

August 14, 2026

Don't Let The Hurt Define You

August Series: Christ-Centered Relationships

Week Focus: Grace Again

Scripture – Genesis 50:20 - *“You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.”*

Devotional Reflection

Some experiences leave marks long after the moment has passed. Betrayal, rejection, abandonment, disappointment, or mistreatment can affect how we see ourselves, how easily we trust others, and what we expect from future relationships. If we are not careful, something that happened **to us** can begin determining what happens **inside us**, causing us to describe ourselves through the language of the wound rather than through the truth of who God says we are.

Joseph had every reason to allow hurt to define him. His brothers rejected him, threw him into a pit, sold him into slavery, and allowed their father to believe he was dead; afterward, Joseph endured false accusation and imprisonment before God elevated him in Egypt. Yet when those same brothers eventually stood before him, Joseph acknowledged the truth—**“You intended to harm me”**—while recognizing something greater: what others intended for harm did not have the authority to cancel what God intended for his life.

Joseph's story reminds us that someone may have wounded us without having the right to define us. Rejection does not mean you are unwanted, betrayal does not have to make you incapable of trusting again, and another person's actions do not get to determine the condition of your heart. What happened may always be part of your story, but **the person who hurt you does not become the author of your story—God remains the Author.**

As followers of Christ, forgiveness helps break the connection between what happened and who we become by refusing to give an offense permanent authority over our hearts. Healing may take time, just as Joseph's journey unfolded over many years, but God can redeem what was painful, restore what was wounded, and use even difficult experiences to develop wisdom, compassion, maturity, and greater dependence upon Him. This does not make what happened right; it demonstrates that **God's redemptive power is greater than what went wrong.**

Today, refuse to give yesterday's hurt permission to name today's identity. You are not simply what happened to you; you belong to Christ, and your life remains in God's hands. Bring the wounded places to Him and allow His truth to speak louder than rejection, betrayal, disappointment, or pain. **The person who hurt you does not have the final word, the painful chapter does not determine the ending, and God is still writing your story.**

Focus for Today

What someone did to you may be part of your story, but it does not have the authority to define who you become.

Practice

- Think about a painful experience that has affected how you see yourself or approach relationships.
 - Ask yourself: **“Have I allowed what happened to me to become part of how I define myself?”**
 - Replace the language of the wound with the truth of God’s Word. Instead of **“I was rejected, so I am unwanted,”** remind yourself: **“I belong to God and am loved by Him.”**
 - Instead of **“I was betrayed, so I can never trust again,”** pray: **“God, heal me and teach me to trust with wisdom.”**
 - Give God permission to write the next chapter without allowing yesterday’s hurt to hold the pen.
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Prayer

Father, thank You that my life is ultimately in Your hands. Heal the places where hurt has affected how I see myself and others. Help me acknowledge what happened without allowing it to define me. Remind me that no person’s actions are greater than Your purpose for my life. Redeem what was painful, restore what was wounded, and continue shaping me into the person You have called me to become. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Reflection Question

What have I allowed a painful experience to say about who I am, and what does God’s truth say instead?