



# Naming the Wound

*When Avoidance Feels Safer*

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## PREFACE

Healing begins where honesty begins. Before God can mend what's broken, He first brings it into view. But let's be honest—most of us aren't afraid of pain itself; we're afraid of *facing it*. We become masters of avoidance because avoidance feels safer than awareness. We tell ourselves, "I've moved on," or, "That was a long time ago." Yet the truth is, what we refuse to face keeps shaping us in ways we don't even realize.

In John chapter 5, verses 1 through 9, we find Jesus walking into a scene of prolonged waiting—the pool of Bethesda, surrounded by people who were sick, broken, and hoping for something to change. Among them was a man who had been lying there for thirty-eight years. Thirty-eight years of disappointment. Thirty-eight years of dependency. Thirty-eight years of hoping for someone else to move on his behalf.

And then Jesus asks him a question that sounds almost offensive in its simplicity: "*Do you want to be made well?*"

You can almost hear the man's confusion. He doesn't answer the question. Instead, he explains why he can't change. "*Sir, I have no one to help me.*" He gives his reasoning instead of his permission.

But Jesus wasn't asking for an explanation—He was asking for participation. He was saying, "*Stop describing why you're still lying here and decide if you're ready to stand.*"

That's the tension we face too. We've grown accustomed to managing our pain. We build our identity around it. Sometimes we even spiritualize it—"God must be teaching me something through this,"—but if we're honest, it's become our excuse for staying stuck.

Wholeness doesn't begin with explanation; it begins with invitation. When Jesus says, "Do you want to be made whole?" He's not talking about perfection—He's talking about willingness.

Psalm 139:23–24 says, "*Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my anxieties; see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*" David doesn't pray, "Hide what hurts." He prays, "Show me what I can't see." That's the prayer of the healed heart.

Avoidance feels like safety, but it's really just a prison with nicer walls. Proverbs 28:13 says, "*Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.*" When you protect the wound, you preserve the pain. What we hide in darkness grows; what we bring to light begins to lose its hold.

When you finally say, "Lord, this is where it hurts," you're not giving God new information—you're giving Him permission to heal what He's already seen. Naming your pain is not a confession of weakness; it's a declaration of faith.

Think about Adam in the garden—his first assignment was to name things. Naming was his first act of dominion. What you name, you bring into order. What you refuse to name, continues to define you without your consent.

You might say, "I'm fine," but the wound still leaks through your words, your relationships, your reactions. You might call it personality—"That's just who I am." You might call it maturity—"I don't let people close anymore." But if you listen closely, what you'll hear beneath those statements is a wound still whispering, "Don't touch that place."

Isaiah 61:1 says, "*He has sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives.*" Notice that healing comes through binding *and* proclamation—it's both an act of care

and an act of confrontation. Jesus doesn't just comfort your pain; He confronts the lie that keeps it alive.

So here's the question for you today: What pain have you normalized instead of healed? Where have you learned to manage what God is trying to mend?

Healing begins when you stop explaining your dysfunction and start inviting the presence of God into it. He doesn't reveal to humiliate you—He reveals to heal you. His exposure is always redemptive.

I want you to pause here and ask Him, “Lord, show me what I've learned to hide.” Don't overthink it. The first thing that comes to mind is usually the place He's ready to touch.

For some of you, it's the moment you lost trust. For others, it's the place where rejection taught you to perform for love. For some, it's disappointment that hardened into apathy. You don't need to fix it right now—you just need to *face* it.

Healing is not about pretending the wound never happened; it's about acknowledging that it no longer gets to rule your story.

When light enters darkness, it feels harsh before it feels safe. When truth exposes a lie, it feels painful before it feels peaceful. But that's how healing works—it brings pain into presence until peace replaces it.

John 5 ends with a moment of radical participation. Jesus looks at the man who's been lying there for nearly four decades and says, “*Rise, take up your mat, and walk.*”

The miracle didn't happen when Jesus spoke. It happened when the man moved. He had to act on what he heard.

He had to stand up in the same place where disappointment once defined him.

That's what facing your wound is—it's standing up where you used to lie down.

So today, name your wound. Write it, whisper it, confess it to God. Say, "Lord, this is where it hurts." And then trust that what He exposes, He intends to restore.

Psalm 34:18 says, "*The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.*" You're not alone in this. Your honesty is not the end—it's the beginning.

You can't heal what you keep hiding. And you don't have to carry what you refuse to name.

So the question remains: *Do you want to be made whole?* If your answer is yes, then say it aloud:

"Lord, I'm ready to see what I've hidden. I give You permission to touch what still hurts."

Wholeness begins right there—at the intersection of truth and invitation.