

Lesson 6A – Living As an Orphan and Not a Son

The Orphan Heart

Because none of us had perfect parents, we all get wounded and hurt growing up, some more so than others. As a child, it is difficult to know what to do with the hurts, and therefore, most of us just stuff them inside, eventually forgetting that they are still there. If the wounds and rejection become too great, *we choose to withdraw from the relationship with our father and/or mother* becoming an orphan in our own home. Some physically run away and hide, but most of us just hide within ourselves, keeping our distance and doing whatever we can to avoid any more pain.

As we withdraw from our earthly father and close our heart, we are unable to experience an intimate relationship with our heavenly Father either.

Steps towards an Orphan Heart

- ❖ We begin to respond with hidden resentment that becomes bitterness towards our parent that wounded us.
- ❖ We then lose trust for the parent and no longer feel secure enough to share our real feelings of pain and rejection.
- ❖ We close our spirit to the parent and cut off any meaningful communication.
- ❖ Not feeling valued or loved, we turn to disobedience. If the parent responds in anger, we feel more worthless and a failure.
- ❖ This will often lead to rebellion. (**Col. 3:21, Eph. 6:4**) “I will reject you before you reject me.”

Three Common Roles Orphans May Assume

- ❖ **The Victim** - The pain leads to feelings of loneliness, self-pity, despair, depression, or life without hope. May form death wishes; be void of emotions or feelings, empty with no motivation for life, or turn to alcoholism, drug addiction, and chronic depression.
- ❖ **The Persecutor** – Person fights against the wounding. May have feelings of deep bitterness, then hatred and rebellion against everyone and everything. These are the people who become abusers, fighters, hyper-perfectionists, workaholics, troublemakers, activists, and inflexible.
- ❖ **The Rescuer** – Wounding creates a deep inner agony, so they begin to struggle against the wound or become indifferent to the hurt and take on a superficial happiness. They find recognition in being in the spotlight and may become talkative, aggressive, loud, and charismatic and enjoy the praises of men. They want to help everyone with their pain, not out of a heart of compassion, but because it makes them feel good about themselves.

Our orphan heart affects every area of our lives: our attitudes, our personality, our relationships, and how we respond to life.

Some common personality types of the orphan:

- ❖ **The Fighter** – Becomes rebellious and defiant toward everyone and everything. Usually very independent. Often become workaholics in order to prove their self-worth and identity
- ❖ **The People Pleaser** – Finds their identity in conforming to the group. Have no sense of their own identity so they follow whatever others say or think. They are the perfect Christians at church, but with non-Christians they follow the crowd’s ideas. Cannot receive criticism.

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- ❖ **The Timid** – Have a fear of man, failure, and rejection. Can't make their own decisions.
- ❖ **The Showoff** – Gets their emotional needs met by drawing as much attention to themselves as possible. Becomes very talkative, name-droppers, exaggerate their accomplishments in work, sports, or family, and steer conversations towards themselves.
- ❖ **The Isolationist** – Forms walls of self-protection. Lack faith in God to meet their needs. Cut themselves off to everyone that they think is a threat to them. May become very possessive.
- ❖ **The Moralist** – Becomes “God’s policemen.” Sees the faults in everyone else and knows how to fix them. They have an answer to every problem. Very opinionated. Lives by the letter of the law, but are empty of love. Their rightness justifies any wrong attitude.

