

THE
HEALING OF
A WOUNDED
HEART

*Prayerful Reflections on the
Samaritan Woman Story*

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INTRODUCTION

Who doesn't need a heart transformation?

We've all be wounded, and we've all sinned because of our wounds. At some point, we've all felt rejection, betrayal, and shame. And no doubt, these wounds can lead to isolation, depression, anxiety, and despair. They can also spawn sins, such as jealousy, envy, and the deadliest one of all, pride.

But there is hope and healing in the Heart of Jesus. There is mercy beyond our greatest imagination.

When I began my own healing journey, by the mercy of God, I was drawn to healing accounts in Scripture. For me, there is no more compelling journey of healing and transformation than the story of the Samaritan woman.

I easily related to her story. Like many others, I know all too well the pain of rejection, the sting of betrayal, and

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the consuming burden of shame. I also know how easy it is to seek out love in the wrong places and the wrong ways to soothe the aching pain of feeling unwanted, unworthy, and unlovable. And, most unfortunately, I know the destruction of sin.

Fortunately, for the Samaritan woman and myself (and you!), Jesus came to save, not to condemn.



The prayerful reflections on the Samaritan woman story shared in this book reveal how Jesus transformed a wounded heart. It is the Samaritan woman's story, but it is also mine. Could it be yours?

I invite you to take this prayerful journey with the Samaritan woman as she engages with Jesus. See how gentle He is with her heart and how He tends to her every need as she moves through the healing process.

It is in the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus we find true healing. Discover how this blessed woman is healed by His Heart—and how you can be, too!



HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

When someone goes through a difficult experience, what we see on the outside is never as revealing as what is happening inside—in that person’s heart. This book is comprised of prayerful reflections that I pray will invite you to experience what the heart of the Samaritan woman and the Heart of Jesus experienced during their beautiful encounter.

Before you begin settling into this prayerful journey, let’s review the structure of this book to help you better understand and reflect on this story as you read.

PRAYERS, NOT CHAPTERS

First, you may notice the chapters are not listed as “Chapters,” but as “Prayers.” Chapter 1 is listed as Prayer One (followed by a short prayer), and so on. This is to help you settle into a prayerful state before you begin reading the Bible verse at the beginning of each chapter.

THE FULL STORY

Each chapter starts with a Scripture passage. This book will start with John 4:1 and continue through the end of the Samaritan woman story at John 4:42. Each chapter starts with a short Scripture passage from this section.

REFLECTION AND CLOSING PRAYERS

Each Scripture passage is followed by a Reflection Prayer and a Closing Prayer written using imaginative prayer, an approach of Ignatian spirituality. Both prayers are written from the heart, my heart, while I meditated and rested in the Heart of Jesus and came to understand, as one would of a dear loved one, what occurred in the depths of the heart of the Samaritan woman and the Heart of Jesus during their encounter. At first glance, both prayers might seem to be one and the same. However, there is a slight difference between the two.

The Reflection Prayer is more of a reflection of my own reaction, as well as the reflection of the heart of the Samaritan woman and the Heart of Jesus, during the events in the Bible passage. The Closing Prayer is more of a plea to God as I desire continual transformation of my own heart and seek His grace in doing so.

You may find it helpful to have your Bible handy to reference the passage in each chapter, as well as a journal to write down any thoughts or feelings you may have while reflecting on each Bible passage.



PRAYER SIX

JESUS, CLEANSE ME
FROM MY SINS
AND RESTORE MY
HEART ANEW

Jesus said to her, "Go call your husband and come back."
The woman answered and said to him, "I do not have a husband." Jesus answered her, "You are right in saying, 'I do not have a husband.' For you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true."

John 4:16-18

REFLECTION PRAYER

Jesus, You knew this conversation would be difficult for this woman, so filled with pain and hurt from rejection and her own sins. So, with gentle honesty, you probed her heart and led her to acknowledge the truth. You knew she must see this and speak of it before she could move forward in faith and healing. You know this about us, too. You know we must face the truth of our sinfulness before we can move forward to a deeper faith and trust in You.

First, we must trust You with the deepest, darkest, messiest places of our hearts before we can be transformed completely into the children of God we were created to be. So, You gently called to this woman's heart to speak the truth. Surely, she could sense You received her as she was, whether she spoke up or not. Surely, she could sense Your great love for her, whether she could face the truth or not.

When we experience Your love, we also come to understand Your desire for our salvation. This understanding beckons us to leave behind our old ways of sin and embrace the truth of who we are called to be.

This understanding, this experience of Your love, is what gave her the courage to be honest with You, to

acknowledge the truth of her life without fear of condemnation or rejection. This is what freed her. This is what led her to the deep healing and merciful love of Your Most Sacred Heart.

CLOSING PRAYER

Jesus, gently call to my heart. Thank You for receiving me in all my woundedness, sin, and pain. Help me not to be ashamed to come to You as I am, not hiding, not holding anything back, ready to speak the truth of my life. Help me to know You came to save me and not condemn me. To know You came to heal and renew my heart.

Draw me closer to You in each moment, with each breath. Purify my heart and free me from the burden of my sins. I know that this healing process may be painful because my wounds are deep, and my sins have led me away from You. But I trust in You, Jesus. I know I need only turn my eyes toward You with yearning to receive You into my heart, so You may shower down Your heavenly mercy upon me and heal me. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.