

Andrea Thompson

Your Pain Has a Purpose

I am so excited to be spending time with you. I have my tea and bible in hand and I am ready to go... Thanks for inviting me into your day. We are going to embark on a journey together of understanding and confronting the realization that your pain actually has a purpose. Pain on some level will always be present in your life whether it's physical, emotional or spiritual. I would imagine by now I have earned a PhD in pain so I feel very qualified to be having this conversation with you.

-Were you aware that Research shows us that Americans consume 80% of the world's consumption of pain-killers. **THAT IS MORE THAN 110 TONS OF PAIN KILLING OPIATES A YEAR**

So when I say, if we are alive and breathing we will at some point in our lives have to confront pain one way or another... I would like to talk to you today about the other ways we can confront pain without having to desensitize ourselves; mind, body and spirit to pain. Being able to Change our thinking and the way we see pain can prove to actually have a positive purpose in our lives and help us to see it as an opportunity not for God to see how strong you are but for you to see how strong God has made you. After all, Christ lives in us... so When you can view pain like that then there isn't room to allow pain to be a devastating detour in your life.

I can't think of anyone better to talk about pain in the bible than James.

Let's open to the book of James 1:2-4 "Consider it a sheer gift, friends, when tests and challenges come at you from all sides. You know, that under pressure, your faith-life is forced into the open and shows its true colors. So don't try to get out of anything pre maturely. Let it do its work so you become mature and well-developed, not deficient in any way." (msg)

Another translation:

"the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let Perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete lacking in nothing. (niv)

When James says that perseverance will lead to completeness, he's referring to a fuller scope and understanding of life that only pain can teach you.

What is pain? According to Webster's Dictionary: Pain is A physical suffering associated with disease, injury or a bodily disorder. It can also mean mental distress. Some other words associated with pain are: suffering, agony, torture, torment, discomfort, irritation and aching. For me and for most people pain can be

something that happens acutely meaning suddenly or something that accumulates over time and will fester and manifest if not dealt with. And as I already told you with 80% of Americans alone popping pain killers as if they were candy. That tells me, our pain is not properly being dealt with for several reasons but one that comes to me instantly is that we don't see pain the way God sees pain. When we can look at pain from a perspective of the need for the more of God, love, family, and hope, we have the opportunity to lean in to Who God says He is and What God says He can do And in doing so we become healed and free. One of the greatest lies of the enemy is to keep everything locked up inside you so you can never fully be free.

In my experience, without pain it would be too easy to forget our need for God.

I am a Jesus Girl doing real life, which means I don't know how to do it any other way but real...

So, How does pain get there in the first place? I am not sure how it got there for you but for me... It began at a very young age... In my book Jesus Girl Doing Real Life I go into detail about my past and the pain I endured along the way, and how I overcame it. I encourage you to get it...I want to be honoring of your time today so I will go through a list of things in my life that I experienced first-hand... pain!

1. Uncle attempted to rape me at 12
2. Gang raped at 14
3. 100lb. overweight
4. Eating disorder
5. Forced into the sex industry for 10 years
6. Abandon by my father
7. 2 miscarriages before I was married
8. Divorced
9. Wanting to kill myself

All before the age of 35...

Oh and by the way a death sentence of cancer at the age of 42

All this pain accumulated and I stuffed it deep down...Which then turned into Bitterness, resentment, anger, self hatred (unloving spirit), others rejecting me, even worse was the rejection of my own self. I was desperate for love and attention. At some point in my life I became so messed up in my head that I actually embraced pain in a very dangerous way.

Now, I want you to understand all these painful experiences I endured were done before I had a real relationship with Jesus. Yes I knew Jesus, but knowing Jesus in my head and knowing Jesus in my heart were 2 very different things.

I thought if I stayed in a perpetual state of pain I would get the attention and love I so desired. This was the point in my life when everything began spiraling down into

horrible choices and compromises I was making in my life. I'm not saying to seek out pain for your life, don't worry it will find you one way or another. Pain also looks different for many but none the less, pain is pain. How we respond to pain will make all the difference in your life.

Don't miss this next statement; "Outlook determines outcome and attitude determines action."

So in my pre-relationship with Jesus days; I personally was not one to take pain killers in the form of pills, but I certainly had "pain killers!"

