

Break the Cycle of Sin!

Many of us are locked into patterns of sinful behavior. But because Jesus paid the full price for your freedom, your family's tainted past doesn't have to pull you down.

I got a phone call some years ago from a minister friend of mine whom I've known for years. He was pastoring a church in the Chicago area when he called and said, "Listen, brother, I'm not going to be able to make it to the conference this year." When I asked him why, he answered, "I'm leaving the ministry, I'm leaving my church, I'm leaving my wife and children, and I'm moving on."

When I asked him what the problem was, he shared with me that throughout their marriage, his wife would go into a deep depression every couple of months and at times would not get out of bed, wouldn't take care of the kids and wouldn't go to church. He said, "It's ruining our marriage, our family and our ministry. I can't take it any longer."

I said to him, "Brother, before you guys split up, do me a favor and come see me."

When they came, I asked his wife what the problem was. She began to tell me that this depression would come on her, and it would totally overtake her life. "When did this begin to happen?" I asked her.

"Pastor, I don't—"

I repeated my question, "When did this begin to happen?"

She began to tell me the most heartbreaking story. When she was a child, every so often her father would go into a depression. He would sit and braid ropes, make nooses and threaten to hang himself.

Then one day, when she was 7 years old, she heard a commotion

in the living room. She ran in and found her dad hanging from a rope that had been tied to a beam.

She screamed and tried to hold her father up. She yelled for help, and her mother came running in from the kitchen. Thank God, they were able to cut the rope, get him down and save her father's life. However, starting that day, the father's depression came on his daughter.

I said to her: "We're going to pray, and we're going to break that family curse off of you. And when God does this, it'll never come back on you again."

We began to plead the blood of Jesus over her life and for her deliverance. Later that night her husband called me and said: "My wife is still in the living room. She's lifting her hands, singing and worshiping God—what do I do?"

I said, "Let her keep worshiping!"

He called me the next day and said, "When I got up to go to work, she was still in the living room worshiping and praising God."

Today, that couple is pastoring a new church, they're having revival, and the church is exploding in growth. Their marriage and their family have never been better.

The depression is completely gone, and they're finally experiencing all the joy, blessings and outpouring of God upon their marriage and ministry that had been on hold for so many years. God is no respecter of persons (see Acts 10:34). What God did for these folks in breaking their family curse, He can do for you today.

Cracks Beneath the Surface

Some time ago, I was in Los Angeles and we were staying in a hotel right outside of Universal Studios. I went in the bathroom to brush my teeth and noticed a piece of paper on the

mirror listing the things to do in case of an earthquake. When I looked out the hotel window, I could see many homes, buildings, Universal Studios, downtown Los Angeles and a highway.

On the surface, everything seemed to be fine. But the hotel posted that list because they knew that even though everything on the surface looked fine, below the surface there were geological faults. Although they were dormant for the moment, when the circumstances were right, these faults could move and cause an earthquake, bringing destruction to the once-perfect surface.

But the word “fault” can also mean a crack or a flaw in your life, in your character or in your personality that lies beneath the surface.

The Bible says in James 5:16, “Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for one another, that ye may be healed” (James 5:16, KJV).

When you look closely at this Scripture you see that it’s not the truth that sets us free, but the truth we know or the truth we understand that sets us free. Faults are not the weaknesses that everyone sees from time to time. They are those hidden, underlying cracks beneath the surface. When the pressure and circumstances are right, those faults can rise up and destroy your future, your marriage, your ministry and the blessing God has for you.

When I talk about being set free, I’m not talking about learning how to control depression, anger, or whatever the fault may be. I’m talking about being set free and delivered from the fault forever! How do we do that?

We are to confess these faults lying beneath the surface, confess the cracks we are covering with a certain type of personality, and confess the earthquake pressures that could bring destruction at any moment.

The concept of confession is very difficult for Christians to grasp because we have the misconception that the moment we get saved, we're supposed to be perfect. But none of us are perfect. It shouldn't be hard to confess our faults to one another because all of us have things in our lives in which God is trying to bring deliverance and spiritual healing. So when the Bible says to confess these things, we need to do just that. Just because we're Christians doesn't mean we're without fault.

When Tiz and I first got married, every pastor and evangelist that would come through would prophesy over me, "You're going to be a great man of God, and God's going to give you a ministry that's going to go around the world." But they didn't realize that I had a very real and very serious anger and violence problem.

They didn't know that when I went home I would hit my wife, or I would erupt in a raging anger that sometimes I couldn't control. This anger and violence was destroying my life, and it was destroying my family. It is a miracle that Tiz didn't leave me.

When I would eventually calm down, Tiz would say: "We need to get help. We need to talk to someone and get some counseling." But I wouldn't do it because I thought Christians were supposed to be perfect.

But James wasn't writing to unbelievers, he was writing to believers. We are to find someone we can confess these things to.

One reason I wouldn't confess is because I didn't know why I was so enraged at times. I would wonder: Why am I doing this? Why is this thing still in my life even though I'm a Christian, even though I'm born again and even though I've been set free from so many horrible things?

