

Small in your own eyes!

Our world is full of people with invisible hurts, many resulting from childhood, but many also inflicted by pressures and problems of modern life.

If a wound is left untreated, the hurt starts to fester and develops pus.

Bible speaks about the need for healing of damaged emotions and depicts this as part of our sanctification process.

Our Heavenly Father desires to heal these hurts in order to ensure sweet and genuine fellowship with His children. He so desires that He gave His only son, Jesus Christ to die on the Cross, to bridge our separation from Him.

Jesus Christ is the wounded healer.

Isaiah 53:3-6

He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.

Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted.

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.

We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He knows how our emotions can be injured. He was tempted in every way we have been tempted.

Hebrews 4:15, 16

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathise with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Jesus came to introduce reconciliation in place of alienation, healing in place of woundedness and wholeness in place of brokenness.

But many believers today are not living a life what Jesus came to give. Instead, they are falling in the same traps as King Saul in the Bible.

To all appearances Saul was special: tall, striking presence, regal bearing, chosen by God to lead a nation, anointed, publicly endorsed by God and the leading prophet of his time. He drew men to him, rally them to a cause, inspire them to greatness, appearance alone said you could trust him, leader of leaders... brilliant in battle strategy and uncanny ability to take right steps at the right time.

Even his early days as king reflected God's favor. He was a success. Yet, incredibly, the same man developed an "above the law" mentality and a knack for denial and self-justification when challenged by God's prophet. Underneath he was filled with inferiority, jealousy, fear, insecurity, he trusted no one and controlled everyone and everything, so deep were his insecurities, so uncertain were the foundations of his personality, that he perceived any hint of greatness in others around him as a serious threat to his own position.

Saul then began a nosedive into anxiety, paranoia, and depression. Jealousy consumed him as one of his servants David. Although Saul knew David was a dedicated servant who would lay down his life for him, his jealousy raged.

There was one man who was not confused. He knew since he had anointed this man to be king. He had fasted for many days and made the discovery of who the man was, now the word of The Lord came to the prophet Samuel.

1 Samuel 15:10-24

Then the word of the Lord came to Samuel: "I regret that I have made Saul king, because he has turned away from me and has not carried out my instructions." Samuel was angry, and he cried out to the Lord all that night.

*Early in the morning Samuel got up and went to meet Saul, but he was told, "Saul has gone to Carmel. **There he has set up a monument in his own honour (8) and has turned and gone on down to Gilgal." (10)***

When Samuel reached him, Saul said, "The Lord bless you! I have carried out the Lord's instructions."

But Samuel said, "What then is this bleating of sheep in my ears? What is this lowing of cattle that I hear?" Saul answered, "The soldiers brought them from the Amalekites; they spared the best of the sheep and cattle to sacrifice to the Lord your God, but we totally destroyed the rest."

"Enough!" Samuel said to Saul. "Let me tell you what the Lord said to me last night." "Tell me," Saul replied.

*Samuel said, "Although **you were once small in your own eyes (1)**, did you not become the head of the tribes of Israel? The Lord anointed you king over Israel. And he sent you on a mission, saying, 'Go and completely destroy those wicked people, the Amalekites; wage war against them until you have wiped them out.' **Why did you not obey (9)** the Lord? Why did you pounce on the plunder and do evil in the eyes of the Lord?"*

*"**But I did obey (5)** the Lord," Saul said. "I went on the mission the Lord assigned me. I completely destroyed the Amalekites and brought back Agag their king. The soldiers took sheep and cattle from the plunder, **the best of what was devoted to God, in order to sacrifice them to the Lord your God at Gilgal." (4)***

*But Samuel replied: "Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams. **For rebellion (6) is like the sin of divination, and arrogance (7) like the evil of idolatry.** Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has rejected you as king." Then Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned. I violated the Lord's command and your instructions. I was **afraid of the men (2)** and so I **gave in to them. (3)***

There is a pattern here:
Saul was small in his own eyes....

A distorted and poor self-image is very destructive - exaggeration, overly loud and insensitive....

Saul didn't see himself as God saw him.

Are you seeing yourself small? Lacking in looks or in education or in social status or wealth...?

Dictionary defines **inferiority complex** as an unrealistic feeling of general inadequacy caused by actual or supposed inferiority in one sphere, sometimes marked by aggressive behaviour in compensation.

An inferiority complex is a lack of self-worth, a doubt and uncertainty, and feelings of not measuring up to standards. It is often subconscious, and is thought to drive afflicted individuals to overcompensate, resulting either in spectacular achievement or extreme asocial behaviour. The term was coined to indicate a lack of covert self-esteem.

Saul's life reveals a pattern of inferiority, emotional hurt, independence, pride.... and is clearly identified in the passage above.

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| (1) Inferiority | (2) Fear of Men | (3) Come under Pressure |
| (4) Try to prove yourself, success driven | | (5) Try to Justify wrong |
| (6) Rebellion | (7) Arrogance, Stubbornness | |
| (8) Pride | (9) Disobedience | (10) Turn away, Independence |

It starts with very innocent statement of seeing himself small in his own eyes.

1 Samuel 9:21 *Saul answered, "But am I not a Benjamite, from the smallest tribe of Israel, and is not my clan the least of all the clans of the tribe of Benjamin? Why do you say such a thing to me?"*

Instead of just saying as Mary said, *"May your word to me be fulfilled."*

This feeling of inferiority, if not nipped in the bud will start a vicious cycle of inferiority --> fear of man --> come under pressure --> try to prove oneself --> try to justify wrong --> pride --> disobedience --> turn away/move away from God; independence.

This is to be avoided at any cost. When we see us small, we in effect are saying, "God, you made a mistake. There is problem in what you created!"

Samuel was saying that inferiority is no excuse for disobedience to God. We are created as worshippers. If we are not worshipping the true and living God, we will worship something else. When we disobey God, we are actually worshipping ourselves, which is idolatry. And God cannot tolerate idolatry.

Power can come from position or title; authority comes from character and obedience to God. The highest-level of authority is in the total submission to God and His Word in our lives.

Some of the characteristics that appear in our daily life, which will help us identify the pattern, Saul went through are:

1. Withdrawal or isolation
2. Possessiveness
3. 'Us' vs 'them' mentality
4. Manipulation
5. Unteachableness
6. Judgmental Attitude
7. Impatience
8. Distrust
9. Disloyalty
10. Ingratitude

Saul's life ended miserably. Never was he able to bring himself to say, "I repent."

But there is a way now.

The Bible shows us how God the Father heals our hearts. If you identify any of the symptoms listed above, you may want to follow these steps.

1. Acknowledge your need for healing - dealing with pride.
2. Confess sin.
3. Repent.
4. Receive your forgiveness.
5. Forgive others, if any grudge or bitterness is left. Release them in the freedom of your forgiveness.
6. Send the hurts to the Cross and in exchange receive healing.
7. Put a balm of Holy Spirit.
8. Celebrate and believe what God in His Word says about you.
9. Renew your mind with the promises of the Word.
10. Practice obedience - live for God!

The power of the Cross is the basis of forgiveness and death of pride.