Living Less Loved

From *He Loves Me*, Wayne Jacobson

- ❖ ***Most Christians live their lives wondering whether Father really loves them or not.***
- ❖ ***Religious traditions tell us that we have to earn Father's love and that Father has a "favor line."*** If you work hard and do everything right (no sin, read the Word, pray, fast, witness, forgive, etc.), then we are on the good side of the favor line and we will be blessed and our prayers answered. Do good, get good. Do bad, get bad! Performance is everything!
- ❖ We allow our feelings and circumstances to determine whether Father loves us. Something good happens; He loves me! Something bad happens; He loves me not!
- ❖ We may basically believe that He loves us, but when tragedies hit like a loved one dies, a car accident, or the house burns down, we question, "Why did God let this happen?"
- ❖ Some wonder if Father loves them because of what they did or what happened to them. "Oh holy God; Oh sinful me!"
- ❖ Still others question how Father could be so loving because of His judgments and wrath against the Israelites and their enemies.
- ❖ Our fears of hell and His judgments compel us to try and please Him through our service and works. Everything we do becomes an "I have to." instead of "I want to." We use human effort to win His favor and blessing.
- ❖ **We begin to live our lives like we are less loved.**
 - We continually give in to sin or become trapped in addictions.
 - We give in to fear, worry, doubt, anxiety, or insecurities.
 - We take things into our own hands because we can't trust Father to do it or meet our needs
 - We try to earn Father's love through our good deeds, acts of service, or religious activities. We act like servants or slaves in Father's house.
 - **We have a poverty mentality** – "I can't afford it." "We'll never have enough for that." "We need to save for a rainy day." We buy the cheap stuff that falls apart. We save everything, even if you don't need it. Duck tape becomes the way to fix everything. We use the right side of the menu to determine what we order at a restaurant.
- ❖ We try to get all of our love needs met by other people. In marriage we say, "I'm going to give you the opportunity of a lifetime. You are going to spend the rest of your life meeting all of my love needs!"
- ❖ We look to man to fill our desire for significance, identity, and destiny.
- ❖ We have a hard time forgiving ourselves and others. We live in shame, guilt, and self-hatred.
- ❖ We are never secure in His love, and therefore, cannot open our hearts to love others.
- ❖ We don't feel comfortable with love.

We need to start living **MORE LOVED!**

- ❖ Father's love is continually flowing towards us, but we must choose to stay in the flow.
- ❖ We must see Calvary as His greatest act of love towards us. **John 3:16, 1 John 3:16**
- ❖ **We need to live as loved as we have always been loved by Father.** We must move from just knowing it in our head to experiencing it in our hearts.
- ❖ As we know His love for us, we can begin to love ourselves and walk in the reality of being His sons and daughters.
- ❖ We need to pray the prayer in **Ephesians 3:17-19** "...to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge..."
- ❖ "God's love for us is too large to fathom – but it's an incredible adventure to try. It is deep enough to cover everything, high enough to conquer everything, wide enough to encompass everything, and long enough to last forever." Graham Cooke *God Revealed*
- ❖ Intimacy with Father is not optional! We must spend time with Him every day in prayer, worship, praise, and study of His Word.
- ❖ We need to see ourselves completely hidden with Him, safe from the devil. (Satan is walking around seeking someone to devour!)
- ❖ Father wants to do everything with us and be involved in every area of our life.
- ❖ We need to have a face-to-face relationship with Father and allow Him to meet our needs.

The Imposter *Abba's Child Brenam Manning*

- ❖ When we don't feel good about ourselves, don't feel loved, or fear rejection, we start wearing masks and costumes, and we start trying out different characters to see which one people will like or a character type that we hope will help avoid rejection.
- ❖ The imposter becomes our identity and after awhile we begin to believe that the imposter is who we really are. We invite the imposter to live our life for us.
- ❖ We allow the imposter to be born in defense of our pain. ***We invent somebody who everyone will like, but nobody will ever know.***
- ❖ The imposter is a deceptive role we play to help us feel safe, but it imprisons us with fears of being abandoned, left alone, or discovered for who we really are.
- ❖ We only feel safe in the Law and follow the Law in hopes of receiving His love.
- ❖ We become preoccupied with acceptance and approval. There is a fear of not living up to others' expectations.
- ❖ We choose appearance over reality. We make the imposter look good to others (i.e. false humility (pride), moral superiority). We judge, condemn or put down others to lift us up.
- ❖ **Everybody will admire us, but nobody will know us.** We create an illusion of success.
- ❖ The imposter blinds us to our own emptiness and hollowness.
- ❖ We are driven for affirmation. It becomes exhausting to maintain the façade.
- ❖ Our greatest fear becomes, "If I get rid of the imposter and bare my true self, then my closest friends will abandon me and my enemies will ridicule me."
- ❖ The imposter prevents us from acknowledging our hurts, pains, and weaknesses.
- ❖ The imposter demands to be noticed or hides in hopes of never being discovered or seen.
- ❖ The imposter becomes our constant companion and takes the place of where the Father wants to be with us. We cannot experience intimacy or acknowledge the unconditional love of the Father.

