

## *The Strong and Tender Healer*

All of us face troubled times. We get disappointed in ourselves and others. Discouragement can drag us down and rob us of the joy of living. We live in a harsh and broken world. We are often part of the anger and the breakdown. Problems look more complex and overwhelming than what we think we can handle. However, God has a plan for us, and it's a plan for good.

***God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change and though the mountains slip into the heart of the sea"*** (Psalm 46)

The first encouraging word God gives us is that we don't have to face our problems alone. The one who built the universe wants to come alongside and give us what we need in our hearts and in our circumstances to live well today. God will not bulldoze problems away and God also won't violate the truth about who we are and what resources we have available to face what's before us. God knows how vulnerable we often feel but He also knows the truth about what's really going on and what is actually needed. God tenderly and lovingly leads us along a strong and good path.

***God says, "Look at my servant, whom I strengthen. He is my chosen one, and I am pleased with Him. I have put my Spirit upon him. He will reveal justice to the nations. He will be gentle -- he will not shout or raise his voice in public. He will not crush those who are weak or quench the smallest hope. He will bring full justice to all who have been wronged. He will not stop until truth and righteousness prevail throughout the earth."*** (Isaiah 42)

No description could be more encouraging to us as we seek deliverance from injuries and fragile emotions than this picture of Jesus Christ. He is gentle. He will not crush us. He will encourage us and bring justice from the wrongs we have suffered. Even as children, many of us have endured abuse or wrongdoings that we did nothing to deserve. In our pressurized self-centered world many people storm through our lives without considering the effects of their actions and choices on our well-being. But we need to let go of the hurt, hatred and bitterness we

feel towards these people because we can't change them. Jesus will judge those who have hurt us and in the meantime, He has a way for us to live today that will protect us in a healthy way and give us quality of life that is deep and real. We only hurt ourselves when we hold onto the pain and allow memories of injustice to continually re-injure us and re-fuel our anger or resentment. We need God's help to put these events behind us so we can move on and live the good life God intends for us.

Jesus Christ is strong enough to lead and judge nations, yet tender enough to care for the weak and helpless. He is our only hope of salvation & healthy living. Jesus has died for all the sin, suffering, and sorrow of the world. The sins and suffering that have been inflicted on us by others can be healed through Jesus Christ. Justice can be given out in full measure because Jesus Christ has taken all sin to the cross and given His life for us.

We are not wise enough or strong enough to heal ourselves. God will give us wise and helpful counselors and friends to walk with us towards healing but only Jesus Christ who made us, who cares about us and who is both strong and tender, has the right combination of love and justice to do the healing work in us and to give us power to forgive and set ourselves free.

### Questions For Reflection and Discussion

1. When does life look overwhelming for us?
2. What's the difference between coping with injustice and being healed from past wounds?
3. How does Jesus Christ have the qualities and resources that can adequately address injustices that people experience?
4. How do we get in touch with the healing of Jesus Christ?
5. What difference does it make when Jesus Christ comes into our life?
6. What do we do with the abuser as we receive the healing of God?
7. What's the next step for me in receiving the healing that I long for today?