

# RISING FROM ASHES

CHRISTIAN PROGRAM

VOL. 2021 - 2022 CANADA

A CURRICULUM SUPPLEMENT DEVELOPED BY

TIMFLETCHER.CA

REACT



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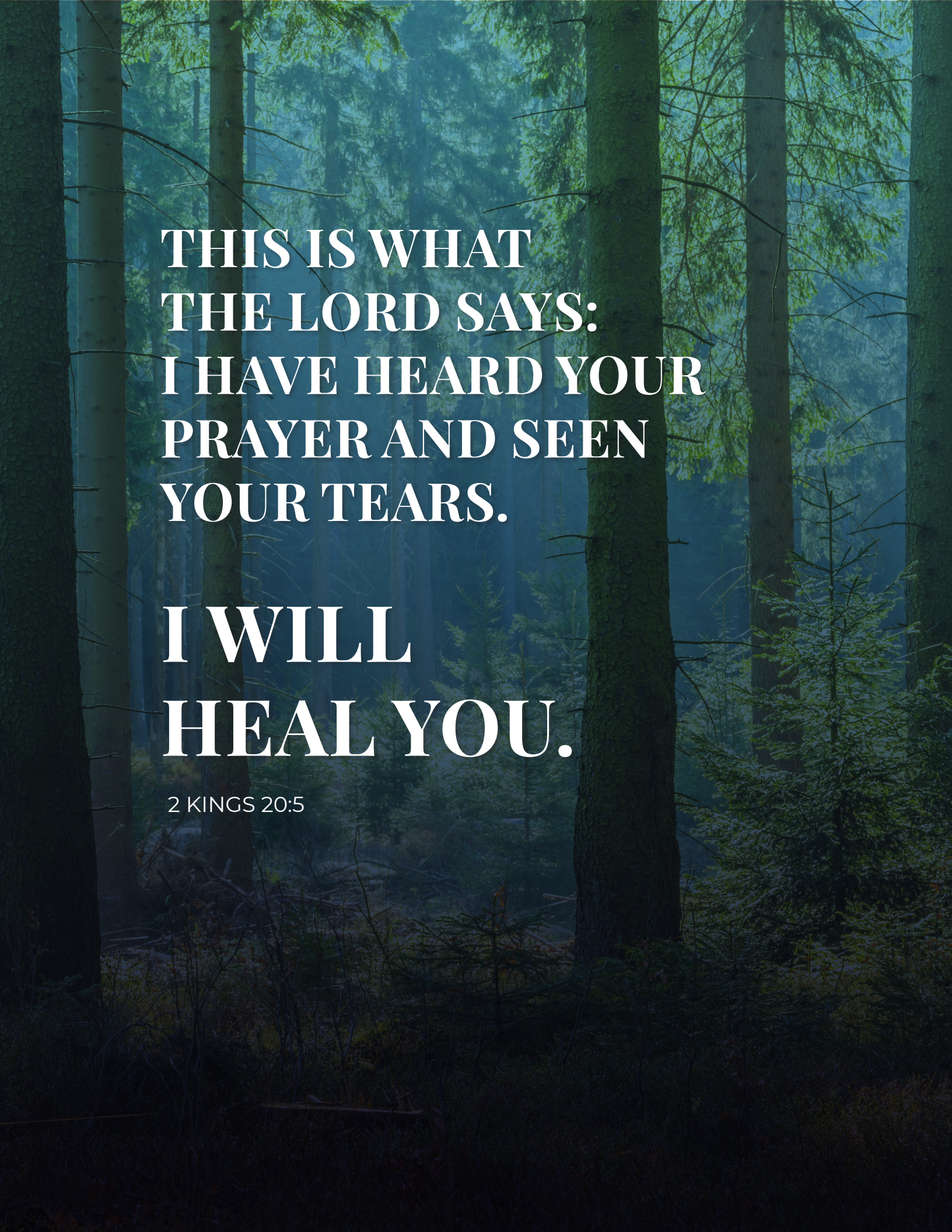
## **PHASE 2**

### **Introduction**

Complex Trauma Week  
Shame Week  
Anger Week  
Emotions Week  
Conflict Week  
Relationships Week  
Boundaries Week  
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Each Week Follows This Sequence:

Day 1 - Understanding the Issue  
Day 2 - How Complex Trauma Affects It  
Day 3 - Tools for Healing  
Day 4 - Discussion Day  
Day 5 - The Issue in its Most Difficult Context