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- ❖ The imposter saves us from seeing who we really are. We refuse to be our true self.
- ❖ The imposter becomes our greatest obstacle to our own nobility. We judge ourselves as unworthy servants, and that hinders Father's omnipotence in our lives.

How to be set free from the Imposter *Abba's Child Brenam Manning*

- ❖ We are created in His image and likeness. He loves us just the way we are. We are his beloved child in whom He is well pleased! **John 17:23**
- ❖ Silence and intimacy allow us to hear His voice and sense His love. He chooses to love us!
- ❖ **Delight in the relentless love of the Father for us!**
- ❖ We must find the root causes for our behavior and the lies that caused us to accept the imposter. We have to set free the inner child that is still hurting.
- ❖ We must acknowledge our nothingness before Him and embrace and accept our brokenness.
- ❖ We must unlock the prison around our emotions and feelings so that we can experience His love for us.
- ❖ **We must be aware of the present riseness of Jesus in our life.** The cross and resurrection are not just some events in the past or hope for our future; they are for today! We are to walk continually in our position as sons and daughters. We are never alone.
- ❖ Jesus' present riseness causes everything in our lives to have relevance, have a purpose, place, meaning, and value. Every moment carries eternal significance. We no longer need to wear masks and wear costumes. It brings us security and strength.
- ❖ "When we treasure Father's love above success, fame, and accomplishment or the faults, failures, and mistakes of life, the imposter shrinks and loses his place in our lives."

Independence and Self-Sufficiency

Independence comes from an orphan heart. We decide that we cannot trust or count on others to help us or take care of our needs. We take Father out of the picture and do everything for ourselves. We don't want to be dependent on anyone else for fear of rejection or their controlling us. We think that it will be easier to avoid pain if we are in control of our own lives and destiny.

Our self and flesh try to rule our spirit

- ❖ Living the Christian life in our own strength is exhausting! At some point, self and flesh may not be able to handle the problems in our life.
- ❖ Many accept Satan's deception that our free will gives us the right to make our own choices.
- ❖ Our independence causes separation from God and from our brothers and sisters in Christ.
- ❖ The tendency to walk in independence comes to us all. We often struggle with the temptation to be in charge and we can fail to be committed to others.

Characteristics of Independence

- ❖ **Presumption** - This occurs when we make choices, decisions and take actions based on assumptions without asking Father. We may start out with a Godly vision, but we drift into self-directed activity toward our godly vision. Be careful not to focus on what a ministry can do for you rather than what God wants to do through you.

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- ❖ **Following our own agenda** - This may be our greatest temptation, desiring to go our own way rather than willingly submitting to Father's agenda. Father wants us to express our submission by getting under someone else's mission.
- ❖ **Self-focus** - Self-directed activity is a snare to many, especially those in leadership. This can be a time when we are preoccupied with ourselves: our progress in God, our ministry, our reputation, our faults and weaknesses, our needs or desires, and our worth (or lack of it).
- ❖ **Worry, anxiety, and fear** - Self-focus leads to each of these emotions. Experiencing anxiety or fear are early symptoms of independence coming back into our lives. There can be physiological issues that cause fear and anxiety, but most often we experience worry or anxiety when we try to do things on our own.
- ❖ **Not Listening** - A person that is battling fear and is self focused often finds it difficult to relate to others. Being too focused on a goal ahead leads to not listening to those around them. Husbands especially may save themselves from some pain, error, or disobedience to God if they will only listen to their wives.
- ❖ **Striving** - This is a clear indicator of independence in our lives. Adam and Eve's independent action in agreement with Satan led to a curse. Instead of God's rest, their future was to be one of toil, striving, and pain. (**Gen. 3:17-19**)
- ❖ **Desire for Promotion** - Each person was created with a need for praise and affirmation, but the counterfeit of this is a desire for title, promotion, or recognition. Promotion can be dangerous. It can be connected to independence, if there is any pride at its root, even though there is humility or a godly vision. Jesus was willing to be demoted for love's sake and then He was exalted by God without ever seeking position. (**Phil. 2:5-11**) Desire for promotion and position is Satan's counterfeit for God's plan for your life, one of purpose and destiny.
- ❖ **Negativity** - By negativity we mean dwelling on negatives, repeatedly speaking words which are more of a curse than a blessing, tending to find the negative in a situation more than the positive, or speaking to put down others. Looking at scripture we will find that Satan is entirely negative and God is completely positive. Negativity is anti-God and independent. It is being in agreement with the devil.
- ❖ **Pride** - A desire to be seen above someone else or any pleasure from a "higher" position than others can be a sign of pride. The best way to handle pride is to think of ourselves soberly. (**Rom. 12:3**)

