



Bruised but Not Broken



This 7-day Bible study helps young men heal from emotional and physical abuse by older brothers and discover identity, peace, and strength in Christ.



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Introduction

Growing up with an older brother is often painted as a gift—someone to look up to, laugh with, and learn from. But what happens when that relationship turns toxic? What if instead of protection, you experienced pain? Instead of love, you received insults, fists, or manipulation?

Many young men carry silent wounds from brothers who should have been their first friend—but instead became their first bully.

Whether the abuse was emotional—constant put-downs, intimidation, control—or physical—fights, hitting, or threatening behavior—it leaves scars. Scars that say: *You're weak. You're worthless. You're never safe.*

This Bible study is for the man still carrying that weight. For the boy inside you who wonders if he ever mattered. For the brother who still flinches inwardly at loud voices, harsh words, or unresolved family trauma.

You are not alone. And you are not what he said you were. Through Christ, there is healing. There is restoration. And yes, even forgiveness—when you're ready.

Let this study walk you step-by-step into deeper peace, godly identity, and new strength.





Day 1: Naming the Wound



Day 1: Naming the Wound

Your Verse

Psalm 55:12–14 (NIV) “If an enemy were insulting me, I could endure it; if a foe were rising against me, I could hide. But it is you... my companion, my close friend, with whom I once enjoyed sweet fellowship...”

Supporting Scriptures

- *Lamentations 3:19–23 (NIV) “I remember my affliction and my wandering, the bitterness and the gall. I well remember them, and my soul is downcast within me. Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail.”*



Day 1: Naming the Wound

Devotional: It Wasn't Supposed to Be This Way

One of the deepest wounds a man can carry is betrayal or abuse from someone he trusted—especially when that someone was his own brother.

Brothers are supposed to be protectors, mentors, maybe even heroes. But what happens when the one who should've had your back was the one who shoved you down? Or made you feel like trash? Or hurt you, over and over again?

Psalms 55 reminds us that **betrayal hurts most when it comes from the people closest to us**. David was crushed not by an enemy—but by a friend. Someone he had shared life with. The pain was personal, and so is yours.

Lamentations speaks to that bitterness—the ache that still lingers, the emotional wandering that comes from never being properly seen, valued, or safe. But even there, in the middle of trauma, the prophet says, *“Yet this I call to mind... the Lord's great love.”*

The path to healing begins with truth. **You were mistreated. It wasn't okay.** And God sees all of it—not with condemnation, but with compassion.

You're not weak for feeling wounded. You're brave for facing it.



Day 1: Naming the Wound

Journaling Prompts

1. What memories with my brother still cause me pain or tension?

2. Have I ever spoken honestly to God about this abuse?

3. How does it feel to know God sees what happened and cares deeply?



Day 1: Naming the Wound

Prayer for Today

God, I'm hurting. Maybe I've buried it for years, or tried to laugh it off—but You know what happened. You saw the way I was treated. The way my brother hurt me, ignored me, mocked me, or crossed lines that shouldn't have been crossed. Help me begin to name the pain so You can begin to heal it. Thank You that Your love is stronger than any wound. In Jesus' name, amen.





Day 2: God Was There



Your Verse

Genesis 16:13 (NIV)

“She gave this name to the Lord who spoke to her: ‘You are the God who sees me,’ for she said, ‘I have now seen the One who sees me.’”

Supporting Scriptures

- *Psalms 139:7–10 (NIV)*

“Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, You are there; if I make my bed in the depths, You are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there Your hand will guide me, Your right hand will hold me fast.”



Devotional: He Never Looked Away

When abuse happens in a family, especially behind closed doors, one of the most common lies we believe is this: *“No one saw. No one cared.”*

Maybe your brother hurt you in secret. Maybe others in the family dismissed it as “just boys being boys.” Maybe you started to wonder if you were the problem—too sensitive, too weak, too soft.

But friend, God saw it all.

In Genesis 16, a mistreated woman named Hagar fled her abuser into the wilderness. Alone and heartbroken, she met God. And she named Him **El Roi** —“**The God who sees me.**”

God saw Hagar. And He sees you.

Psalms 139 promises that there is no corner of your past too dark, too far, or too hidden for His presence. Even in the deepest, most painful moments—He was there. **Not to condemn. But to comfort.** Not to punish. But to redeem.

