

Healing after Abortion

God's Mercy Is for You

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If you are reading this booklet, you are probably struggling after having had an abortion. The turmoil you are experiencing is sometimes called “post-abortion syndrome.” But you don’t need a technical term to describe what you are feeling. You are experiencing the common struggles of a woman who’s had an abortion and...who takes to heart what has happened. These are honest struggles—the feelings of guilt, the regrets, the depression, the heartache, the grief. For many women these feelings become even more intense around the anniversary of the abortion.

You might also be having other kinds of reactions. Perhaps you simply feel numb. You don’t know how to face what happened, so you try to avoid thinking about it. Or you might feel a sense of anger and betrayal. Other people—your friends, your boyfriend, your parents, your husband—were involved in your decision. Perhaps you feel that they failed you. Now you are having a hard time trusting anyone. Your abortion has led to brokenness and broken relationships.

The last thing you might want to do right now is consider what God has to say to you. But he is the

one who can help you. God, in the Bible, brings hope to every aspect of the turmoil you are experiencing:

- Are you afraid to face what happened? God's mercy invites you to confess to him.
- Are you guilty and ashamed? God offers forgiveness.
- Are you full of regret? Your Redeemer specializes in rebuilding broken lives and making them fruitful.
- Do you feel pain that won't go away? God is a refuge for the broken and hopeless.

Whatever reactions and emotions you experience, the living God is committed to entering into your struggle. He sympathizes with you in your weakness, but he does more than offer sympathy. Jesus steps into your life with mercy, hope, and transformation. How does this happen? Read on, and take to heart the tenderness of the God who enters the turmoil of our lives.

Silence Surrounds Abortion

Have you noticed the silence that surrounds abortion? Nobody brings it up around the dinner table.

People freely talk about their struggles with illness, relationships, children, and jobs. They may even talk about their religious, moral, and political views on abortion. But very few talk about their own experience with abortion. Why not? Because instinctively abortion is viewed with shame. Where does that feeling of shame come from? And what do you do with it now that it is a part of your life?

Your emotions and feelings reveal what's going on inside of you. No matter how you view abortion intellectually, the shame you feel is telling you that deep down you know you did something wrong. If you always supported a woman's right to choose abortion, this realization may come as a surprise to you. Who can you talk to about this? Everyone you know thinks you made the best choice, but you are struggling with feelings that won't go away.

Or perhaps you always believed abortion was wrong, but because of fear and shame about your pregnancy you did the very thing you oppose. Who can you talk to? Everyone you know would be shocked and dismayed to know what you did. Keeping quiet seems so much easier.

Replace Silence with Confession

The problem with silence is that what you keep hidden grows more dark, confusing, and threatening as time goes on. You might have already noticed this happening. You need to bring your abortion into the light by confessing what happened. But who do you confess it to? And who has the power to forgive you? These questions can only be answered in the context of your relationship with God.

Because God made you, you must answer to him. God is able to weigh the many factors that affected your decision. He saw the trouble that you were in and understood the pressure you were experiencing. Yet God sees deeper than all the shades of gray, all the extenuating circumstances, all the rationalizations. Even though you were facing a very difficult circumstance, from God's ultimate perspective your abortion was one of two things. Either it was a good choice, for which you can be proud, or it was a bad choice, for which you need his mercy.

So put aside all the reasons for your abortion—your age, your school plans, your financial problems, how your pregnancy happened, pressure from your