**Growing in Leadership by Healing Your Past**

Our family of origin impacts how we function and minister, often in unconscious ways. This workshop will help leaders gain greater awareness about how their past is shaping their present struggles, discern growth pathways, and achieve emotional freedom and healing in their ministries and personal lives.

**René Breuel** is the lead pastor of Hopera, a church in Rome, Italy. He has a MDiv from Regent College, Canada; a MSt in Creative Writing from Oxford University; and is the author of *The Paradox of Happiness*. He is married to Sarah and is the father of two boys.

1. MY JOURNEY
   1. Future-oriented, results-driven, and skills-focused
      1. Pros
      2. Cons
   2. Mid-life crisis
      1. Characteristics
      2. New adolescence
      3. Review of my childhood and adolescence
   3. New functioning
      1. More self-aware
      2. Richer spiritual life: George Herbert and *The Valley of Vision*
      3. More attuned to the hardships of others
      4. Closer to family of origin
      5. More intentional about friendships and support structures
2. UNDERSTANDING OUR FAMILY OF ORIGIN

“That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.”

Genesis 2:24

“Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may live long and that it may go well with you in the land the Lord your God is giving you.” Deuteronomy 5:16

**The story of a family**

* Abraham: separates from his father. Physical distance. God’s blessing.
* Sarah: doesn’t believe. Offers an alternative wife/mother to Abraham. Rejects Ismael.
* Isaac: attached to his mother. Favors Esau over Jacob.
* Jacob: sibling rivalry. Escapes. Romantic solution. Fosters rivalry among sister-wives.
* Rachel e Leah: compete for Jacob’s love. Children are their redemption.
* Joseph: heir of the promise but also conflicts. Is betrayed but overcomes the curse. Forgives, blesses, and facilitates Jacob’s blessing.



“Isaac brought her into the tent of his mother Sarah, and he married Rebekah. So she became his wife, and he loved her; and Isaac was comforted after his mother’s death.”

Genesis 24:67

Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, the wife of his son Abram, and together they set out from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to Canaan. But when they came to Harran, they settled there. Terah lived 205 years, and he died in Harran.

The Lord had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.

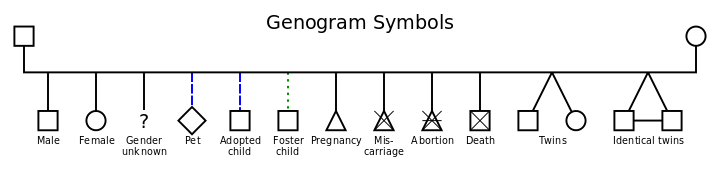
“I will make you into a great nation,  
    and I will bless you;  
I will make your name great,  
    and you will be a blessing.   
I will bless those who bless you,  
    and whoever curses you I will curse;  
and all peoples on earth  
    will be blessed through you.”

Genesis 11:31-12:1-3

“Leah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Reuben, for she said, “It is because the Lord has seen my misery. Surely my husband will love me now.” Genesis 29:32

1. BUILD YOUR FAMILY GENOGRAM
   * 1. Draw your relatives and types of relationships
     2. Describe these people and these relationships. How were they? What have they passed down?
     3. Identify the dynamics and the events that have most shaped you.

"One of the most difficult things in life is to gain emotional separateness from that powerful early family environment and not continually repeat or react against it.”   
Ronald Richardson



1. ANSWER YOUR WOUNDS WITH THE GOSPEL

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Wound** | **Message** | **How I reacted** | **Filters** | **What does God say now** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

“Then the Lord came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the Lord. And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, “The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation.”

Exodus 34:5-7

Then he blessed Joseph and said,

“May the God before whom my fathers  
    Abraham and Isaac walked faithfully,  
the God who has been my shepherd  
    all my life to this day,  
the Angel who has delivered me from all harm  
    —may he bless these boys.  
May they be called by my name  
    and the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac,  
and may they increase greatly  
    on the earth.” Genesis 48:14-15

“I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt!And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you.” Genesis 45:4b-5

***Suggested Readings:***

Pete Scazzero, *The Emotionally Healthy Leader*

Jenny Brown, *Growing Yourself Up*

Ronald Richardson, *Families Ties That Bind*

Henry Cloud and John Townsend, *Our Mothers, Ourselves*

Robert Karen, *Becoming Attached*

R. Robert Creech, *Family Systems and Congregational Life*

*The Valley of Vision*