Again it's not the truth alone that will set you free, but the

knowledge of the truth. Remember, God's people are destroyed because of their lack of knowledge.

You may be suffering from a generational curse, not because you're a bad person, a bad Christian or someone who is worse than anyone else. As a matter of fact, it may not even be your fault. Iniquity can come as a spirit that lands on you or is something you inherit.

But however it comes, James says to confess those things that lie beneath the surface so that you can be healed. How did those faults get there? Faults can land on you or can attach themselves to you from generations past because of the iniquity of the fathers.

There is no curse without a cause. John 9:1-3 says: "Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that He was born blind?' Jesus answered, 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him.'"

Jesus told the disciples that the man's blindness was not because of a generational curse—but the disciples thought it was. According to the religious thinking at that time, someone who was born blind must have been cursed by God.

Now don't limit this understanding to someone who has a physical ailment or disability. The question is more than, "Why is this man blind?"

The question could be: Why does this person go through so many divorces? Why are they always angry? Why are they so depressed? Why do they have an eating disorder? Why are they suicidal? Why are they always poor? Why is this child always out of control?

Jesus didn't say to His disciples: "That's ridiculous! What a stupid question." These people understood that many of life's

problems have a spiritual root.

Second Thessalonians says, "For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way."

The word "mystery" is translated from the Greek word *mysterion*, whose root word means "to shut the mouth." And the Greek word for "iniquity" is *anomia*, which means "a violation of the law; wickedness and unrighteousness." So what does that say to us? Someone is keeping his or her mouth shut about something that's evil!

When we look at the Old Testament meaning of iniquity, we see that in the context of the verses of Scripture where it is used, iniquity is a spiritual force that pressures us and drives us to bow or bend under its destructive nature. From this New Testament verse, we can see that to be delivered of iniquity, we must speak the truth, name the iniquity for what it is, confess the fault and declare that the blood of Jesus Christ has set us free.

Exodus 20:5 says, "'For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me.'"

The word "iniquity" appears in the Bible more than 300 times. I believe God wants us to know that apart from Jesus and understanding that His blood has set us free, iniquities are passed down from the fathers and mothers to the children and to the children's children. The iniquity of the children denotes a curse that is not the result of something the children did, but is the result of something that happened in their forefathers' lives, and it landed on them.

Can it be that something happened in our grandparents' lives, and because of that a curse landed on us? We literally inherited a family curse:

* “Our fathers sinned and are no more, but we bear their iniquities” (Lam. 5:7).

* “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me” (Ps. 51:5).

You and I inherited the iniquity of our forefathers. Through conception, weaknesses were passed down, and we inherited an evil spiritual force on the inside of us that caused us to bow under its destructive nature. We inherited the faults of our families.

The question the disciples asked Jesus was something that you and I as Americans, or Westernized people, don’t understand. They asked: “Why is this man cursed? Was it because of something He did or because of something his parents did?”

We’re taught in our Western world to think intellectually, not spiritually. We have been taught to think reasonably, logically and rationally.

I remember hearing about a study the United States government did on many Third World countries after World War II. The U.S. researchers believed that people in Third World countries were not as intelligent as Westernized people, so they asked them this question: “If cotton does not grow in a cold climate, and London is a cold climate, does cotton grow in London?”

Their answers were: “We don’t know. We’ve never been to London.” Immediately the people giving the test said: “These people are unintelligent. They can’t even put two plus two together.”

If you and I took the test, we would say, “If cotton doesn’t grow in a cold climate, and London is a cold climate, of course, cotton doesn’t grow in London.” But the Third World people didn’t give that answer, so the U.S. government came to the conclusion that these Third World people weren’t as intelligent as those in a Western-thinking country.

Researchers later found out that these people did understand. They understood that normally cotton wouldn't grow in London because of its cold climate, but they also understood that there is a dimension beyond the natural.

There's a dimension that brings water out of a rock. There's a dimension that puts gold coins in fishes' mouths. There's a dimension that causes blind eyes to see. There's a dimension that causes the dead to rise. There's a dimension that turns ex-drug addicts and dope dealers into preachers and men and women of God.

So in the natural, cotton wouldn't grow in London's cold climate, but they knew there is a spiritual dimension beyond the natural that can override the natural.

In our Western mind-set, we can accept the fact that someone is paying the price because of something they did. We understand that a man reaps what he sows. What we're not taught is that we may reap something sown by our family many generations ago.

The disciples knew that curses were passed on to future generations. They understood that the supernatural could transcend all reason and logic. And we must understand this truth to be set free from generational curses.

A Spiritual Force at Work

"Like a flitting sparrow, like a flying swallow, so a curse without cause shall not alight" (Prov. 26:2).

I am amazed when I hear or read about birds migrating to distant continents at various seasons of the year. A bird can fly out of North America, wing its way across the equator into South America, find the exact nest it had before, stay there for the winter season, and then fly home to Alaska and find its way back to the exact nest it left there.

This is a tremendous illustration of the spiritual principle behind curses. Proverbs 26:2 tells us to look at the swallows that fly thousands of miles every year, if not tens of thousands of miles, and return to the same nest. How does that happen?

