

“HE HAS NO HOLD ON ME’ . . . REMOVING THE ‘HOOKS’ THAT KEEP US BOUND”

During Jesus’ final discourse with His disciples leading up to His death, He shared that the “prince of this world is coming;” however, He also shared that “he has no hold on me” (paraphrased from John 14:31). Another translation states it this way . . . “He has found nothing in me.” Another way of saying this would be that Jesus, through His sinless state, had no “hooks” by which the enemy could affect His will or bring Him into bondage. Even in His death, Jesus laid down His life in obedience to the Father. It was not “taken from Him” by any work of the enemy.

ONE GOAL OF COUNSELING IS TO IDENTIFY AND REMOVE THE “HOOKS”

Unfortunately, we **do** have “hooks” or places where the enemy can and does affect us, resulting in a multitude of issues. In counseling, we often share that one of our main goals is to help the counselee, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, identify these “hooks” and then “partner” with the Father to remove them. It is our goal personally, and those that we counsel, to be able to say, “although the enemy may come (and he surely will), he can find nothing in me” (the “hooks” are gone). Unfortunately, we will never be totally “hook-free” in this life; however, many of these can indeed be removed.

WHAT ARE THESE HOOKS AND HOW DO THEY GET THERE?

When we refer to these “hooks,” we’re referring to places in our soul or spirit where sin has had its effect. It may involve places where we’ve been wounded or “sinned against” as well as our own sinful response to such actions. In either case, these wounds create a place for lies to form—beliefs about ourselves, God, or others that are not in agreement with God—and any time we agree with the “father of lies” instead of the “Father of lights” (Jas. 1:17), a potential “hook” is established. It is in these places where the enemy can bring torment and interfere greatly with our relationship with God and others. Let us share an example. If a child grows up in a home where the father is either physically or emotionally absent, this child will not receive the affection, healthy touch, sense of belonging, guidance and other critical needs that God established for that father to instill in that child. The child will likely reach a conclusion from these omissions—“something must be wrong with me or my daddy would want to be with me, hold me, talk with me . . .” The child “feels” this rejection and/or abandonment and begins to believe a lie about him or herself and a root of destructive shame begins to develop. As this child continues to grow and progresses to adolescence, teenage years, and into adulthood, this “core lie” (“something is inherently wrong with me”) remains and solidifies. Often the “circumstances of life” can contribute to reinforce this lie. Our responses to this core of shame can be varied, as one person might find him or herself seeking to perform and excel, while another person might be just the opposite—struggling to move forward with a significant focus or purpose. An issue common to both is an inability to live from a place of peace and contentment and thus to be able to rest in God the Father’s love. Because of the root of shame and the inability to “love what God loves” (ourselves), this person cannot truly love others from the heart. As a result, any close relationship (especially in marriage) will suffer from this lack of intimacy, and frequently an increase in conflict will occur. However, the “cry to receive and give love” that the Father placed in each one of us will continue to exist. When this need

is not met, other issues may surface, which might include anger, sadness or depression, fears and anxiety, and addictions (i.e., sex, food, alcohol, work, religion, etc.).

NOW THAT I REALIZE I HAVE THESE HOOKS, WHAT DO I DO ABOUT IT?

The first step in any healing process is to come to an awareness that a problem exists and that, without external help, you cannot overcome that problem. It starts with simply acknowledging to God the Father that you "are weak and in need of His help" (2 Cor. 12:9). You may also need the help of a counselor and/or trustworthy friend to assist in this journey of "Godly brokenness." Although it is beyond the scope of this writing to explore the various approaches to deal with potential issues at hand, when the symptoms and struggles indicate that "hooks" are present, it is important to ask the Father for greater insight into the roots of such problems. Since most of these issues started as children, ask Him to "take you deeper" and allow Him to share with you when and how these "holes in your soul" originated. As He reveals these places, invite Him to come in to those wounds and to bring His healing presence and His truth to confront the lies that exist. Realize that as this occurs, you will experience a certain amount of pain and grief due to the losses that have resulted from these wounds. The process will also involve a dismantling of the many "defense mechanisms" that you've used to protect yourself from this pain, and it will ultimately include extending forgiveness to those who have hurt you and receiving forgiveness from the Father (and others) for your own responses to these hurts. The ultimate goal will be to finally live from the place of **experiencing** the love of God the Father and, in turn, giving it back to Him and to others! (Lk. 10:27)

PRAYER

Father, show me the "hooks" or issues in my heart that are hurting my relationship with You and with others. I want to live from a place of peace and rest in who You've made me to be and how You see me. I want to live from a place of freedom and to know and experience Your love for me. And I want to, in turn, love You and others as I love myself . . . the way You love me. Lord, I cannot resolve these "hooks" or issues on my own. I need Your help. I AM in need and I run to Your Throne of Grace to find You . . . to find Your mercy. Father, as You reveal these wounded parts of my heart, I invite You to come in and bring healing to those places. I long for Your "Good News" to reach every part of my heart . . . ultimately for Your glory and Your Kingdom. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

From the Father's Heart,

Jerry and Denise Basel