What were my pain killers and hey maybe some of mine are yours and you will be able to relate with me: men, attention, being sick and my twisted way of thinking was they would feel sorry for me and they would become my knight in shining armor, playing the victim, money, and material things. All were my so called, "pain-killers."

I was desperate for attention and I remember saying to myself, "I will do whatever it takes to get someone to notice me and love me. No matter what I tried to do, whether change my physical appearance, my personality, compromise my moral and values(what I had of them.)

Realized no matter how pathetic my pit was... nothing changed. Everything stayed the same, still was treated awful, they didn't change and the pain only got worse over the years...

Then I learned after quite some time that the ***"pain of staying the same is way more painful that the pain of change."*** Until we become so sick and tired of being sick and tired we will not make a change. Are you tired of being sick and tired?

There is no special formula of how we can choose to get out of our pity party: But I have found as I continue to listen to so many stories of women who finally had enough, there was a common denominator we all had; It was that pivotal point, that AHA moment when we choose not to be a victim of pain and to live in victory. For me it was when... ***The day I went to church with the ex-wife***

The night I chose to leave and never look back... no matter what! That was March 1, 2007 and you know what I have never looked back!

Jesus made me realize that the freedom from pain was worth more than holding onto all the hurtful things people said or did to me.. Worth more than any shame or guilt the enemy put on me, worth more than any horrible thing I could think or speak over my own self.

2 Corin. 12:8-9" Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, my power is made perfect in weakness."

In my teaching on Renewing the Mind I walk you through my journey of my deadly diagnosis of cancer and give you key steps in how to change your mindset... I highly recommend if you or someone you know is going through cancer download my new eBook on my victorious journey of beating the deadly disease in 90 days and also my teaching on Renewing your Mind. I guarantee I pleaded with God more than 3 times to take it out of my body... I know you know what I mean. You've been there, ask God over and over to take your situation or circumstance away.

I have come to know that God will answer you with one of two responses:

1. He will remove it
2. He will give you the grace and strength to walk through it. Even when **He** isn't even on **your** radar! Like me when I was being gang raped.

I know you are probably wondering how in the world did I get through that one! Not easily but I came out of it fully restored. And this is where I want to take you through a few of the things I have done to walk through my pain with grace and strength that God has given me. I have learned I can handle anything with God's help. When you and I rely on the sustaining grace of God during a painful time in our lives, whether right after it happens or years later when your heart is ready to heal.. You will demonstrate a spirit that is so sweet and catching to others as well.

Joyce Meyer says, "You can be pitiful or powerful but you can't be both."

So hear I go again getting real...

I spoke earlier about one of the biggest lies of the enemy was to keep everything hidden and locked up inside of you because then you will never be fully healed. Talking about the realities of our pain may be very difficult at times, for many different reasons. Let me just get to the point. When I was ganged rape, not that I am excusing what happened or even for a moment was that ok, but I also evaluated my actions that day. I was not where I told my parents I would be, I put myself in a very vulnerable situation, I should have never been there in the first place. But hindsight they tell me is 20/20. I was ashamed, I was scared, I didn't want to get into trouble from my dad because I was not where I told him I would be, and pretty much back then you just didn't say anything to anyone about bad things that happen to you especially sexual things!

So I stuffed it! I stuffed it good alright.

Pain when left un dealt with will eventually manifest and become even more painful. It's the way our bodies work to protect itself.

I wanted to share with you a few key things I have done over the years to take me from pitiful to powerful when it comes to overcoming pain...This is where we put our big girl pants on and go after it!

The first key to overcoming your pain is:

#1 - PURSUE HEALING:

When pain isn't dealt with and buried deep inside of you it can and most likely will manifest physically in your body. It will take on (morph) into things like: Bitterness, rejection, anger, resentment, self hating (like low self esteem, not feeling worthy enough, hating others, and the list goes on.

Let me ask you a question and I want you to write down the first thing that comes to you... How is your heart right now? Go ahead write down whatever is coming to you.

I want to talk about your heart for a moment. After all, the heart is the well spring of your life and the Lord wants you to guard it closely. I have come to know that when I am in pain of any kind, it's hard for me to stop and think about my heart. Well it used to until I began applying these very principles to my life.

