

What 10 Lepers Can Teach Us About Process Healing

As an American or Western believer, culturally we are trained to appreciate the instantaneous in our lives, whether it be instant coffee, instant microwaveable food or popcorn, instant internet access, instant cell phone access and more. How many times a day do we push a button of some type and something occurs instantly?

When we come to Christ we sometimes carry this desire for immediate freedom. We see the many instantaneous, physical miracles in the Bible and wonder, why can't Jesus just touch me and get me free? Why do I have to do all of this recovery work to experience freedom? Why must I go through a process?

Well, in the Bible there are both types of miracles: instantaneous and those that occur over time as a process. We see the instant healings of the blind being made able to see (Acts 9:17-18), the deaf being made able to hear (Acts 5:15), and even people being raised from the dead (Acts 20:7-10). However, the Bible also describes physical healings that occurred over time, particularly in Jesus' early ministry.

Recall the 10 lepers Jesus told to go show themselves to the priest, and as they went, they were healed (Luke 17:11-15). They had to obey and put action into their obedience. As they obeyed, they were healed. Theirs was a process healing. Remember the man Jesus told to go wash in the pool of Bethesda? As the man bathed there, he was healed. In yet another example of obedience in action resulting in a process healing—recall the man Jesus told to stretch forth his withered hand. As he stretched it forth in obedience, he was healed.

Jesus decides if you'll experience an instant miracle or a

process miracle, but both are true miracles. In the former, He does all the work, while in the latter; we have to participate for the miracle to occur. For me, freedom from alcohol and drugs were instant miracles. God took them away and I have never desired them since. Overcoming other addictions were process miracles for me. I used to ask why He had not just instantly delivered me from all of them. I have come to understand that process healing that leads to recovery from addiction has several added benefits over the instant miracle we might desire.

This recovery for everyone miracle gives you a humility that can last a lifetime. You know deep down you are a sinner and that you have been forgiven much. This process gives you genuine compassion and deeper love for others and yourself. This process allows you to give and receive from your brothers and sisters in Christ in an authentic manner. Process healing allows you to grow up spiritually, morally and emotionally in the very areas where your addictive choices and behaviors stunted you. In many cases, this process gives you a ministry of healing and recovery you would likely not have had if you had been set free instantly.

God sometimes allows us to go through a miracle process because sometimes this way is actually better for us than an instantaneous healing. Now that I'm on this side of the miracle process, going through it, learning it, teaching it and duplicating it globally, I am grateful I was chosen for it.

If you and I are 100 percent willing to get honest with another person of the same gender, we can heal and be free. If we protect our pride and our perceived spiritual reputation, we are guaranteed to stay sick. One of the major things I have learned in counseling people for more than 25 years is "what you love, you protect."

If you love your addictive choices and behavior, you will

protect them. You will lie, minimize, blame, and get angry, sulk or do whatever you have to do to not be 100 percent honest about your participation in your addictive choices or behavior. If you love the people in your life, including yourself, you will be 100 percent honest about your addictive choices and behaviors, protect the people you love, expose those choices and behavior to the light of another believer, and walk the path of recovery.

Doug Weiss, Ph.D., is a nationally known author, speaker and licensed psychologist. He is the executive director of Heart to Heart Counseling Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and the author of several books including, *Recovery for Everyone*. You may contact Dr. Weiss via his website, www.heart2heart.org, by phone at 719-278-3708 or through email at heart2heart@heart2heart.org.