



FREE TO BE A MAN

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TAKE THE MASK OFF & RIDE THE OPEN ROAD OF GRACE!

Many men try to hide and pretend they are not broken. But this only leads to more hiding, pretending, and despair—and nothing ever changes. We fear that God is almost never pleased.

This study will lead us into the light between two very different underlying motives: our determination to please God or to trust him. One results in a striving that never feels it has done enough to please him. The other results in a trust that experiences his full pleasure.

Our motives as Jesus followers will either keep us enslaved in our hiding or free us into God's Adventure for our lives. Let's discover the Open Road of Grace together!

RIDE ON!

THE SAD JOURNEY OF HIDING!

Galatians 5:1 Romans 5:20, 21 Ephesians 2:8-10

TAKE THE MASK OFF – UNRESOLVED SIN KILLS THE HEART!

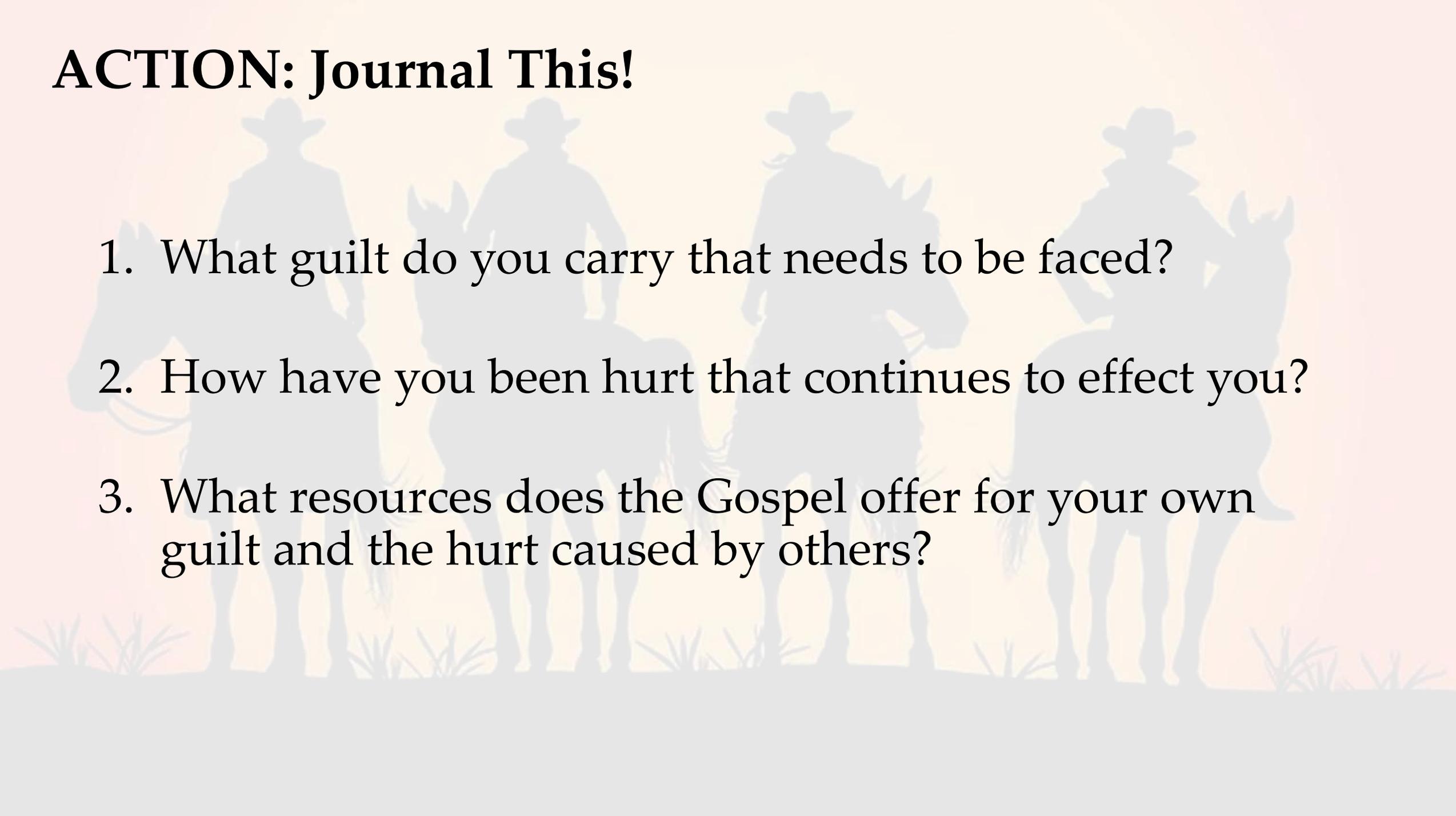
1. HOW DID I GET HERE?!?! → We need to see “where we are” and “how we got there.” We need to see ourselves in our story, to see what causes and nurtures the responses that trip us up. We must see what causes and nurtures the responses that trip us up. We must see that our controlling behavior isn’t a response to something happening in the present. It was triggered by some sin in the past that never got resolved. If we can begin to understand the phases of unresolved sin and discover what is happening to us, we may no longer react to life like lemmings heading for a cliff.
2. THE JOURNEY OF HIDING → 3 phase process.
 - 1) Act of Sin →
 - 2) Involuntary Response →
 - 3) Inevitable Effect

