

## SESSION 6

# BIBLICAL STEPS TO SOLUTION

## PART 3

*“God saw all that He had made,  
and it was very good.”*

Genesis 1:31

## **His Promise of Hope**

Dorie's childhood rejection was a seemingly impossible obstacle to overcome. Even though she had overcome much of her childhood pain, when her father died, some of the painful feelings of rejection and worthlessness resurfaced.

Upon hearing of her father's death, Dorie and her husband drove to Tulsa for his funeral. She signed the registry as his daughter and was stunned when the funeral director informed her that he had no children! The director insisted that her presence would upset the family, and she was turned away from the funeral home. Later, her aunt called and said the obituary had read "no children" and there would be discomfort for other family members if she appeared. Her father, even in death, stung Dorie with yet another rejection—but this one delivered an even greater blow. She said, "My father's death ended all earthly ties with my relatives.

However, Dorie did not lose her new sense of worth because of her father's rejection. She knew the Lord would always love her. The Lord had compassion toward her. The Lord would always be faithful to her. This was His promise of hope . . .

***"Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope.  
Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for His  
compassions never fail."***

Lamentations 3:21-22

In this session, we'll look at how God can turn our mistreatment into ministry, and then wrap up with some reminders about our worth in God's eyes.

*Write from the Heart*

Were you rejected or ostracized by someone you never forgave and who is now deceased. Is forgiveness just for the living? What benefits would forgiveness bring?

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Describe a time when God brought something good out of a hardship you faced.

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## How to Turn Mistreatment into Ministry

At some point Dorie wrote, “I heard the voice of God—the voice that had whispered to me during those many years of loneliness, sorrow, and heartache; ‘Dorie, your end is going to be so much better than your beginning.’” And how true! Not only did Christ accept Dorie just as she was, but He also elevated her to be His representative, His voice, His ambassador.

*“He raises the poor from the dust  
and lifts the needy from the ash heap;  
He seats them with princes,  
with the princes of His people.”*

Psalm 113:7-8

Mistreatment is no stranger to any of us. Why then, in the face of misfortune, do some victims see themselves as having little value, while others live victoriously in light of their true value? What makes the difference? The victorious Christian can learn priceless lessons through mistreatment.

- Allow your mistreatment to be the making of your ministry.

“The Father of compassion and the God of all comfort . . .  
Comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any  
trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God”  
(2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

- Don't be consumed with the negatives you have received from others.

“Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland” (Isaiah 43:18-19).

- Be consumed with the positives you have received from God—positives He will lead you to pass on to others.

The blessing comes when you focus not on what you are getting, but on what you are giving, Jesus suffered immense mistreatment yet He was not burdened with low self-worth. His ministry of compassion models for us the truth that “it is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35).

*Write from the Heart*

Read Romans 5:3-5; 2 Corinthians 1:3-4; James 1:2-4. How can God use suffering and mistreatment for His purposes?

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No experience in life is ever wasted with God. Read Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; Ephesians 4:10-11; 1 Peter 4:10-11. What gifts and abilities has God given you? How can you use them to help others.

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*“Now may the God of peace . . .  
equip you with everything good for doing His will.”*

Hebrews 13:20-21

## **The Bible Answers Two Intriguing Questions**

### **Question #1**

Since the Bible says, “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Mark 12:31), am I actually supposed to love myself or is that arrogance and pride?

### **Answer**

When you hear the word *love*, it is common to assume it means affectionate love or passionate love. But *agape love* is the type of love referred to in this passage. The Greek word *agape* in the text means a “commitment to do what is best on behalf of others.” If you truly “love your neighbor as yourself,” you must comprehend the context of this love as well as understand its roots.

Jesus presents the two most important commandments: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these” (Mark 12:30-31).

The apostle Paul states that love is the fulfillment of the law. “Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law” (Romans 13:10).

We are to love with *agape* love , which is based not on feelings but on commitment. “If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. . . .But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because He is kind to the ungrateful and wicked” (Luke 6:32,35). We are to love what God loves, that is, we are to value the truth that God loves us. “We love because He first loved us” (1 John 4:19).

## Question #2

In Luke 14:26, does the Bible really mean that I am to hate my family and myself?

## Answer

To interpret any literary work correctly, a major principle of interpretation must be applied: *context!* Therefore, look at how “hatred” is used in context of the *whole counsel of God’s Word*.

Moses states, “Do not hate your brother in your heart” (Leviticus 19:17 ESV)

One of the Ten Commandments state, “Honor your father and your mother” (Exodus 20:12). It doesn’t say *hate* your father and mother!

The apostle John states, “Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates a brother or sister is still in the darkness” (1 John 2:9).



Jesus states, astonishing those who hear Him, “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Matthew 5:43-44).

Based on the whole counsel of God, we are not to carry hatred in our hearts. When referring to “hating” our father, mother, sister, brother—and even our own lives, Jesus was not promoting a lifestyle of personal hatred. Such a message is completely inconsistent with the heart of the Bible and the heart of the Lord. Jesus instead appealed His followers to hate anything—including anything in their own lives—that stood in the way of giving their relationship with Him absolute priority. If we are to be true disciples, Jesus must be preeminent. Jesus must occupy the place of highest priority. We should not let anyone take the place that He alone should have.

“For in Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together, And He is the head of the body, the church; He is the beginning, and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything He might have the supremacy” (Colossians 1:16-18).



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Here are some reminders of your real worth from seven sections in Psalm 139:

1. Realize that God knows all about you (vv. 1-6)
2. Remember that God is always with you (vv. 7-12).
3. Respect the fact that God created you (vv.13-14).
4. Recognize that God uniquely designed you (vv. 15-16).
5. Receive God's loving thoughts toward you (vv. 17-18),
6. Renounce God's enemies as enemies to you (vv. 19-22).
7. Respond to God as He changes you (vv. 23-24).

## *Discussion/Application Questions*

1. How has your understanding of self-worth changed over the past six sessions? What are one or two key takeaways the Lord has revealed to you about your own self-worth?

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2. How has your view of God changed as a result of this study? How have His truths changed your view of *you*?

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3. As you look ahead, describe at least one behavior in your life that will begin, change, or stop in order to help you understand your worth in God's eyes.

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4. Who in your life struggles with low self-worth? What truths from this study would be helpful for them to know? What can you do to encourage them and help them see their value in God's eyes?

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