You may feel forgotten by your family, but you are not forgotten by your Father.



Day 2: God Was There

Journaling Prompts

1. Where was God during the hardest moments with my brother?

2. What emotions rise up when I picture God seeing everything that happened?

3. How can I begin to trust that God was present—even in my pain?



Day 2: God Was There

Prayer for Today

El Roi, You are the God who sees me. You saw what happened when no one else did. You saw the fists, the words, the shame, the silence. And You never looked away. Thank You for never abandoning me. Help me believe that Your presence was real even then—and is still real today. Guide me through this healing, one step at a time. In Jesus' name, amen.





Day 3: You Are Not What He Said



Your Verse

Isaiah 62:3–4 (NIV)

“You will be a crown of splendor in the Lord’s hand, a royal diadem in the hand of your God. No longer will they call you Deserted... but you will be called Hephzibah, for the Lord will take delight in you.”

Supporting Scriptures

- *Romans 8:16–17 (NIV)*
- *“The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ...”*



Devotional: Rewriting the Labels

The words of a brother stick. Especially when those words came at vulnerable moments—calling you weak, dumb, useless, unwanted. Maybe you heard it so often you started to believe it.

But here's the truth: **You are not what he said.**

You are who *God* says you are.

Isaiah 62 is God's love letter to His people. He doesn't call them *Deserted* or *Forsaken* anymore—He gives them a new name: **"Hephzibah,"** which means **"My delight is in her."** Imagine that. You, as a man, being renamed by the Father who takes delight in you.

Romans 8 makes it even more powerful: **You are God's child. A co-heir with Christ. Royal. Worthy. Secure.**

Your brother may have tried to crush your sense of self, but your Father is building it back up with truth. Let Him.



Journaling Prompts

1. What lies did I start believing because of my brother's words?

2. What names or labels has God called me in Scripture?

3. How would my life look if I fully believed I am who God says I am?



Day 3: You Are Not What He Said

Prayer for Today

Father, I've carried names that never belonged to me. Weak. Worthless. Annoying. I reject those lies today in Jesus' name. I receive Your truth—I am Your child, chosen, loved, and delighted in. Help me believe this in the depths of my soul. Replace every false label with Your voice of love and honor. Thank You for rewriting my identity. In Jesus' name, amen.





Day 4: Releasing the Bitterness



Day 4: Releasing the Bitterness

Your Verse

Ephesians 4:31–32 (NIV)

“Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger... Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”

Supporting Scriptures

- *Hebrews 12:15 (NIV)*

“See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.”



Day 4: Releasing the Bitterness

Devotional: Letting Go of the Poison

Bitterness is the slow poison of unresolved pain. It creeps into your thoughts, your habits, your reactions. You might not even realize it's shaping how you trust, how you handle conflict, or how you feel about yourself.

It's completely normal to feel angry about what your brother did. It was wrong. It left a mark. But holding onto bitterness won't punish him—it only continues punishing you.

Ephesians 4 doesn't say to minimize what happened. It simply invites you to **release what's killing your spirit**. It's not about pretending your brother didn't hurt you. It's about breaking the soul-tie that keeps you bound to the pain.

Forgiveness is not forgetting. Forgiveness is choosing freedom. It's taking your hands off his throat and placing him into God's hands.

Hebrews 12 warns us about the root of bitterness—it doesn't just stay buried. It grows, spreading into every part of your life. The good news? **You can dig it out. With God's help, you can be free.**



Day 4: Releasing the Bitterness

Journaling Prompts

1. Where do I feel bitterness or resentment toward my brother today?

2. How has holding onto anger affected my life or relationships?

3. What would freedom from bitterness look like for me?



Day 4: Releasing the Bitterness

Prayer for Today

God, I confess that I've held onto bitterness. I've replayed what happened, felt rage all over again, and sometimes wished harm on my brother. But it's exhausting. It's draining me. I want to be free. Help me release the grip of anger and choose to forgive—not because he deserves it, but because I don't want to live chained to the past. Fill my heart with Your grace. In Jesus' name, amen.





Day 5: Healing the Inner Boy



Your Verse

Psalm 147:3 (NIV)

“He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.”