Someone sins against us or we sin against someone else, and that act of sin evokes within us an involuntary response (Romans 2:15). We don’t have to work at producing these responses. They are automatic. If we do the sinning, our involuntary response is called guilt (Psalm 51:3-14). If someone else sins against us, our involuntary response is called hurt (Psalm 31:12; 41:7-10; 52:2-4). God designed these two responses to tell us that something wrong has happened – something just got fractured and needs healing. Our involuntary responses will progress to inevitable effects, unleashing a new depth of pain, inner turmoil, and mask-wearing. Hope begins by understanding the effect of guilt and hurt and applying God’s resources and power to resolve that sin.

TAKE THE MASK OFF – THE EFFECTS OF UNRESOLVED SIN!

1. **GUILT & HURT MUTATE** → When we trust our own ideas about how to handle our guilt or hurt, we allow something much worse to be released in us. Suddenly, our guilt or hurt morphs into half a dozen or more ugly inevitable effects. Something under our own roof begins to destroy us! By not dealing with our guilt and hurt, we invite harm and make themselves right at home.
2. The effects of unresolved sin—guilt and hurt—leads us down a path of destructive, self-protective experiences that produces any number of inevitable effects.
 1. **Shame** = Guilt produces shame when I fail to acknowledge what I have done wrong. Hurt produces shame in the form of feeling demeaned and humiliated.
 2. **Blame** = We can blame others because we feel shame or we can feel shame because of blame.
 3. **Fear** = Guilt creates a barrier in relationships. Hurt convinces us that others cannot be trusted.
 4. **Denial** = Prevents us from facing the truth about ourselves. If we are the offender, it allows us to deny that we've done anything wrong. If we are the offended, it allows us to deny that the sin done to us has affected us.
 5. **Anger** = Brings a heroic sense of purpose to our guilt or our hurt. It gives us energy, explosive and unpredictable energy. "Somebody's gonna pay!" It allows us to play the victim or demand justice. It prevents the truth from being known or embraced.

ACTION: Journal This!

The background of the slide features a soft, warm sunset gradient. Overlaid on this are the silhouettes of four cowboys riding horses. They are arranged in a line, moving from left to right. The cowboys are wearing wide-brimmed hats and long coats. The horses are also silhouetted, and their manes and tails appear to be blowing in the wind. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

1. What guilt do you carry that needs to be faced?
2. How have you been hurt that continues to effect you?
3. What resources does the Gospel offer for your own guilt and the hurt caused by others?