Let's take a road trip to Psalm 73, beginning in v.21 ***Psalm 73:21 " For my heart was embittered and I was pierced within." Another translation says, "For my heart was in ferment, and I was pierced in my kidneys."***(institute for scripture research) That word embittered in the Hebrew is "chamets" which means to be sour or leavened. The word ferment means to "be in a state of agitation." When the heart is in a state of agitation, when it is in pain whether from past hurts, past or present sins, things we have done or things that others have done to us that have gone unforgiven, it will go so deep that it will affect the organs of your body. It will cause a disconnect in the very mechanisms in our bodies that bring about healing.

Like... The heart!

I've been saying this for a long time, Disease is spiritual and it begins in the heart! And will manifest physically if not dealt with. There are times when Jesus chooses to take the problem we are faced with immediately when we ask. And there are times that in His love and omniscience He will allow those things that ail us to remain as I stated earlier. Yes there are times for medical help, but he also wants us to have that automatic reflex in coming to him, depending on him, and acknowledging His ultimate power and ability.

The condition of our hearts is so vital. Do you realize that we are carrying the answers for this generation! We as followers of Jesus Christ carry Him in us, we carry His heart. If we can yield our hearts to Him, He has the power and love for us to change our hearts.

And part of changing the pain in your heart so it won't affect other organs of your physical body is what I was alluding to a bit ago...**Forgiveness**

And this is the next key point in overcoming pain...

#2 - FORGIVE IN THE PAIN

One of the things I did to heal from the pain of being ganged raped was – ***Forgive in the pain.***

Hebrews 12:15(Phillips) "Be careful that none of you fails to respond to the grace which God gives for if He doesn't there can very easily spring up in him a bitter spirit which is not only bad in itself but can also poison the lives of many others.

Maybe your pain isn't about getting gang raped, maybe it is divorce so putting this verse in perspective would be like instead of responding to your ex with grace, even when you don't like him or her or the way they live their life or whatever they did to you, and you began speaking so horribly about them to your children... oh wow! I'm stepping on some toes now... but that is what is meant by "***it can also poison the lives of many others.***" There are many examples but this seems to be one that happens a lot. I'm not pointing fingers... like I said earlier I went through an ugly divorce so no blaming here, but this is real life stuff and we need to confront it from the throne of Grace if we want to be free from pain and be a positive sweet light to the world!

When I travel and speak, I have the privilege of sharing my testimony of God's redemption in my life and I will say at some point in my testimony that I forgave the 6 guys that ganged raped me and I will say I forgive my father for abandoning me, and so on... well I had the opportunity to find out first hand if I really did. I don't ever want to tell people one thing and not be doing it myself.

I want to tell you a story of 2 particular houses:

So I was in LA last year and I decided to drive to the first house..... tell story of that and my dad, then I prayed over them I learned something so powerful from my Pastor Bill Johnson...and asked God to bless them

So I did... and then to my dad's... and I did. If I'm going to be completely honest with you, I at times need to go through these keys steps with my dad still when something triggers. You may need to do it over and over as well. Let me give you a piece of advice:

How do you do all this you ask: **AND THIS IS THE LAST KEY I WANTED TO SHARE WITH YOU...**

#3 - HUMBLE YOURSELF:

Humble yourself before the Lord and you tell Him "Jesus I can't do this on my own and I need your help." You may feel like you need to do that right now so you can just get through this teaching... so let's invite Jesus right now to come and help....

The question now is... What is your choice of pain killers? Again, for me it wasn't actually pain meds, maybe it is for you, or maybe like me it's men, or maybe for you it's drugs, alcohol, attention, social media (having to live vicariously through other people's happiness or made up happiness just to cope and escape? Whatever it is...

Jesus wants to meet you right now wherever you are at in this process of pain. Even if it has turned into bitterness, anger or resentment He wants to help you through this and He wants to impart His Love and Grace to you.

Religion separates God from the pain. God wants to show you something- the purpose of him showing you something is so that you can see that he is right there with you to walk this thing called pain out into victory. So you don't have to spend the rest of your life a victim and defeated..

Repeat- I recognize God you are with me right now. You are not judging. And I don't need _____ to get me through another moment. All I need is you!

