lives.

As the next generation says, "He's the ox." So, if you're a teen saying you've got ox, it just means that they have enemies. It just means that he's in opposition to everything that God wants to do in our lives—everything.

Satan knows that God doesn't just want to heal for the sake of healing. There is a purpose to the healing. And Satan knows that healing is married to this invitation for us to be set free and to partner with God and His plan to bring restoration to the world. Here's a simple way to put it:

Healing Leads To Freedom and Freedom Leads to Impact

That's what Satan doesn't want to happen. It's not the healing itself that he's against. He could care less about that. It's what he knows comes on the other side of the healing, the freedom and the impact. He hates the potential of you taking the Good News of Jesus to others and saying, "Hey, I met this man. I met a Savior who knew everything about me, who knew my past, who knew the pain that I was in, who knew everything that I did yet He called me into this relationship with him. He redeemed me. He's cleaned me up. I'm still in process, but guess what? He's the same Savior who wants an encounter with you too."

That's what Satan doesn't want to happen. He doesn't like the freedom, and he doesn't like the impact.

I was reminded of that this past week. I had a conversation with a friend—with two people who reminded me of that. One of them was a friend who for years walked through a pornography addiction, and it cost him his job and it nearly cost him his family. And praise the Lord, through work and prayer and through lots of counsel, of people coming around him, he's been walking in freedom for some time now.

And he shared with me, "Kyle, you know what? God has now freed me and I'm actually in this position where I'm able to share with authenticity and vulnerability my story and what God has done for me. And I'm starting to help other men heal from their addiction as well." That's what Satan doesn't want to happen.

And I was also reminded of this this past week by a young woman at our Downtown campus. She's been coming for a couple of months now. She came and there was a lot of hurt, a lot of pain, a lot of brokenness. But our Downtown campus wrapped our arms around her, we've been praying for her and showing here what it's like to walk in this relationship with God.



And she said to me this past Sunday, "I've experienced the unconditional love of Jesus like I've never, ever felt before. It's changing me." She said, "I'm now discipling my son and we are walking together and that's actually who I'm doing it for because I want to change these generational curses in my life."

And she said she wants to start serving. And the reason why she wants to start serving—she told me this, she said, "I want to help others experience what God and this church have done for me." Man, that's what Satan does not want to happen.

That's what Satan is against. It's not the healing itself, it's what he knows comes on the other side of that healing. And guess what. He tries to outsmart us to keep that from happening. He has these evil schemes that he will employ in order to keep us from finding the healing and the freedom and the impact that God wants us to have.

Paul actually points to this in his second letter to the Corinthians. And what I love about it is it's actually in relation to them forgiving somebody who had caused some hurt and some pain in the church. And he's telling them, "Man, if you want to experience the healing and the grace of God, you've got to be aware of what unforgiveness can look like in your life and how the enemy wants to use that to keep you from experiencing freedom. Look at what he says in 2 Corinthians, chapter 2. He says:

"When you forgive this man, I forgive him, too. And when I forgive whatever needs to be forgiven, I do so with Christ's authority for your benefit, so that Satan will not outsmart us. For we are familiar with his evil schemes." 2 Corinthians 2:10-11 (NLT)

What's Paul talking about? Well, he's telling the church that their freedom, their ability to forgive this person and to find healing from their hurt is connected to knowing that Satan doesn't want that to happen. He wants to outsmart them. He wants to outsmart you. He wants to outsmart me.

He wants to do everything he can to keep us from experiencing the freedom and the grace that is available, to keep us from healing, to keep us from forgiving others and forgiving ourselves. So, he uses these evil schemes to keep us pinned down in bitterness and brokenness.

So, what are those schemes? Well, there are a lot of them. But I'm just going to highlight three. Three big ones that Satan uses, the schemes that he uses to keep us from experiencing the healing from our past.

Here's the first one. It's:

Distraction

Distracting us from God. Distracting us from the healing process. So, what he does is he kind of dangles this carrot over here to keep us from acknowledging, from admitting,

from confessing. And he'll keep us pursuing all of these other things—sometimes good things—so that we ignore, so that we suppress, so that we have these unhealthy coping mechanisms from the pain of our past.

So, he keeps us distracted, keep us from acknowledging, “Man, there is something that God wants to do.” He'll distract us with these things over here: numbing, business, whatever he needs to do to distract us from coming to God and coming to others to find the healing that God wants to give us.

