



RAPHA RESTORED / WRITING TO HEAL

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What Story Have You Been Believing About Yourself?

A Scripture-centered writing reflection • Inspired by Writing to Heal by Samone D. Johnson

Examine the narrative. Return to the Word. Respond with intention.

Not Everything You Believe About Yourself Is True

Some of the things we believe about ourselves were never spoken by God. They came from experiences: rejection, disappointment, abandonment, failure, or the words of people who hurt us. Sometimes they came from conclusions we made when we were too overwhelmed or wounded to see clearly.

Somewhere along the way, those conclusions became part of our identity. We stopped saying, “Something painful happened to me,” and started saying, “Something must be wrong with me.” We stopped saying, “I failed at something,” and started believing, “I am a failure.”

Who told you that was true?

And more importantly, have you examined that belief through the Word of God?

This reflection is not about pretending your experiences did not happen. It is about learning to distinguish what happened to you from what you have come to believe about who you are.

We are going to slow down, open Scripture, and do some honest reflection. You do not need to manufacture a breakthrough today. You just need to be willing to examine what you have been carrying.

Before you begin

Choose a quiet place, have your Bible nearby, and give yourself permission to be honest. If a question brings up something overwhelming, you can stop and return when you are ready.

What Have You Been Telling Yourself?

We all interpret our experiences. Sometimes those interpretations are accurate. Sometimes they are incomplete. And sometimes a painful experience becomes the foundation for a belief that follows us for years.

Someone abandons you, and you begin believing you are unworthy of love. You experience repeated criticism, and you begin believing nothing you do will ever be enough. You make a serious mistake, and you begin believing your past disqualifies you from a meaningful future.

The experience may be real. The pain may be real. But the conclusion you have drawn about your identity still deserves examination.

1. What is one negative belief about yourself that keeps showing up in your thoughts or decisions?

2. Where do you think that belief began? Consider an experience, relationship, or recurring message.

3. How has this belief influenced the way you live, relate to others, or approach God?

You are not required to minimize your pain or blame yourself for the ways someone else treated you. The purpose is to recognize a belief so you can examine it honestly.

What Does the Word Actually Say?

Read Ephesians 4:17-24 in your Bible, especially verses 20-24 (NASB 2020).

Paul contrasts the believers' former way of life with the new life they have learned in Christ. He calls them to put off the old self, be renewed in the spirit of their minds, and put on the new self, reflecting God's righteousness and holiness.

Paul does not simply tell believers to think more positively about themselves. He grounds changed living in learning Christ and the truth found in Him.

Our feelings deserve acknowledgment, but they are not the final authority on truth. Our experiences help explain why we believe certain things, but they do not have the authority to redefine what God has revealed.

1. According to this passage, what is the foundation for the believer's new way of life?

2. What does this passage teach about renewal and putting off the former way of life?

3. Is the belief you named consistent with Scripture, contradicted by Scripture, or not directly addressed? Do not force the passage to say what it does not say.

4. What other biblical passage could help you examine this belief more carefully?

Knowing the Truth and Living by It Are Not the Same Thing

You can recognize an unhealthy belief and still struggle with it. You can understand what Scripture teaches and still need time, support, prayer, and practice to respond differently.

Renewal is not pretending you no longer struggle. Spiritual growth is not measured by how quickly you stop feeling pain. It involves learning to live according to the truth you have received.

Step 1 — Name the belief.

The belief I want to examine is:

Step 2 — Identify the biblical truth.

The passage I studied teaches:

Step 3 — Choose one intentional response.

When this belief shows up again, one practical action I can take is:

Your response might involve pausing before reacting, praying honestly, reviewing Scripture in context, challenging an unfair conclusion, seeking wise counsel, or setting an appropriate boundary.

Step 4 — Identify the support you may need.

Is there someone trustworthy who could help you process this further?

Am I willing to examine a belief I have held for years if God's Word challenges it?

Healing Is Not About Pretending the Wound Never Happened

Some experiences leave marks. There are things we remember, grieve, and may need help processing. Faith does not require us to deny those realities.

But we can examine the meaning we have attached to our experiences. We can bring our questions to God, study His Word carefully, and practice responding in ways that reflect what we are learning in Christ.

Not instant perfection. Not a promise that every painful feeling will disappear. An intentional willingness to stop allowing unexamined beliefs to speak with more authority than the truth of God.

What is one thing you want to continue studying, praying about, or working through?

A Prayer

Father, help me recognize beliefs I have carried without examining them carefully. Give me courage to be honest about my experiences without allowing them to become the final authority over my identity. Teach me to understand Your Word in context. Correct what is false, strengthen what is true, and help me respond with wisdom and obedience. Where I need support, give me humility to seek it. Where I need patience, help me practice it. Continue Your work in me as I follow Christ more faithfully. In Jesus' name, amen.

Continue Your Journey with Writing to Heal

Turn to the next page for an invitation to explore the full book and continue your reflection.

Psalm 107:20 • This reflection is for biblical education and personal growth, not a substitute for professional counseling or mental health care. Pause or seek qualified support when needed.

Continue Your Journey with Writing to Heal

This reflection is one opportunity to examine the stories you've believed about yourself through the truth of God's Word.

If you're ready to explore those beliefs more deeply, Writing to Heal: A 12-Month Journey offers guided biblical reflection, honest questions, and practical writing exercises to help you engage with your experiences, challenge false narratives, and grow in your relationship with Christ.

Healing is a journey, and you don't have to rush the process.

Explore Writing to Heal >

Book purchase page: <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0GHJ3VP6T>