I want to leave you with this scripture from James, it's where we began our conversation together and it's where we will leave off until we meet again...

James 1:12- Anyone who meets a testing challenge head on and manages to stick it out is mighty fortunate. For such persons loyally in love with God, the reward is life and more life." I have been blessed beyond measure to have walked out every incident of pain in my life with purpose and freedom! I pray the same for you...

"Resiliency is born from your discovery of strength within yourself to overcome."

Andrea Thompson

How To Renew Your Mind

I am so excited to be getting together. I have my tea and bible in hand and I am ready to go... Thanks for inviting me to spend this time with you. Today we are going to embark on a journey of renewing our mind with practical steps in how your beliefs and behaviors will align with God's Truth... Do you have your bible out and ready?

Turn with me to Romans 12 but before we dive in to the word I am reminded of a fascinating story....

In my 47 years of life I have come to understand that What we believe helps to determine how we behave. My beliefs and my behavior though they have matched up I can honestly say... had caused a distorted way of thinking for me up until about 10 years ago.

Romans 12:2(amp)- "And do not conform to this world(any longer with its superficial values and customs), but be transformed and progressively changed (as you mature spiritually) by the renewing of your mind (focusing on godly values and ethical attitudes), so that you may prove (for yourselves) what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect (in His plan and purpose for you).

Romans 12:1 (msg) " So here's what I want you to do, God helping you; Take your everyday, ordinary life -your sleeping, eating, going to work, and walking around life and place it before God as an offering.

In order for us to go from being a victim to being victorious in all areas of living, we need to take everything we do in life from the time we go to bed at night until the time we wake up in the morning and bring it to the Lord. By doing this we begin the process of "Renewing our minds." It's not a one time thing, it's continual. Hints the verb being used in Romans 12:2 "transformed by the renewing of your mind."

Josh. 1:5 " No man will be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you."
Josh. 3:10 "Joshua said, By this you shall know that the living God is among you, and that He will assuredly dispossess from before you the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Hivite, the Perezite, the Girgashite, the Amorite and the Jebusite.

I want you to know that God will remove every obstacle, every stronghold, every toxic thought, word, person, place or thing- in order for you to enter your promised land by the continual renewing of your mind.

The awareness of God's presence energizes us for our work... So before we dive in Let's pray - Holy Spirit come...

People like the idea of renewing their mind, But most people don't want to take the necessary steps and fight for the "continual renewing" "***The world will conform you but the Word of God will transform you.***"

On our journey today I am going to lay out 5 steps for you on how to continually renew your mind, so that you will be equipped in the day of battle. (?) It's important to understand that even when we set out to purposely position ourselves in a posture to receive God's renewing, which by the way is key to experiencing new life in Christ, it doesn't necessarily happen overnight. For me, I have positioned myself purposely for God to do an over hall in my thinking in order to be and do all that He has called me to...but it has been continuous and is still continuing and won't stop this side of heaven unless I choose to step out of His presence and into the way of the world's system of conformed thinking.

Take your skin for instance, it is the largest organ on your body. Our skin tells us a plethora of information of what is happening on the inside of us. We apply a lot of topical ointments, medications, etc to clear up any irritation and inflammation going on. During this specific journey that I have been over the past 10 years I have learned so much about looking inward to heal in order for the external to be healed. Same thing with renewing our minds. When you read, meditate upon and then apply God's Word into your daily life, you are being changed from the inside out.

I have also noticed that when you and I begin to reflect the very nature of God's character, others will be able to taste and see that the Lord is good through you and that you will have significant impact on those you will meet along your journey.

So the key in renewing your mind, changing your mindset and having the mindset of a champion is to take ownership and responsibility for your actions, words, thoughts, habits and behaviors. I like to tell people that it's not a wagon you fall off, it's that something triggers you and you wind up reverting back to old ways, habits and behaviors. It's familiar and in some way comforting sometimes a false sense of comfort.

But, what if we became so familiar with God and His truth, that not only does it become familiar and comforting but more importantly...FREEING!

I didn't realize how key this was until Aug. 1, 2012 when I was blind-sided by a deadly diagnosis of cancer.