**THIS IS WHAT  
THE LORD SAYS:  
I HAVE HEARD YOUR  
PRAYER AND SEEN  
YOUR TEARS.**

**I WILL  
HEAL YOU.**

2 KINGS 20:5

*“Unity occurs when diversity learns distinction and respect.”*

The Christian religion is considered to be the most fractured and divided of all religions on the globe. After Jesus came, the good news spread quickly! The origination of the gospel was interpreted thousands of ways to suit many diverse cultures, languages and people. However, there are two absolutes that are agreed upon: God is constant - meaning he never changes or fails us and there are no mistakes in God’s plan, ever.

If there is purpose to be found in this “broken” religion of His, what would that be? Read 1 Corinthians Chapter 12: 1 - 31

The human body is a finely tuned instrument with each part working together in harmony. This multi-organ function is too great a construction for man to fully comprehend - but God does. This Rising From Ashes supplement doesn’t speak of fracturing and division, but speaks of diversity and distinction. When we look at Christianity through the lens of humanity, we don’t see the whole picture - but God does.

He sees one universal church working in all parts of the globe. Utilizing gifts, talents, abilities, societies, with motives in acts of service to fulfill His purpose. The lifeblood of that church, is the body and the blood of Jesus.

**The chapter ends with the verse 31b: And yet I will show you the most excellent way.**

Glory doesn’t go to man and his ability to build a mega church or a super religion. God gets the glory. All of it. May we put on the lenses empathy and understanding, appreciation and awe at the incredible work God is doing to build His Church as His body. And may we do just that in the study of this book as well together.

- Cindy McKay & Shannon Vanderlinde

Rising From Ashes Christian Supplement - Thriving Beyond Complex Trauma

A woman with long hair, wearing a pink hoodie, is sitting in a field at dusk or dawn. She is holding an open book and looking down at it. The background is a soft, blurred landscape with trees and a sky transitioning from blue to orange.

BOUNDARIES WEEK

# BOUNDARIES IN THE BIBLE

## THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

*“And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.”*

Genesis 12: 2-3

People who come out of Complex Trauma live with a feeling that no one truly knows them or cares. They may have prayed asking God for help, but when the abuse did not stop, they questioned God's love for them. If they continued to pray and have no relief from their pain, they feel abandoned. Part of the shame message they create is that they must be too bad for God, or others to love them.

If someone says, "I love you" they don't believe it. When a person is convinced they are unlovable, they develop defence mechanisms to discount any attempt by others to love them.

**How can we help people understand how much they are loved?**

*God finally frees the Israelites from the 430 years of slavery in Egypt and they cross the desert to reach Mt Sinai.*

The Israelites had been slaves in Egypt for 430 years before they were set free and entered the desert. During that time, their suffering was so bitter, they often prayed to God to be delivered from the bondage they were in. Four Hundred and Thirty years is a lot of generations of Complex Trauma and abuse.

God looked to be distant, cruel, totally uninvolved and uncaring. Their prayers appeared to be unanswered and they didn't think God was doing anything. They doubted whether God loved them or was committed to them. They wondered if He really would make them into a great nation and bless them. They felt abandoned by God and were ruled by fear. This had a traumatic and profound affect on how they thought and acted.

When God finally brought the Israelites out of slavery, he knows that just saying, "I love you" will not penetrate their hearts. Actions speak louder than words. Just because he didn't rescue them right away didn't mean that he didn't love them.

## So what does God do?

God asked, what natural things do humans do that communicate love bigger and louder than anything else? They get married! He sets up a wedding ceremony at Mt. Sinai, where part of the promise was that God will take the Israelites to be His people.

## *Scripture Readings:*

- **Jeremiah 2: 2** - "Thus says the LORD, "I remember the devotion of your youth, your life as a bride, how you followed me in the wilderness, in a land not sown."
- **Exodus 6:7** - "I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who has brought you out from under the burden of the Egyptians."



The term 'take' was used for marriage such as taking a bride.

The components of a Jewish wedding are described as; "The dawning wedding day heralds the happiest and holiest day of one's life. This day is considered a personal **Yom Kippur** (fasting) for the bride and groom, for on this day all their past mistakes are forgiven as they merge into a new, complete soul."

God recruited Moses to help with the preparations. When Moses went up to Mt Sinai, the people were to have a day of purification and fasting just like a bride would do before her wedding day. That day of purification was also to make sure they confessed all their faults before God and their hearts were right with God.



