

## **Healing from Abandonment & Anger**

### **Bart Schuchts**

Hello everyone. I'm Bart Schuchts and I'm excited to be sharing with you about healing, particularly as it relates to abandonment and any residual impacts of the feeling of anger. This is very near and dear to me both abandonment and anger are things I've journeyed through and received healing in and I'll share some stories with you, but first I want to start by prayer. So before every time I speak, I like to share three things. Two are catechism quotes and one is a saint quote, and then we'll pray together.

#### **Opening Prayer**

Catechism 2670 and Catechism 2671. 2670 of the Catechism Church says this, that the church invites us to call upon the Holy Spirit every day before and after every important event. I think this counts 2671 is a prayer you may be familiar with. It says, the simplest and most direct prayer is come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and in Kindle, within me, within us, the fire of your love.

The church says in 2563 that the heart is the place to which we withdraw. It's the place of decision. The place of encounter in 696 of the catechism talks about fire, and it says, fire is the transforming energy of the Holy Spirit's actions. So. As we pray, we're praying for our hearts to be set on fire with the love of God, to encounter the love of God and the transforming energy of the Holy Spirits in the depths of our being.

Saint Bon Avengers said this, that the Holy Spirit comes where he is loved. He is invited and where he is expected. Can we pray together? If you will just place your hand upon your heart. And I'll just lead us in a quick prayer. You can just say with me, Come Holy Spirit, fill the heart of your faithful and enkindle and me the fire of your love.

May the fire of the Holy Spirit touch me and transform me into the depths of my heart. Father, lead us into deeper encounter with your love and your goodness. Jesus. We thank you for all that you've done for us through your life, through your mission, through your death, and through your resurrection, and thank you.

You did not leave us as orphans, but you sent us your spirit, the very Holy Spirit that lived within you. We have received through our baptism and confirmation. Come Holy Spirit, holy Spirit, we love you. We invite you and we expect you. Speak through me. Speak to each of us as only you know how to do, bless this time together.

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## **Healing on Abandonment and Anger**

So let's talk about healing related to abandonment and anger. I share with you that this is very near and dear to me. Well, I don't know about dear to me. It's been part of my journey. So my father left when I was five years old, and he left my mom to raise seven children by herself, and I was the sixth of seven children. So I grew up really not knowing my father, and I grew a deep anger.

And looking back I realized that, that that anger was protecting my heart from feeling the pain of abandonment wasn't constructive, but the anger increased. When I would watch my mom cry herself to sleep as a little boy, knowing that my father had broken her heart, and the anger grew to the point of even hatred from my father, and the anger would manifest itself in various ways. And I ended up having a lot of shame around anger because the ways that I would, I hurt people in my anger, but I'd received a lot of healing, and maybe I'll share some of that here in a minute.

But someone once shared this with me that I want to pass on to you, that anger. It is like a red light in the car. You know that light that comes on and it says engine, engine, engine. You know, you and I can find a way to turn off that light, but it's not going to fix the problem, right? Because that red light in the car is telling us there's a problem under the hood.

So for me, the anger was like the red light, and it was telling me there's a problem under the hood. And so I started to pray and asked Jesus, Jesus, go to the deeper places of my heart, my being. The core of my being and reveal to me where this anger is rooted, what's going on under the hood. And I've received much healing throughout the years related to anger, but also related to abandonment.

And I realized that, as I said earlier, the anger was protecting my heart. From actually feeling the pain caused by abandonment. You know, the word courage actually means of or from the heart. And so for me, instead of going to the heart, to the deeper place of the heart where the pain really was, I was putting a false protection, kind of like a beware of the dog sign, a false protection on my heart saying, Hey, don't get near this, don't get near this pain if you get near this pain.

Right. And that's kind of how anger can falsely protect us. But by inviting Jesus, the one who came to heal and to, and to save, to restore, to redeem, inviting Jesus into those deeper places of my heart, I began to receive healing. And the places where there was abandonment, I encountered the love of the Father.

## **Inviting Jesus In Deeper Places in Your Heart**

Let me share that with you very quickly here. There's a testimony that I share. Well, sometimes can take me 45 minutes. I won't do that now, but I don't want to give an abbreviated version. So I played college football and as actually, anger was pretty convenient at times, but it also got me into a lot of trouble.