(tell brief story of cancer diagnosis) THE MORNING OF AUG. 1.. MY FIRST 2 THOUGHTS I HAD WERE... I WAS SCARED... SCARED TO DEATH. I WAS IN THE FIGHT FOR MY LIFE. AND I KNEW THAT MY MIND NEEDED TO BE SO CLEAR AND EMPTIED OF MY THINKING AND THE WORLDS THINKING SO THAT I COULD FILL MY MIND WITH THE WISDOM OF GOD.

This scripture came at the perfect time for me because I remember I was getting ready to head over to my dr. office to discuss my options...

Joshua 1:11, 12b “ Prepare provisions for yourself, for within 3 days you are to cross this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the Lord your God is giving you, to possess it.

So I want to encourage you to take possession not just of your things but take possession of your mindset! In other words take accountability and responsibility. It is so easy to blame everything that happens in our lives on somebody or something other than ourselves.

I came to understand that taking accountability and responsibility for our actions, words, decisions we make, our short comings, weaknesses, etc... even taking accountability over the cancer that was wreaking havoc in my body, let me tell you...cancer didn't make me sick, I was already sick for years before it showed up. it was a culmination of many things including the things that happened to me in the past, which I talk about in my first teaching on how Your Pain Has a purpose and how to live from victory and not from a place of victim. I am not sure if anybody played the part of victim better than me but I'm pretty sure I would have won the academy award for that!

I encourage you to get that teaching if you haven't and listen to it. So not only from what others did to me, what I spoke over myself, the foods I was eating, the environment I was in mentally and physically, all these things which wreaked havoc in my body and mind. When I was able to get a grip on my mind, and by the way it was not about taking on blame and shame.

But when I was able to grab onto to God's truth that said in the Josh. 1 v. 13 – “ ***The Lord your God gives you rest and will give you this land.***” I knew as I grabbed a hold of myself(my provisions) took accountability... God would give me rest for my body and give me health and healing to the land... (my spirit, physical body and my soul (our mind, will and emotions.)

So as we dive into specific steps to move you from Point A to Point B – I want you to embrace a healthy perspective of Taking accountability and responsibility for your mind and allow God to begin transforming you from the inside out.

These next few steps I am going to share with you have gotten me through some of the most difficult life situations, from wanting to commit suicide, getting me through

a divorce, abuse, abandonment from my father, being a 100lbs. overweight, to an eating disorder, to having absolutely no self esteem feeling so uncomfortable in my own skin, miscarriages, forced into the sex industry for 10 years of my life, and to fighting and beating cancer naturally... Seriously... you need to download my last message on pain!

Hey let's stop for a second. Let's go back to how uncomfortable I was in my skin and the lack of self esteem I had because there are so many of us that have or still are believing the lie that you are ugly, fat, unlovable, not good enough, you want to look like someone else and you feel it's about being a certain size... For years I suffered from this until one day about 5 years ago shortly after my diagnosis with cancer... I was feeling this way and a friend of mine literally walked me through... He had me stand in front of a mirror...

"It's one thing to show up for duty and quite something else to go to battle... So are you ready...let's step forward together to the front line..."

Step 1- To Renewing your Mind:

Grab your bible and if you don't have one get one! You can even download the bible app right to your phone and Pull out every scripture you can find for the season you are in. In my first book Jesus Girl Doing Real Life, I outline key points to victory. The first is Daily Walking with God! Remember it's the Word of God that changes, shapes and renews your mind. So for example: when I was battling cancer and the dr. told me I had a year to live, I went home and pulled out every scripture I could find on healing. Not once did the Lord say "Andrea you are going to die." Everything I pulled out of His Word was... you will live and not die, "I have healed you from all diseases, "by my stripes you were healed, "I am the God who heals." And on and on. I also noticed that every person who asked Jesus to heal them... He did! ... Aren't you so thankful God's expiration date for you is not of this world! ***Step 1- Pull out every promising scripture you can find for the season you are in.*** Maybe your situation is not regarding physical health. Maybe it's finances, relationships, your marriage, your job, anxiety, depression, an addiction, whatever it is... Get in His word!