There are three main components to a Jewish wedding:

- **The Chuppah** or **Canopy** where the ceremony would be performed. This becomes the symbol of the home the new couple would have and build together. There weren't any walls as it was open for others to be welcome, showing their hospitality.

The roof over top symbolized the protection of God that he would have over them.

The people stood under the great cloud that acted as the chuppah.

- **Mikvah** is a purification bath. The bride fasts, confesses her sins and then she takes a bath. This way she is said to be purified on the outside and on the inside.

- **Ketubah** is the marriage contract. The couple writes two copies. One is for the bride and the other belongs to the group attending the ceremony.

To protect the precious relationship between Himself and His people, God came up with 10 "Boundaries" and called them the **10 Commandments**. These are God's Wedding Vows. Moses came down from Mt Sinai with two tablets of stone. The first tablet was not 1-5 and the second 6-10 but rather both tablets had commandments 1-10. One copy for the people of Israel and the other for the rest of humanity.



## Scripture Readings:

- **Exodus 19: 16** - "On the morning of the third day there were thunder and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled."
- **Exodus 16:10** - "The LORD said to Moses, 'Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments.'"

**The wedding vows or boundaries God wrote for his people are:**

**1. You shall have no other gods before me**

- Put me first and have no other lovers. You will be treasured and nothing will come between you in my heart. Cheating will destroy trust, intimacy and our relationship. DO NOT allow our affections to drift that would destroy having each other as first place in our hearts.

**2. You shall not make for yourself a carved image**, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but show steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

- Do not dwell on your former lovers. Don't listen to them, if this is going to work we need to make a clear break. If we flirt with our old relationships they will gain power over us.

**3. You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain**, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.

- The groom gives the bride his name. Don't treat it lightly or in vain so let's value each other and be proud of our new relationship.
- In Jewish culture, the future groom offers a cup of wine and the future bride drinks from it as an acceptance of the proposal. *This is what Jesus did on the night before he died. He gave a cup to his disciples and said he was going to prepare a place for them to live.*
- Once they get to the marriage, there was a second cup called the cup of the covenant. Jesus says that one day in the future, his engaged bride is going to drink the cup with him in heaven. *When the bride takes the second cup and drinks it, she says she is now taking his name and committing herself to a new identity and relationship.*

**4. Remember the Sabbath day**, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labour, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

- I will make time for you, to love you, enjoy you and to get to know you better. So I would like you to spend quality time with me.

5. **Honour your father and your mother**, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

- I will live with a foundational value of treating you with respect, so treat me with respect.

6. **You shall not murder**

- I will hang onto a resentment in those times that you hurt me but I will forgive.

7. **You shall not commit adultery**

- I will be faithful. You must be too.

8. **You shall not steal**

- I will supply your needs so that you don't need to covet what others have.

9. **You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour**

- I commit to a relationship of openness and honesty. We will not bottle up hurts but rather deal with them so that I do not lash out at you. There will not be secrets or masks but rather we will be authentic.

10. **You shall not covet your neighbour's house**; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbour's.

- Don't crave another's spouse, possessions or servants. I will supply all your needs, accept and be content with you.

The 10 Commandments are often viewed, especially by children, as a set of 'Rules' that are God's way of controlling them. They see God as a rule-maker, not because it was best for everybody, but rather, He wanted to take everyone's fun away. The belief is that fun is to be found by breaking the rules. This becomes the goal of young children, especially if they have prayed for God's help and he appears to have abandoned them.

We are all children of God and He created boundaries out of His great love for us (the Bible is His Book of Love!). The 10 Commandments teach us that true love is a commitment. It is an agreement that regardless of how we are feeling on each day, we will still be open, honest and respect one another. We deal with anger and forgive each other. All of this is how love works itself out in action. God is saying, "Here are the boundaries to protect relationships and to make love last." God has recreated a wedding ceremony for us today. Although He is a great and awesome God, he still wants us to be His bride regardless of how 'damaged' we think we are. He commits himself to us.

## QUESTIONS TO PONDER

**1. Have you ever considered God's Commandments to be loving?**

How does it change your perspective of them? How does it make you feel?

**2. Are there areas in your life of love with God that you can grow?**

Do you see any similarities between yourself and the nation of Israel?

### PRAYER REFLECTIONS:

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