The second one is:

Discouragement

He's really good at this. This has everything to do with deception—lies that he tells us. In fact, Jesus would call Satan the father of lies. So, what Satan does is he whispers these lies in our ears to discourage us. Things like, “You'll never heal from this. This is always going to be how your life is. You can't come to God. He doesn't want to talk to you. He doesn't want to heal you. You can't go to church. If they only knew who you were, if they only knew what your past looked like they would judge you.”

He whispers these lies and he discourages us with shame and guilt. If we're not careful, we begin to expect that reality. We get to believe the lies of discouragement and deception. And we distance ourselves and get distracted by all of these other things, not believing that God wants to step in and to heal and to mend and to bandage. So, he'll use distraction, and he'll use discouragement, and it often leads to this third thing:

Distance

He's really good at distancing us. Distance—he gets us away from God. He gets us away from the church. He gets us isolated from community. Because if he can isolate us, then he can keep us vulnerable. And if he can get us alone, he can attack us.

The Bible says that Satan is like a roaring lion prowling, seeking whom he can devour. And I find that interesting. Because if you know anything about lions and how they hunt, they will often stalk their prey, whether it's an antelope, or a wildebeest. And what they do is, when they come across a pack of any type of animal, their tactic is to try to get the vulnerable and the weak one alone, isolated from the pack. Because if they can get it alone, they can corner it, they can attack it. That's their strategy.

The same thing is true of Satan. If he can distance you from God and if he can distance you from His church, if he can distance you from community, man, he's got you. Check mate: vulnerable, alone, isolated—attack.

He tries to discourage us. He tries to distract us. But he also tries to distance us.

So, in relation to us finding healing from our past I've got a few questions for us to interrogate this week and see, "What does God want to bring to the surface as I wrestle through some of these questions that relate to me finding healing from my past?"

Here they are:

Am I:

Distracted by the pain from my past?

Discouraged by it?

Satan whispering lies, and am I:

Distanced from others because of it?

Some of you are like: Yes, yes, and yes. Three strikes. I'm out. That's okay. That's okay because at least you're being honest. But what's not okay is for us to know all of that and not take steps toward the healing process. What's not okay is for us to roll over and let Satan do what he does and try to outsmart us. What's not okay is accepting that you don't have the power to fight and the power to heal.

No, the Bible says, "Greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world." Meaning, the Spirit of God lives inside each and every one of us and Satan does not get to win this fight.

There is impact to be had for the kingdom and there are people who need to know about a God who rebuilds and a God who heals. And He wants to use you to not only find that healing but to help others experience the freedom that comes with that so they can take that healing to the rest of the world around them too. Because healing leads to freedom and freedom leads to impact.

So, if you've been wondering, "Okay, how do we do it? How can we just get practical for a second?" I've got you. We had to walk through that stuff first. So, if we're going to find healing from our past, we need to know how to fight against the schemes of the enemy, and there are some steps that we need to take.

Again, it's not an exhaustive list, but it's just a way for us to get started. And they all start with "C" to make it easy for you. Alright? The first one is:

Confession

Confession—this is just us naming it. This is us naming the thing, dragging it into the light. That's going back to that question that we asked at the beginning: Is there something that God wants me to see about my past? And then it's us saying, "Hey, I'm not going to run from it anymore."

I know there are some people at the sound of my voice who have for far too long had something from your past eating at you and it's painful. And you've gotten really good at running. You've gotten really good at ignoring and avoiding and numbing.

Maybe today is the day that God is telling you to stop. Stop running. Stop suppressing. Stop hiding. Because here's the reality. God cannot bring comfort to what we are unwilling to confront. For some of us, we just need to name it. We need to confess and say, "This is what it is."

Here's the second one:

Communion

I'm not talking about the crackers and the juice. Okay? Communion means intimacy with God, communing with Him, being in relationship with Him. This is us getting to know the character of our heavenly Father. It's us spending time with Him, being in His word. It's us praying with Him.

It's knowing this is who my Father is. He is a God who heals. He is a God who mends the broken hearted. He is a God who bandages wounds. So, I'm going to be very familiar with who He is and His character and His likeness. I'm going to fill my heart with His truth. Why? So, when the enemy comes in and tries to fill my head with lies, I have a bank of truth to draw from. Right?