Step 2- To renewing your mind:

Begin declaring those scriptures over yourself. Whether you "***feel***" like it or not! By the way... renewing your mind isn't a matter of waiting until you feel like doing it... by the time you feel like it, "stinkin-thinkin" has set in with thoughts that are toxic to your health and healing. So, When you begin declaring God's words over your life your mind shifts into agreement with God's Kingdom v. the worlds kingdom. Declarations empower the way you live, think, make decisions, see things and then respond to them. Steve Backlund said, "Nothing happens in the Kingdom unless a declaration is made." So my question to you is; "What are you speaking over yourself? What are you declaring? What kingdom are your words partnering with? You have a choice to declare life or death. About 3 weeks after my diagnosis I was in

my bathroom and the Lord took me back to the time I first began declaring death over myself...Got on my knees, He said Baby girl we are going to break that off and not partner with that lie anymore. So maybe right now some lie that you have been believing is bubbling to the service.. It's time to break that off... So repeat after me, I know longer partner with the lie of _____ you fill in the blank Instead I partner with God's truth! I partner with his peace, His healing, His love, and who He says I am.

Devotions and Declarations will set the Direction for your life.

If you aren't sure where to begin, Ask God! Ask Him for His perspective on what you should be declaring. He says, If you seek him with all your heart you will find him. Seek His wisdom. ALSO, you can Partner with other people who may be going through similar situations and make declarations over each other. ***A RAINDROP IS A VERY FRAGILE THING, BUT WHEN YOU PUT ENOUGH OF THEM TOGETHER YOU CAN DEFEAT AN ARMY.***

Every scripture I found on healing I wrote down in a notebook, on sticky pads, you name it and I posted them everywhere so that I would constantly be reminding and renewing my mind of the Truth. Facts are one thing but God's truth overrides every earthly fact.

Matthew 4:4 "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. In other words, We cannot just think our way out of things, we must speak our way out of our situation and or circumstance. In my case of my Dr. who was my Dr. for over 20 yrs. By the way and wasn't purposely trying to speak death over me, but none the less who was making a deadly declaration over my life with only giving me 1 year to live... I needed to come into agreement with the Kingdom of Life and speak it out loud over myself. I said in my first teaching on Pain... that one of the biggest lies of the enemy was to keep everything locked up inside so that you can never fully be free.

Let's pause for a moment and practice declaring God's truth over yourself, repeat after me... "From this day forth the best days of my life are ahead of me!"

Also, when I am declaring scripture I insert my name to make it personal. The Word is alive and active so if it was for Abraham it is still for you today and just as powerful. Supplements and medications will have expiration dates to let you know they lose their potency... Not God's Word it's just as powerful! For example,... the scripture: "No weapon formed against you will prosper." I will say, "***Andrea, no weapon formed against you will prosper!***" ***We have a personal relationship with our God... make it very personal!***

I truly believe our faith grows as we declare God's word and allow it to renew our mind. After all, God created the world by declaring it, speaking it into being! Words are quite powerful!

So step 1 was pulling out scripture for the season you are in, Step 2 was to make declarations with those scriptures, write them down, speak them out loud and make them personal by putting your name in those declaration, and get together with others and make declarations over each other. Now on to step 3- which may be one of the most challenging steps yet...

Step 3- To Renewing your Mind:

YOU NEED TO ACCEPT THE PROCESS AND ACCEPT WHERE YOU ARE IN THE PROCESS.

A good formula to keep in mind is this: You hear the Promise- Go through the Process and then you get the promotion. So Promise+Process=Promotion

They call this generation among many things: the “Microwave Generation- We want everything now! After spending much time speaking across the country I have come to ***realize we live in society where we have become tolerant instead of resilient! But as you and I embark on this journey together... we will begin to change that...***

As I stated earlier... People like the idea of renewing their mind but people don't want to take the necessary steps and fight for it!

Don't get me wrong... when I found out I had cancer, I prayed like you would not believe that God would remove and uproot that cancer out of my body. I didn't want to have to deal with it. I just wanted it gone. Don't misunderstand me, I know He could have done that in a millisecond. I also know that because I had to walk out a process of my healing, he wasn't placing judgment and punishment on me either. But through his divine process, I gained such wisdom, knowledge and allowed the measure of faith he deposited inside me to come forth and be used for His glory and now for so many people, I get the honor of ministering to them on the truth about what cancer really is.

I don't fear faith... for faith is the victory! It takes great faith to walk through the process without cutting corners.