Getting Rid of Independence

- ❖ Independence can be reduced by repentance and bring us into agreement with God that it is sin. As we submit to God in this way, we can resist the devil and turn away from his methods to godly motives. Then we choose to embrace relationship with God and others.
- ❖ **James 4:6-10** gives us some good instructions to follow:
 - **Submit to God** - step into your place under God's authority.
 - **Resist the devil** - stand against any forms of independence. Choose to act in the opposite spirit and reach out to maintain relationships.
 - **Draw near to God** - actively move toward God, receive His love, and rest in His presence
- ❖ **Cultivate humility** – choose submission to God in any situation and you will find Jesus there. We may have to give up our "rights" in order to demonstrate love. Look for the "lower" place because in it we express servanthood.

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- ❖ **Seek relationships** – We need others in our lives both to reveal independent pride and to walk with us in obedience to God.
- ❖ **Invite input** – build relationships and humility by actively seeking input in our lives. Ask others to help you see your blind spots or faults and be thankful when others point them out.
- ❖ **Choose to be positive** – looking for the positive in every circumstance.
- ❖ **Seek to live in agreement** – with God and one another. Always seek to discuss decisions and agree. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you walk in interdependence.

Control

Another way to protect ourselves from being hurt again is to try and control our environment.

We can control our environment by:

Fear and Intimidation – We can use "the look," tone of voice, gestures, body language, threatening words, or actions to bring fear and cause people to either stay away or "tow the line." We can threaten to use something that would hurt the other person.

Dress – We can wear clothing that might intimidate others or convey the message of "don't mess with me." We can put tattoos on our body to convey the message of "fear our roughness." We can wear jewelry or color our hair in such a way that will attract certain people, but repel others.

Withdrawal – We can either threaten to leave, actually leave or pull away from a situation to gain control. We can also use the silent treatment to protect ourselves, avoid confrontation, or try to punish the other person.

Manipulation – This can take a variety of forms. We can use bribes or withholding something the other person wants to control their actions. Conditional love or promises can be used to get someone to do what you want. We can give gifts with the intention of getting something in return.

Anger and Rage – While sometimes a result of touching hidden core pain, these can also be used to bring fear or manipulate the situation so that we are in control. Anger is a secondary emotion of fear, usually the fear of rejection.

Shame and Condemnation – We can place shame on someone to try and get them to behave the way we want. "Shame on you!" Some in the church try to use shame to get Christians to be more spiritual. "Good Christians pray more, read their Bible every day, witness to others, stop sinning, etc." Demeaning or defiling words can be spoken in hopes of getting someone to change their behavior.

Freedom from the Orphan Heart!

Freedom from an orphan heart begins through acknowledging that we were wounded and it did hurt growing up. We must forgive those who hurt us and take them to the cross. **Mark 11:25, Matt. 18:33-35** Give them a gift they may not deserve and seek to restore our relationship with our parents, if they are still alive. Ask their forgiveness for how we hurt them by not being a son or daughter. Ask the Father to come and be our father and we will be His son or daughter.

Be ready to receive our inheritance of sonship! (**Mark 1:11, John 16:27, John 17:23**) Find rest and peace in our Father's love and ask Him to hold us in His arms.

In reality, we all have a little of the orphan heart still in us and can act like an orphan in certain situations. But we can begin to retrain our thinking and be on the look-out for an orphan heart!