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FearlessAndFreeCommunity.com

PODCAST EPISODE 49
Unmasking Spiritual Abuse and Cult Communities—Part 2
Restoring Relationship with God and Community

PRAYER EXERCISE

Make this a time of prayer and reflection. Remove distractions. Begin an authentic conversation with Jesus. Consider writing down thoughts as they come to you.

Thank you, Jesus, that You are here with me. I ask You to reveal truth to my heart and guide me in this time of prayer and reflection.

- 1. Experiencing abuse through a religious community, or religious person, is a deeply painful wound, and one that requires healing. It is important to make time for that healing to occur. It is best to have someone you trust to process your heart with. Together, pray and process by asking the Lord to help you connect with your own heart and identify:**
 - a. What was done?
 - b. Who was a part of it?
 - c. Call sin *sin*.
 - d. Recognize your own emotions. How did you see yourself in that time?
 - e. Invite Jesus into the painful memory. Ask Him how He sees you. Ask Him how He sees the situation.
 - f. Remember that forgiveness is not based on another asking us for it, but for our own benefit to be set free and receive healing from God. Who do you blame? Who do you need to forgive? Yourself? God? Others?
 - g. In prayer, forgive the person or persons, including yourself, from holding the offense against them. Be as specific as you can about what you are forgiving. This forgiveness releases the offenders and the offense to God. Let Him be the Judge. This will release you from becoming imprisoned by the offense. [If you struggle with the issue of forgiveness, listen to podcast episodes 23—27, “Forgiving the Unforgivable.”]

For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God...So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God. Romans 14:10-12

- 2. God is not an abuser. He never tells anyone to abuse, nor does He condone it. Anyone who uses the name of God to abuse others is not a true follower of Christ. That person is like an identity thief: they have taken God’s name and resources and misused them for their own advantage, harming others.**

- a. Make time to heal.
- b. Spend time in the Bible reading for yourself the characteristics of God. (There is usually a list of characteristics of God in the back of your Bible). The best way to know who God truly is and what His voice sounds like is by His Word, where He describes Himself.
- c. Find ways to connect with God that are meaningful to you (ie. worship music, nature, walks, rivers, ponds, in the shower, dancing, drawing, writing, singing, exercising...)
- d. Be honest with God about how you feel about Him.
- e. Start fresh in your relationship with God.
- f. Invite Him to know your heart and seek to know His. He always answers this prayer!
Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Matthew 7: 7-8

3. All cult activity and spiritual abuse is fueled by the enemy of God: Satan and his demons. Don't believe the lies that all pastors or all churches are bad, or that you are not meant to be part of the community of God. The enemy wants you to be isolated and cut off from true fellowship with the Spirit of God.

- a. *Pray to ask the Lord to heal your heart, where those lies have felt true.*
- b. *Pray to ask the Lord to restore what the enemy stole through abuse (restore hope, trust, peace, sense of security, sense of identity, ...)*
- c. When you are ready, pray to ask the Lord to direct you to the Christian community He has for you.
- d. Seek safe community through healthy churches that:
 - i. Love God and love people.
 - ii. Value the Bible and teach from it.
 - iii. Are humble.
 - iv. Acknowledge their dependence on Jesus as Lord.
 - v. Are surrendered to and led by the Spirit of God.
 - vi. Make prayer a priority.
 - vii. Prioritize building members' personal relationship with Jesus over building platforms.
 - viii. Model God's heart for the lost and broken-hearted.

We are wounded in relationships, but we are also healed through relationships. We are designed for community and receive life through one another. Others have been through things that can help you. And you have been through things that can help others.

For more on freedom from spiritual abuse, go to www.teachingfellowshipinsitute.org
Courses on detoxing from religion, healing from trauma, and more.

**If you have yet to call on Jesus as your Lord and Savior,
find a biblical explanation of the vital need and a prayer guide at
FearlessAndFreeCommunity.com/Saving-Faith**