

Experience Healing by Identifying with Christ in the Psalms

One way to think about internalizing the gospel is by helping your clients experience Christ and the gospel by taking it out of their head, taking it off the page and giving them a personal, powerful experience. One way of doing that is to use the Psalms.

First Goal

The first goal to aim for is to have the client experience scripture in a way in which they say, “This is me! This is my story!”

To get started, select a psalm that seems to fit your client’s problem, situation and emotions. Then give them these four questions to reflect on for homework:

1. What in this Psalm have I experienced?
2. What in this Psalm have I felt?
3. What does the Psalmist remind himself about God?
4. What does the Psalmist cry out in faith?

The first question seeks to make a situational match between the Psalm and the client, then question two makes an emotional match, whereas question three leads the client to contemplate what words in the Psalm to preach to themselves about God. Finally, the fourth question enables the client to have biblical words and permission to cry out in faith back to God.

In the next sessions with your client, process the meaning of these findings:

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| What connected for you? | The client can identify with scripture in a deep personal way |
| How did finding yourself in the scripture make you feel? | The client might express emotions such as feeling validated and not alone |
| Why would God include this specific experience in the Bible? | Client responses might include: God understands, He sees, He cares, He gives permission to feel this way |

Second Goal

The next step is to reveal that this psalm is Jesus' experience (Luke 24:44) and that Jesus is the person they have so intimately connected with. Together brainstorm:

When can we surmise Jesus felt this way?

Reflecting on Jesus' experience takes it out of the abstract and makes it more specific. This process brings Jesus to life and creates a deep connection. It also helps clients receive the comfort and compassion of Christ, helps them realize they are not alone, and helps them know that Christ identifies, sympathizes and understands their hurts.

Third Goal

Then help clients identify: "And this suffering was for me!"

This process of experiencing Christ's deep and abiding love, his kindness, leads to repentance and renewed faith.

Finally, celebrate with clients that Christ is risen and what that means for them in their daily lives. If they truly believed that Jesus has experienced these things for them and that they are victorious in him, how would they be different? Process the glorious abundance they have in Christ!