But I lived out of a lot of disordered desires and there's an old song that, uh, was written, you may be familiar with, uh, that they might as well have written for me, looking for love in all the wrong places and looking for love in too many faces. So between the anger and the disordered desires and the sins, I was far from, God, I grew up in the Catholic church, but I walked away from God and the church during my college years and just basically just lived for myself.

And then it was my senior year as things were starting to unravel for me, and I was going through some difficult times that I was confronted and I realized the pain that I had caused. You see, when I was a little boy watching my mom cry herself to sleep, I made a vow, an unholy vow, made out of a judgment.

Scripture says, as you judge, you'll be judged. And I made an unholy vow that I'll never be like my father, that I'll never hurt a woman the way my father hurt my mother. Well, here I am my senior year of college and I'm confronted with people that I had hurt. And what hits me is I'm just like my father.

Just like my father hurt, my mother, hurt me, hurt my siblings. I too was hurting people with my sin and my disordered desires as well as anger. And I was trying to change. I didn't know how to change. And while in a locker room, an NFL locker room where I was at the doorstep of my childhood dream, I cried out to God and I said, God, this is what I thought I always wanted, but it's not enough. I need to know if you're real. I mean, I know Jesus Christ died for me.

I mean, I went to Catholic schools. I grew up in the Catholic church. I wore a cross. I know Jesus died for me 2000 years ago, but what good does that do me right now? I need to know if you're real. If you're real, God, please show yourself real to me. Within a week. My NFL Dream came to an end and I went back to school in Tallahassee and I was playing golf with my brother Bob, and he was telling me about a men's weekend that he went on that deeply impacted him.

## **I'm A Father to the Fatherless**

And he invited me to go and I remembered the prayer that I prayed in the locker room and I said, God, okay, I'll give it a shot. So I went on this men's weekend, 50 men, several men sharing their stories, several of them deeply impacting me. By Sunday, my heart is really open and I receive a letter from my brother, Bob.

My brother Bob is eight years older than me. My brother Bob had always been close. Uh, Bob was that brother who would always be like, you know, Bart, you need to come back to the faith, you know, bar, here's a Bible for Christmas. You know, Bob, thanks man. That's your thing, not my thing. Uh, but I always knew Bob cared about me, and Bob wrote me a letter.

He was on the weekend with me, and in this letter he just simply said this, but I want to let you know that I love you and that I'm proud of you. What? Like, you love me. Why do you love me man? I, I'm full of shame. I hate me. What do you mean you love me? You're proud

of me. You're proud of me. For what? I just failed at the only thing I'm good at. So I believed at the time you love me, you're proud of me. I thought, well, you know, I should thank him. So I stand up and Bob sees me and we meet in the middle of the room and as we're meeting in the middle room, I kind of reached my hand out and I said, Hey, Bob. Thanks for that letter.

It was really nice of you, you know, and as I did, a guy stands behind us and he says, you two brothers need the hug. And he pushes Bob and I together, and the hardened walls of my heart began to crumble, and I'm sobbing in my brother's arms. I'm crying. Bob's crying. Every man in the room is crying, and I feel this presence fill the room I now understand is the Holy Spirit, which is why I love to invite him. And the Holy Spirit is in the room, and the love of God is so present and men are touched to the core of their hearts.

And as I'm crying in Bob's arms, I hear this still small voice and I knew it was God. And he said, Bart, I'm your father. I'm a father to the fatherless and I love you. And I just absolutely lost it. I realized that in that moment, what I had been looking for my entire life was the love of the father. From the moment my dad walked out the door, I had a deep abandonment wound and a deep longing for the father, but because my natural father wasn't there, I grew angry and my heart.

Became hardened and as I watched the pain of my mother, I had a very sensitive heart and I watched the destruction in my family. I judged my father, I judged him as his sin, and I said, I will never be like my father. And yet I was doing some of the same things that I judged my father for. And I hated myself, just like I hated my father.

And yet in that moment, God the Father, our heavenly Father, who doesn't just love you and I, but is love himself, reached down and embraced me, and I encountered the love of the Father, and it radically transformed my life in a moment.

After this encounter, and I'm weeping and every man's weeping and my brother's weeping, and I feel God's presence in the room. And I hear him speak to me and he says, Bart, I'm your father. I'm a father to the fathers and I love you. I then was open for confession and I went to confession with Father Mike who was there in the room and who witnessed this whole thing happening and while I was in confession.

And yes, it was a very long confession and Father Mike was very gracious and. I forgave my sins, and as I felt the freedom of those sins lifting from me. I then said to Father Mike, just a few weeks ago, I was in the locker room of an NFL football team, and I cried out to God and I said, God, I need to know if you're real.