So, I need to be able to spend time with Him and know who He is and fellowship with Him, commune with Him through prayer and Bible study and worship, all these things. I'm getting to know the character of my heavenly Father who wants to heal me.

Here's the third one:

Community

It doesn't happen in isolation. Healing happens in community. Alright? The process of healing cannot be done alone. This is why we push so hard around here, man—find your crew. Man your stations but also find your crew. Find a group of people—whether it's joining a small group or whether it's getting into Rooted.

Find some people who are equally broken, people who likely have some pain in their past as well, who you can walk in step with toward the journey of healing. Don't get isolated. Don't get vulnerable by being alone. No, find your crew. Get into a community of people who can help you grow in the healing process.

Here's the last one:

Counseling

Man, for some of us we need someone to process our past with. For some of us, we need to find someone who has a unique skill set and a biblical worldview, that's



important, who can help us unearth some of the things in our lives and heal from them in healthy ways. Let me say that there's no shame in that. We need to do away with this stigma around that.

Maybe today is the day that you choose to take that step. Maybe you've been telling yourself for a long time, "I'm going to pursue faith-based counseling in some way, but you just haven't taken that step. I pray that God would lead you to that if that is for you. If you need help in that we have a list of resources on our web page. You can go to:

tpcc.org/care

We've put together vetted, clinical counselors who are happy to meet with you and happy to help walk you through some of the healing that God wants to do in your life. Maybe today is the day that you need to take that step.

You know, as we talk about all of this, as we've mentioned that we live in brokenness and that God steps into that brokenness and He offers healing and redemption and bandages our wounds, I was drawn to somebody in the Bible who had experienced all of that, somebody who didn't hide it, who wasn't afraid to confess it—a guy named David.

David had a pretty messy past. He dealt with isolation. He dealt with loneliness. He dealt with, man you name it: betrayal, and loss. He dealt with sin, agreed to sin. He's also a guy who really expressed all of the things that we've talked about that are essential to healing.

Confession. He was in communion with God. Man, you read the Psalms it's him just crying out to God over and over again, not being afraid to name what he was walking through, not being afraid to invite God in and commune with Him and say, "I know that this is what the world says. I know this is what it looks like around me. But, God, this is who I know You to be."

He does that all throughout Scripture. He has community. He has people around him who he processes with. Mainly, he had a good friend named Jonathan. They walked together and experienced a lot of life together—a lot of hard times, but also some celebratory times. He had counsel. There was a prophet named Nathan who wasn't afraid to come in and call him out on his stuff and help him see what he could not see. Man, he has all of those things.

I love how he just beautifully writes in the Psalms. But there is this one Psalm in particular, many of us are familiar with it. It is Psalm, chapter 23. He says:

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want."

You may know it. I think it is interesting that David refers to the Lord as a Shepherd. David, himself, was a shepherd. So, he was very familiar with what shepherds do and

what the life of a shepherd actually looked like and some of the difficulties that came along with being a shepherd as you would raise the sheep.

There is a line in Psalm 23, particularly verse 5. This is what David says. He says:

“You honor me by anointing my head with oil. My cup overflows with blessings.” (NLT)

As I was looking at that I was kind of interested in why David chose that language. And with him being a shepherd he would have known that it wasn't easy. But there was something in particular that I believe David was referencing.

As I did some research this week... Shepherds hated summertime. They hated summertime mainly because of insects. And there was a particular insect called the Nose Fly. What the Nose Fly would do is it would circle the sheep trying to find a way to land on the sheep. And if it was successful, then it could lay eggs on the sheep's nose. And if that was successful the eggs would hatch and the larva would actually creep up into the nose of the sheep and would bury itself in the nasal passage, sometimes even into the brain.

This would become very painful for the sheep. And what the shepherd would see the sheep doing a lot of times was like rubbing its nose in the dirt or even beating its head against a rock or a tree or any object that it could find trying to relieve itself of the pain—banging its head over and over again. Sometimes even until death, killing itself trying to numb, trying to rid itself of the pain that it was in.

As I was looking at that I was like, “God, what does that have to do with us? What does that have to do with our past?” And God said, “So many of my kids are battling with the internal struggles of life and the internal pains of their past and are trying to cope with it, trying to deal with it in so many unhealthy ways.

“I see them metaphorically banging their heads against the rocks trying to relieve themselves of the pain, whether it's from substances, whether it's through unhealthy habits, whether it's through busyness—they are trying to do anything they can to rid themselves of the pain. And they are causing themselves destruction. They are causing people around them destruction. They are banging their heads against these rocks, these trees.”

