

How God Turned One Woman's Deep Pain Into Healing and Help for Other Trauma Victims

Incest. Date rape. Emotional abuse.

None of these horrific like experiences sound like qualifications one would list on a resume, and yet God used them all to help Shannon McGraw prepare for the work He has called her to do. Her Hopeful Hearts ministry, geared to those who have experienced any type of trauma, flows out of the ways the Holy Spirit has brought healing to her soul.

God even used the trauma of having her home flooded during Hurricane Harvey to assure McGraw of His care for her in the most challenging situations, she tells host Marti Pieper on a recent episode of the *Family Matters* series on *Charisma News*.

"I was rescued from the home on a boat, and I'll never forget being dropped on dry land and then just having this peace settle over me," she says. "And that's how I always know that God is there, even in the midst of chaos, is that I just have this sudden sense of peace and knowing He has you. And that is what I've gotten from all my past issues and recovering, healing journey is consistently looking for that peace of the Lord."

But McGraw doesn't claim an instant cure for trauma. In fact, she says, she encourages the trauma victims she works with that "You deserve being able to better yourself, to heal from what has been done to you in the past. And you can only truly do that if you have the proper tools." McGraw says her new book, *Reclaimed*, is "one tool to put in that toolbox."

Healing is an ongoing process, McGraw says. "Along the way, you begin to recognize specific aspects of your life that can

be worked on or dealt with. And it's always better to have somebody else to be able to give some feedback."

McGraw recognizes, however, that for those struck in trauma, reaching out for help can involve a high degree of fear. "The hardest part is to acknowledge: This happened to me. And I need help," she says.

That help may lie in talking with a trusted pastor, counselor, therapist or other support person, she says. "And that's what we do here at Hopeful Hearts as well. We're one-to-one peer support. And we're kind of that first step for you to encourage you, if you need that encouragement, to get into therapy and to move forward."

✖ To hear more from Shannon McGraw about the journey of healing from trauma and how God is using her to help others recover and reclaim their lives, listen to this entire episode of *Family Matters* here, and be sure to watch for more episodes of *Family Matters* for inspiring, encouraging content like this. Find McGraw's book, *Reclaimed*, wherever fine books are sold. {eoa}

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Have you or has someone close to you experienced God's healing power over trauma? Join our Facebook conversation here.