



Soul-Battering



Many people experience a form of soul-battering in their childhood and teen years, that leaves them with a sense of lostness and abandonment all their lives. They can't trust themselves to make right decisions because their personality has been so beaten down that it is weak and fragmented, so they allow other people to make their decisions for them. But then they suffer the consequences of having to do things they don't want to do, and struggle with the torment of inadequacy in doing them.



Victims of soul-battering enter a life-long search for love. They have a desperate, consuming need to be loved and an even greater need to have someone to love. The kind of love they constantly seek is one that gives them acceptance and approval – not in shallow ways as the world gives – but in very specific, and instant, assurance whenever they feel inadequate or self-conscious about something they have done, resulting in “love on demand” relationships.

Victims of soul-battering are passive about life. Afraid to reach out and take what they want, because they don't know if they're supposed to have it, or how to get it. Emotionally, they have strong feelings about what they want, but they feel unable to obtain those desires. Like a child trying to reach an unobtainable toy; they reach and strain and whimper and cry and get mad and give up; then they settle for the same old toys that are within reach.

A soul-battered person gives themselves away to buy love from others. Completely setting aside their own needs, they busy themselves fulfilling the needs of others – no matter the cost in time, hard work, inconvenience or money. Setting the needs of another person so far ahead of theirs that they actually take on the cares and anxieties of that other person and try to fix them and work out their problems for them. Their overwhelming desire is to please that other person, because then they feel worthwhile and they feel alive and fulfilled through the other person's life, so opposite from their own passive, unfulfilled life.



When a soul-battered child loses the recognition of their own personality, they lose their personhood – that “me” that lives inside of each of us. So instead of being able to draw strength and boldness from inside, they have an empty void that nothing seems able to fill. With aching hearts they look at other people and see the love, guidance, and provision of a caring father and mother, family, home, and proven abilities. A “me”-less victim stands in awe of that self-assured and confident person, and quietly withdraws into that battered soul to seek once again for a possible healing of that bruised and battered area.

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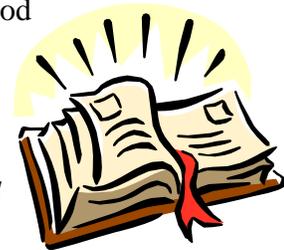
The world has a name for soul-battering, they call it “verbal abuse.” But, that name sounds like it means words that go from mouth-to-mouth, instead of the true meaning which is mouth-to-soul abuse. We learned an old saying in childhood that says, “Sticks and stones can break my bones, but words can never hurt me.” It doesn’t take very long to find out how wrong those words are. Words are the most powerful weapons for good or for destruction known to mankind. We can all remember cruel unkind words that were spoken years ago but they stick in our soul like fiery darts to this day.

God knows the absolute power of words, that’s why He tells us not to waste them in idle, negative chatter, but to use them to give love to people and to encourage them and make them feel better about themselves. God is the Master of Words. He used words to create the universe, our world, and to give life to everything in it. He gave mankind the same ability He has.



Guess where the Word of God is stored in us? In our soul! The same soul that becomes battered and bruised by cruel, unloving, burning, tormenting words, is the place God chooses to let Himself be known to us. The soul is the very center of our being, it is our mind – where we think and remember; where our memories hide; where we make choices and decision. That’s where we need God, to help us, because what we think, what we remember, what we choose, and what we decide, is what creates our own world and affects everything in it.

For centuries people read God’s Word but didn’t live it. They still lived in sin and unbelief, broken-hearted and dying. So in His great love, God wrapped His Word in flesh and called Him Jesus. Jesus was the living Word of God who came to prove that God’s Word was true, and He only spoke words here on earth that God told Him to. *“In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . and the Word was made flesh, and lived here with us, full of grace and truth.”* (John 1:1,14)



Jesus came to save our souls. Our souls are who we are. Our souls are very important and should be given great care. When we suffer from soul pain we call it being “broken-hearted.” But Jesus said *“The Spirit of God has anointed Me to preach the gospel (good news) to the poor; . . . to heal the broken hearted, to deliver them from bondage, and set at liberty them that are bruised (mentally shattered).”* (Luke 4:18) The reason God sent Him was so we can be healed and not have to live with a broken heart.

To heal the wounds and scars of your soul-battering, make it first priority to put the Word of God in you every way you can; by reading and thinking about what you read; by listening to tapes; and by faithful church attendance because, *“Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.”* (Romans 10:17)

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Begin to bring your soul into line with God's will for your life, in your thinking, your memories, your choices, and your decisions. The light of God's Word removes any dark, shadowy corners of memory. If you could take a little black piece of darkness, about the size of a candle flame, and put it on a candle in a room full of light, you would not even be able to see it, but if you take a little light, about the size of a candle flame, and put it in a room full of darkness, it will light up the room and remove the darkness.



Giving God first place in your soul is so important that Jesus said, "*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment.*" (Matthew 22:37,38) If it's that important to God, it should be the most important thing to us! Our soul will spend eternity with God.



Soul-Battering

1. When does the worst soul-battering happen?

2. What do soul-battered people search for all their life?

3. What does the kind of love they seek result in?

4. How does a soul-battered victim buy love?

5. What does verbal abuse mean?

6. What are the most powerful weapons for good or for destruction?

7. Where is the Word of God stored in us?

8. Who did God send to prove His love in the flesh?

9. Why should the care of our soul be most important to us?

10. What are we supposed to love God with? (Matthew 22:37,38)
(The answer to this question will be your memory verse)

MEMORY VERSE _____

Soul-Battering

1. When does the worst soul-battering happen?

In childhood.

2. What do soul-battered people search for all their life?

Love.

3. What does the kind of love they seek result in?

“Love on demand” relationships.

4. How does a soul-battered victim buy love?

By setting aside their own needs to fulfill the needs of others.

5. What does verbal abuse mean?

Mouth-to-soul abuse.

6. What are the most powerful weapons for good or for destruction?

Words.

7. Where is the Word of God stored in us?

In our soul.

8. Who did God send to prove His love in the flesh?

Jesus.

9. Why should the care of our soul be most important to us?

Because it will spend eternity with God.

10. What are we supposed to love God with? (Matthew 22:37,38)

MEMORY VERSE “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment.”