This reminds me of the story of David and Saul when David had the opportunity to kill Saul but David never crossed that line. He would always say it wasn't his right or authority to kill what God anointed! Turn with me to ***1 Sam. 24, Here David spares Saul's life.*** Let's read v. 4 and 5

“ The men of David said to him, Behold this is the day of which the Lord said to you, Behold I am about to give your enemy into your hand and you shall do to him as it seems good to you.” Then David arose and cut off the edge of Saul's robe secretly.

V. 5- It came about afterward that David's conscience bothered him because he had cut off the edge of Saul's robe.

There is something to be said about the process... I remember the night I was by myself in the bedroom after receiving the news "I had cancer" I remember getting down on my knees just crying... I mean ugly cry! And I said Lord, why would you get me through all the things of my past to get to this point and have cancer kill me? I yelled out to Him... "Why me and why now!" And then I heard this... ***"Why not you, and why not now!"***

I knew right then this was way bigger than me...

There is something to be said about honoring the process. What if David was so unsettled about cutting the corner of Saul's robe because in his spirit he heard God whisper to him... I wanted to give you the entire robe...not just a corner! (Before I Got into full time ministry I practiced in Physical Therapy) mission field, to speaking to 2000 people.

Maybe for you it's trying to figure out how to pay off a bill or a debt but maybe God wants to take you through a process and want to bless you abundantly in your finances but you aren't seeing what He sees, or maybe you are trying to fix a relational issue but God wants to give you a whole new paradigm on relationships. When we can take our eyes off what we see in the natural and put our eyes on him and allow Him to help us see the way he see's. Our mindset changes, and Kingdom thinking a bigger way of thinking, renewing our mind to have the mind of Christ sets in. (Ya I wanted an instant miracle with cancer but I got something greater, not only was I healed from cancer but I went through a process that gave me the wisdom to now teach others what cancer is and it doesn't have to kill you, that is Kingdom thinking...)This renewing of your mind, however long, hard and painful the process... It's got to be ***God's Will, God's Way!***

Hebrews 13:21(amp) He will equip you with every good thing to carry out His will and strengthen you(making you complete and perfect as you ought to be), accomplishing in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen

I believe this would be a good time to practice another declaration over yourself. Repeat after me. ***"I will not become something I am not on the road of process to my promise."***

Step 3- honor the process, don't cut corners, allow God to bless you with the entire promotion he promised you. A renewed mind sees it from His perspective... God's Will, God's Way.

Step 4- To Renewing Your Mind:

Eph. 4:29 “ Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that is may give grace to those who hear.”

Give yourself grace! This can definitely be challenging at times when we can be the hardest on our own selves. Can I get an Amen! As hard as it may be sometimes to impart grace on others it can be that much harder to give our own selves the grace we need to get through some of the most challenging circumstances of life. Grace... freely given. The unmerited favor and love of God. It's the influence of the spirit of God operating in humans to regenerate, renew and strengthen us.

I heard it said; “Grace is the empowerment to do God’s will.” Not only do we have the opportunity to impart grace to others, but we also have the ability to speak grace over our own lives. How do you do this... believe it or not...by changing your heart!

Remember when I talked about there being no wagon you fall off of but that we revert back to old habits and behaviors? When you and I confess with our mouths; “Jesus is Lord and we make him our Savior of our lives something so amazing and spectacular happens... we become changed from the inside out. Our thoughts, actions and words become empowered with Christ’s grace and love. I learned through my journey of cancer that disease is spiritual and begins in the heart. When I allowed the Lord to have my heart, I mean all my heart, every chamber of my heart... He did something that only He could do. He taught me to give my heart grace.

I can remember early on in my cancer diagnosis when I made the decision to fight it naturally without chemo or radiation I began working with a wonderful woman who was a Naturopathic Doctor. One day I went in for my check up and I thought I was doing everything right. I tell ya, learning a whole new system of taking care of myself was no easy task. Simple but not always easy. Kind of like learning to walk all over again... and this one day, half of the things I had been doing were not exactly correct. Well I allowed my appetite for previous old behaviors and thought to get the best of me and I unloaded! I was fed up! Had it! I was so confused, not sure what I was doing, frustrated with myself... you know what I mean? You really just want to give up? Ever been there? Like, how many diets have you been on? How many have you started on Monday and stopped by Tuesday at dinner time? Or you are addicted to something? And yesterday was your last day? Or you have spent 20 of your 24 hours living vicariously through others on FB and comparing yourself to them constantly? And you say I am going to fast from it? And well as you are listening to me you are going back and forth from me to social media? Do you get my drift???