This is what I thought I always wanted, and it's not enough. I need to know if you're real. And I said, right here, father, you saw it happen right here. In front of all these men and my brothers embrace, I encountered the father's love. I said, I want to give my life to Jesus Christ. And Father Mike, right there graciously prayed for me to surrender my life to Christ.

## **All Things Are Made New**

You see, there's a scripture that says, those who hold onto their life will lose it, but those who lose their life, for my sake, Christ's sake, will find it. I had been holding onto my life. I had been holding onto my pain. I've been holding onto my right to be angry. I've been holding onto my judgements.

I've been holding onto my fears. It led to depression, disillusionment, discouragement, a bunch of disorder desires, a bunch of shame and self-hatred. And in this moment when I encountered the father's love. My life was changed, and when I went to confession, all of this was washed away. See, Jesus says, when you come to Christ, old things pass away.

All things are made new. I was made new and I gave my life to Christ. And not long after that, I experienced the Holy Spirit in a way that I didn't even know existed. Jesus says, you'll receive power. When the Holy Spirit comes upon you, Jesus said to his disciples, when I leave, you're going to be sad, but your sadness will turn to joy because when I leave, I'm going to send you the Holy Spirit. You'll receive power, which is the word, "Dunamis".

So within a year's time, I encountered the father's love. I gave my life to follow Jesus Christ and I was full of the spirit of God. And then I went six years. Where I walked in purity and Jesus was doing so much healing. So much healing. So in the moment of the encounter, I was transformed. But in the six years following, he did a deep work of healing and cleansing, and now he's done a lifetime of that. I would love to be able to tell you I'm done now. That's why I can present now, but I would be kidding myself and you.

It's a journey, right? But you see, Jesus came to heal and to restore and to redeem. And in those places of deep abandonment left by my father's decision to walk out the door, the Father, God, the Father, Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit, encountered the depths of my being. And the place of abandonment. He met me with love itself. God doesn't just love you and I, he is love itself.

## **We Invite Jesus Under the Hood**

So what do we do with abandonment? How do we receive healing in the areas of deep abandonment? By encountering the father's love, by receiving everything that Jesus did for us. Through his life, through his myth mission, through his death, and through his resurrection. John 10:10 says, Jesus says the thief, speaking of the evil one, the thief comes to steal, to kill and to destroy. But I Jesus said, have come to bring you life, abundant life. Life to the fullest. Isn't that what we're all longing for? But see, the thief comes to steal.

The enemy comes to wound us to abandon us, to leave us abandoned and rejected. But Jesus comes to heal, to restore, to redeem. So what do we do with the residual impact of anger? Or the consequences of sin or the consequences of others', choices that have hurt us and reject us and left us abandoned. What do we do? Well, we invite Jesus under the hood.

What is going on in the deeper places of my heart? Why am I acting out this way in anger? It's the red light in the car. Warning, warning, warning. Jesus, will you come to the deep

places of my heart? Will you look up under the hood? Holy Spirit, will you come and search out the innermost places of my being and will you touch and heal the places of my heart?

I want to close this time out with a, with a prayer experience, maybe a couple of them. I want to invite you right now just to close your eyes. You see, the church is beautiful. In talking about prayer, it talks about meditation and contemplative prayer. That meditation engages, thought, imagination, emotions, and desire, and that contemplative prayer is simply gazing upon Jesus. It's like one friend speaking to another. I want to invite you just at this moment to close your eyes. And I want you just to be where you are, just to feel what you feel, experience what you experienced, and I want to invite you to engage your holy imagination, emotions, desires.

## **Closing Prayer**

I want to pray for you. Holy Spirit. Just reveal to us. Any residual pain or anger related to abandonment or rejection? Holy Spirit, do as only you know how to do and meet each one of us right where we are. And though, Jesus, I ask that you would go to those deeper places of our heart and that you would bring your healing.

Come Holy Spirit.

If you will just place your hand upon your heart. I want to close the same place we started and just pray this with me. Say, come Holy Spirit, reveal the heart of the Father. May I encounter the love of God deeper than I've ever known it before? I come Lord Jesus, and pray this with me. Come Holy Spirit, fill the heart of your faithful and enkindle, in me the fire of your love. May the fire of the Holy Spirit touch me now, heal me, and transform me.

Father, we ask you to bless all that you are doing. In the name of the Father and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.