



Theophostic Ministry and Type “A” Trauma

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A number of people have asked questions about type “A” trauma and Theophostic ministry. We have written out several of our thoughts in response to these questions.

Brief definitions: Type “A” trauma is the absence of good things (as when a child is neglected), whereas type “B” trauma is the presence of bad things (as when a child is physically or sexually abused).¹

One of the most common questions is “Should we/can we use Theophostic ministry for type ‘A’ trauma?” The first part of the answer is very simple and straight-forward, once we realize that type “A” trauma will almost always result in associated lies. Children will *always* try to explain their experiences. If you neglect and/or deprive a child, the child will try to figure out why, and the interpretation/conclusions they come to will almost always include lies. The truth is usually that it’s not the child’s fault, and there is nothing he can do about it, but children try desperately to avoid this painful place of vulnerability and helplessness. Children also normally think that the world revolves around them, and this contributes to the erroneous conclusion that all problems must be their fault in some way. The truth may be that Dad doesn’t spend time with his son because he is alcoholic, but the child will conclude “Daddy doesn’t spend time with me because I’m not important.” The truth may be that Mom doesn’t talk to her daughter because she is deeply depressed, but the child will conclude “Mom doesn’t talk to me because I’m stupid.” The truth may be that Dad left because he was selfish, immature, and chose to abandon his family, but the child will conclude “Dad left because I wasn’t good enough for him to want to stay.” The truth may be that Mom and Dad are cocaine addicts and spend all their money on drugs, but the child will conclude “I never get birthday presents because I am bad and don’t deserve them.” Theophostic ministry will be helpful in any situation where lies are part of the problem, and therefore will almost always be beneficial for those who have suffered type “A” trauma.

Another part of the answer becomes clear once we realize that the lies associated with type “A” trauma will often become infected with judgments and bitterness, and that the lies, judgments, and bitterness will usually become infested with demonic spirits. Theophostic ministry will be helpful in any situation where lie-associated judgments, bitterness, and demonic spirits are present.

Finally, there will usually be truth-based grief associated with type “A” trauma. Our perception is that Theophostic ministry can be helpful for truth-based grief and loss associated with type “A” trauma in the same way that it can be helpful for truth-based grief and loss associated with

¹See Friesen, James, Wilder, James, et al. “Living From The Heart Jesus Gave You” (Morris Publishing: Kearney, NE, 2000), p. 42-46 for careful definitions and additional comments regarding the two different types of trauma.

type “B” traumas.²

A more difficult question is “Will Theophostic ministry *completely* resolve the effects of type “A” trauma? Is there anything left after lies, judgments, bitterness, demonic infestation, and truth-based grief are removed?” The answer to this question is not as clear or as simple, and we are still pondering, observing, and dialoguing with colleagues. Here are a few thoughts:

We have been pleasantly surprised with the way in which Jesus fills huge love and affirmation deficits when He comes with truth and healing. It seems that being loved and affirmed by the Master of the Universe is very effective in compensating for lack of human love and affirmation.

It makes sense that the person receiving ministry will still have to “make up” learning tasks that have been neglected as a part of type “A” trauma. A person who was never taught to read as a part of deprivation trauma will probably have lies about being stupid, and these lies will hinder him from learning, even when he has been removed from the deprived environment. It will be important to remove the “I can’t read because I’m stupid” lies. However, he will still have to learn to read, even after all deprivation-associated lies have been resolved. Another example would be children who have been severely over-controlled by abusive parents. They seem to need to learn how to think and make decisions for themselves, even after deprivation-associated lies have been resolved.

It also makes sense that the person receiving ministry will have to “make up” developmental tasks that have not occurred normally because of type “A” trauma. However, our perception is that “remedial” development occurs very quickly once the lies, judgments, demonic spirits, etc. have been resolved with Theophostic ministry. The time required to “make up” developmental tasks is dramatically reduced as compared to the usual time required in childhood. For example, a developmental task that requires 2-3 years in the normal course of childhood might require only several months.

Whatever the case may be with respect to needing other healing/remedial work in addition to Theophostic ministry, it seems very clear to us that using Theophostic to resolve lies, bitterness, judgments, demonic infestation, and truth-based grief will make it much easier to address any other aspects of type A trauma.

My own experience provides a good example of some of the principles just discussed: When my father was so busy during my childhood, a major part of the injury to me were the lies that became attached to his absence: “I am not special,” “I am not important,” “There is something wrong with me,” and “He doesn’t want to be with me.” These lies became infected with bitterness and judgment towards my father, and the lies, bitterness, and judgment provided a place for demonic infestation. Theophostic tools and techniques have been very effective for resolving the lies, releasing the judgments and bitterness, and eliminating the demonic infestation. This has produced dramatic benefit, with tangible changes in my behavior that Charlotte and I can both observe. However, Theophostic tools and techniques have not magically taught me skills I might have learned from my father, nor filled in memories from family times that didn’t happen.

²See “Bereavement, Grief, and Mourning” on the Ministry Aids page of our web site.