Look at Proverbs 4:beginning in verse 20...” ***My son (Andrea) this is where you insert your name. remember step 2! , give attention to my words: incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your sight; Keep them in the midst of your heart. For they are life to those who find them and Health to all***

their body." Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it flow the springs of life." (v.23)

v.24- " put away from you a deceitful mouth. And put devious speech far from you."

When you get it in your heart, you will renew your mind!

So how do you change your heart to renew your mind? First of all go back to v. 23
"Watch over your heart with all diligence for from it flow the springs of life.

The heart is the pathway to all renewing health and healing. Mind, Body, and Spirit.

And the way you change your heart is by speaking the truth, listening to the truth and holding onto the truth. The remedy so to speak is to make sure your heart is full of blessing. So fill your heart with the love of Christ so that only truth and purity can come out of your mouth. And if you allow the appetite of the old behaviors to creep in, give your heart grace. I don't believe there is a limit on how much grace we can receive for ourselves.

God will never take you where His grace will not sustain you!

So how did my Dr. that day handle the situation? The same way I am about to do with you... I was so confused on what I was suppose to be doing. Ever feel like that? Maybe you feel like that now.

Stop what you are doing. First thing first... God is not a God of confusion. This is what my Dr. told me too! Then we stopped talking about my protocol and we immediately went into prayer.

STEP 5- TO RENEWING YOUR MIND...

PRAYER!

PRAYER CHANGES EVERYTHING! I Know I have saved prayer for last but prayer should always be your first response not your last.

Letting God's Will be done His Way requires you to draw upon Him. It means stopping what you are doing, thinking and saying. I will literally lay myself on the floor flat on my face. Or if I am sitting in my dr.'s office it's dropping my head low in surrender. It's about getting into a position to receive from Him... His truth, His promises, His strength, His wisdom, His grace, His love. I was never strong enough to make it through anything I endured in my life until I partnered with Jesus and allowed Him access to my heart in order for my mind to be renewed and aligned with His thinking.

Prayer for me is a culmination of some the steps I just outlined for you. I will grab my bible, I will grab my notecards, I will make declarations out loud, I will allow Jesus to enter into my heart, I will allow His grace and love to wash over me and I will stay there until something shifts. There is no magic time frame. I will put on worship music and begin to allow the atmosphere in me change so that my environment around me will begin to respond to what is happening inside of me...

I have learned from a dear friend in my recent weeks and months the power of taking communion. You don't have to wait until they do this at church. I try and do communion everyday! Not because it has become legalistic or religious but because I'm constantly in process of God's Will, God's Way! There is so much power in the blood of Jesus. I encourage you to partake in communion as often as you can.

There isn't a set script on prayer and you don't have to wait until you have your bible, or your note cards, or the communion elements. If something arises out of nowhere and I can feel the old way of doing things want to ride to the surface... I will call upon the Lord right there, right then!!! Sometimes it's as simple as Calling out the name JESUS! OVER AND OVER AGAIN! And there He is! He is as close as your breath! I just wanted to share with you the steps I have taken in my journey to renewing my mind that have worked in my life when I was faced with some pretty life altering circumstances. They work! And I am honored to spend this time with you sharing from my heart, real life. And the steps I have taken to Renew My Mind and gain control of my thoughts, my words, my life and begin the process of seeing things the way God sees them. I pray that this will be an encouragement and a useful tool for you as you journey through your process shifting your mindset from a defeated one to That of a champion.

Let's end this time praying together. Father God, thank you for who you are! Thank you that you continually do what only you can do, thank you that we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us and that your word is alive and sharper than any two-edged sword. I thank you that you have already begun the process of renewing and shifting mindsets to that of a champion and victor. May you continue to bless us beyond measure and give us eyes, hearts and minds to see the way you see, think and know. In Jesus Mighty name... Amen!