Supporting Scriptures

- *Matthew 18:3 (NIV)*

“And he said: ‘Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.’”



Devotional: The Boy Inside Still Hurts

No matter how old you are—18, 28, 38—there's still a younger version of you tucked inside. That little boy who took the hit. Who heard the insults. Who ran to his room and cried silently into his pillow so no one would hear.

Sometimes we ignore him. Tell him to toughen up. Act like the pain doesn't matter. But **God doesn't ignore him**. He goes back and gathers the pieces of that broken-hearted child and begins to heal him gently, lovingly.

Psalm 147 says He “binds up wounds.” That includes the emotional bruises from years of being mistreated, mocked, or hit by someone you should have been able to trust.

Jesus even said we must become like little children—humble, trusting, vulnerable. That's not weakness. That's the path to healing.

You can't fully walk in manhood until you let God heal the boy.



Day 5: Healing the Inner Boy

Journaling Prompts

1. If I could speak to the younger version of myself, what would I say?

2. What did I need most during the years my brother was abusive?

3. How can I invite God to heal that inner child today?



Day 5: Healing the Inner Boy

Prayer for Today

Father, I bring You the hurting boy inside of me—the one who still remembers, who still aches, who still flinches from memories I try to bury. Heal that little boy. Wrap Your arms around him. Show him that he is safe now, loved now, and valuable now. Help me receive Your healing in the deepest places of my heart. In Jesus' name, amen.





Day 6: Redeeming the Story



Your Verse

Romans 8:28 (NIV)

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”

Supporting Scriptures

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



Devotional: God Can Use Even This

It's hard to imagine that anything good could come from the pain you experienced. Abuse feels like wasted years, broken relationships, and trauma that never stops echoing. But God does not let pain go to waste.

Romans 8:28 doesn't say everything *is* good—but that God *works* all things for good. That includes the darkest chapters.

Just like Joseph, whose brothers abused and betrayed him, you have a choice: let the past define you... or let God refine you.

Joseph was thrown in a pit, sold, forgotten, imprisoned—and yet he emerged stronger, wiser, and full of grace. Not because his brothers didn't hurt him, but because God had the final word.

Your story isn't over. And the parts you wish you could erase may be the very ones God will use to bring healing to others.



Day 6: Redeeming the Story

Journaling Prompts

1. In what ways has God already begun redeeming parts of my story?

2. What good might come from sharing my testimony one day?

3. How can I trust God with the pieces that still feel broken?



Day 6: Redeeming the Story

Prayer for Today

God, I don't understand all the reasons for what happened. But I choose today to believe that You can use even this. Redeem the pain. Use my scars as signs of Your grace and power. Turn what was meant for harm into something holy. Help me walk forward with faith, knowing You're still writing my story. In Jesus' name, amen.





Day 7: Becoming the Man God Created You to Be



Your Verse

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV) “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”

Supporting Scriptures

- *Philippians 1:6 (NIV) “Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”*



Devotional: You're Not That Boy Anymore

The bruises may have faded. The memories may still come and go. But today, you stand on new ground.

You're no longer defined by the abuse. You're no longer stuck in the cycle of shame, anger, and regret. **You are a new creation.**

God didn't just patch you up—He is *remaking* you. He is shaping you into the man He always intended you to become. A man of strength. Of gentleness. Of courage and integrity. You are not a reflection of your brother's sin—you are a reflection of your Savior's grace.

Philippians 1:6 reminds us: God is not done. He started something in you, and He *will* finish it. The pain from the past can become power in the present. The boy who was abused can become a man who brings healing to others.

Don't just survive. Become. Become the man of God you were created to be.



Day 7: Becoming the Man God Created You to Be

Journaling Prompts

1. How have I changed since starting this study?

2. What new identity am I claiming today in Christ?

3. What kind of man do I want to be moving forward?



Day 7: Becoming the Man God Created You to Be

Prayer for Today

Lord, thank You for carrying me through this journey of healing. Thank You for never abandoning me in the pain. Today, I receive Your truth: I am new. I am strong. I am Yours. Keep shaping me into the man You've called me to be. Let my story bring You glory. I trust You to complete the good work You've started in me. In Jesus' name, amen.





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