The Psalmist says, “You anoint my head with oil.” I think that's interesting because what shepherds would do is they would take this oil, and they would pour it on the head of the sheep and the oil essentially did three things. One: the oil would clean the sheep. It would pull out all of the larva and the gunk and the dirt. All of the things that were in the nose, like a medicine that would help clean all of that stuff out.

Secondly: it would protect. It would provide a coat or a layer of protection within the nose to keep the flies from landing there. Here's the third thing: the shepherd anointing

the sheep with oil would also heal bruises from them banging their heads against the rocks. It would heal the wounds of them trying to relieve themselves of the pain.

My prayer this week has been, “God, would You anoint our heads with oil? God, we’re tired of dealing with these things on our own. We’re tired of banging our heads against the rocks and looking to other solutions, other mechanisms of healing. God, would You anoint our heads with oil? Could we just come to You. Would You allow Your fresh Spirit to just come fresh upon us and point us to the healing that you died for us to have?”

And in His providence and His grace, He kind of reminded me that He did through His Son, Jesus. Jesus would be considered the Good Shepherd. Jesus referred to Himself as a Good Shepherd who laid His life down for His sheep.

Jesus would be the One who said, “Anointing on this day has been placed upon Me. And I have come to set the captives free, to set the oppressed free, to free the poor, to free the marginalized, to free those who have been oppressed, to those who have been incarcerated—not just physically, but emotionally as well. On this day anointing has been placed up Me to set those people free.”

And the Bible would go on to say that He was wounded for our transgressions. He was pierced for our iniquities. And the Bible would say that by His wounds we are healed. He would go to a cross for you and for me, nailing everything from our past, our present, and our future to that cross.

And all we have to do is come to Him, not hiding it, not being ashamed of it, not running from it but confessing it to Him and saying, “God, I know that You can heal me. God, You sent Your Son 2,000 years ago to a cross to die for everything from my past, present, and future. And I believe today freedom is available from the healing that comes from You and You alone.” And He always responds to that.

So, what I want to do is offer a moment for that to happen. For us to respond to Jesus and what He has done. For us to be anointed with oil. At all of our campuses, I’m going to ask you to stand to your feet right now, in this moment. And what I’m going to do, I’m going to pray.

When I get done praying, we’re going to create this moment where you can actually come forward and pray with somebody from our response team. And they are actually going to anoint your head with oil. It may be a little bit different for you, but all this is is a symbol. They are just going to take a thumb print of oil and place it on your head, and they are going to pray a prayer of blessing over you as a symbol of the Spirit working in your life, offering you the healing and freedom that Jesus died for you to have.

We saw this happening at our last worship night and man, these aisles were filled with people who just came forward and they said a simple thing, “My name is I want to be delivered or healed from . As simple as that. That’s all you have to do.



Our people are willing, and they are ready to pray with you at each and every one of our campuses. Here at Northwest, you'll see these candles that are lit around the room. You can go to one of those tables that has a lit candle on it. There is somebody there waiting to pray with you.

At other campuses, you can find somebody from the response team. Just come forward. There is no judgment. There is no shame. We are wanting to pray with you so that you can experience the healing that Jesus died for you to have.

So, let me pray and then we can respond.

Father, we acknowledge that our past is painful, our past includes brokenness. But, God, we also acknowledge and we appreciate the fact that you stepped into that brokenness to heal what has been broken, to restore what has been damaged, and to revive what has been dead.

God, we thank You that You are a God who heals the broken hearted. God, we thank You that You bandage wounds and like a surgeon You intricately stitch together what has been fractured.

So, God, I pray right now that You would empower whoever needs to experience that healing to be able to come forward and know that they can lay it all down at Your feet, that they can confess, "This is who I am. This is what I need to be healed from." And in that moment, You will meet them right where they are.

God, we bind the strategies and the schemes of the enemy. He has no power. In the name of Jesus we are declaring that greater are You who is within us than he who is in the world. And we declare that we are going to stand on the victory that You already died on Calvary for us to have and that Satan can no longer hold us hostage.

So, God, would You release today? Would You heal what has been broken? And would You set us free today, in this moment? We thank You and we love You. It's in Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen.

Right now, you can respond wherever you are. Come forward and receive prayer.