They don't have a map, they don't have a global positioning system unit, and they're not following road signs. The birds are not guided by radar or traffic control. They're not just flapping their wings, flying around and then suddenly, somehow, happen to find their way to the right nests.

It is not a coincidence. There is something inside those birds that guides them to return to exactly the same place they were born.

In a similar way, a curse doesn't just float around in the atmosphere and then, for no apparent reason, land somewhere. Just as there is something that directs the swallows, there is something that directs a curse on a person, on a city, on a church or on a nation. That curse is guided by a spiritual force.

There is a reason why a child grows up to become an alcoholic. There is a reason why an abused child becomes an abusive parent. There is a reason why a young man ends up in prison. There is a reason why a person goes through divorce after divorce.

David repented for committing adultery with Bathsheba and then murdering her husband, but because of David's sin, a curse landed on his family.

“‘Why have you despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in His sight? You have killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword; you have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the people of Ammon. Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me, and have taken the wife of Uriah

the Hittite to be your wife.

“‘Thus says the Lord: “Behold, I will raise up adversity against you from your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun. For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun.”

“So David said to Nathan, ‘I have sinned against the Lord.’ And Nathan said to David, ‘The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die’” (2 Sam. 12:9-13).

The word “sword” referred to a curse of destruction, desolation and death on David’s family. One son, Ammon, raped his own sister. Another son, Absalom, rose up in rebellion against his own father (see 2 Sam. 13:14; 15:4-12).

God forgave David’s sins when he repented, but the curse of his iniquity was passed on to his family. The wives and the children did nothing to deserve the curse, but they suffered from the curse that landed on them as a result of David’s iniquity.

That’s why the Bible says to confess, “I have this depression,” or, “I have this fault in my life.” Having to confess does not mean we’re bad people, but that we have inherited iniquity. This is not to place blame on the parents or the grandparents, but to identify our true enemy. Our battle is not against flesh and blood. Our battle is against principalities and powers and rulers of darkness in high places (see Eph. 6:12).

Once when we were praying for a woman, she went down under the power of God. I said to the usher standing next to her, “Brother, pick her up.” Then I said to the woman: “Ma’am, I don’t know why you came forward to be prayed for, but there’s a spirit of suicide on you. Is there a history of suicide in your family?”

The woman broke into tears and said, "Pastor, my family is from England and Ireland, and at different times over the last 50 years, seven of my aunts have set themselves on fire and committed suicide." She continued, "I love God, I love my family, and I love my life, but I'm being pulled toward this depression and suicide."

We prayed the prayer of breaking generational curses, and Jesus set that woman free.

I once met a woman whose family suffered from various eating disorders. When I talked with her in a church service, I asked, "Ma'am, what did God set you free from?" She answered: "For generations, my family members have died early from obesity. However, in the last 10 years, my family has been dying from anorexia."

Whether it was obesity or anorexia, each generation was dying from eating disorders. That generational curse stemmed back to someone in the family who was molested. A spirit of eating disorders was birthed into the family from that traumatic event. We began to pray, and this woman's family is now eating right because Jesus set them free.

A successful businesswoman told my wife that at certain times of the year, no matter how well everything in her life was going, a cloud of depression tried to come over her. She couldn't even pinpoint particular reasons, but she had to struggle just to keep her mind together. She would feel like it was dragging her under.

Tiz asked her if her mother faced the same thing and she said: "Yes, only much more severely. It would turn into crippling migraine headaches." Tiz told her this was a family curse. They prayed and felt the Spirit of God break it. This woman has been totally free from the oppression for several years, and that freedom has blessed not only her, but her husband and family as well.

I was going through an airport on my way to an out-of-town preaching engagement when a man walked up to me and said, "You're pastor Huch, aren't you?"

I replied, "Yes, sir, I am."

Then he said: "We've been watching your program on television. Pastor, can I ask you something?" He didn't wait for me to answer and continued: "I've been listening to your teachings on breaking the curse off our lives. I need to ask you, what happened to me?"

"The reason I am at the airport right now is to pick up my children. My wife and I are divorced. We are both saved, and both love God and each other. But all of a sudden, we started fighting.

"We didn't know why we were fighting. We didn't really even know what we were fighting about. The next thing I knew—we were divorced!"

He began to weep, and then He said: "I don't know what happened. She doesn't know what happened. But here we are. We're talking to one another because we have both been watching your program. We are talking about getting back together again, but we need to know what happened. What happened to us?"

I looked at him and said, "Brother, is there any history of divorce in your family?"

He replied, "My mom has been divorced five times and my dad six times."

I told him, "Brother, that's a family curse."

As we talked, a crowd of people gathered around us there in the airport to listen in on our conversation. Perhaps many of them were going through similar experiences and didn't know how they ended up in a place or in circumstances they never

intended to be in. Maybe they were also asking the questions, "How did this happen to me?" and "How can I change my life?"

Most likely for the first time in their lives, they heard a confident answer, "That is a generational curse, and the blood of Jesus Christ can set you free right now!" *

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