



## Spiritual Miscarriage by Joe Ferrante

When I was younger, I had big dreams for my life. A few times they came to pass, but many times they just died. Never knowing what to do with those dead dreams, and not wanting to wallow in self-pity, I would anesthetize my pain with some bright new venture. What I didn't realize though, was that I was carrying death inside of me.

My dead dreams surfaced one night quite unexpectedly. I had spent an evening with friends whom I had not seen for five years, reminiscing about the good times we had shared together in ministry. (We avoided however, talking about the conflicts that had brought that ministry down.) Later that night, as I was thinking about those years - out of nowhere - a tidal wave of grief crashed onto the shores of my mind. Through my tears I cried out, "God, we had such big dreams for our lives back then! Why did they all have to die? And why does this still hurt five years later?"

God showed me that I had never grieved through my emotional and spiritual losses. Like a pregnant woman whose unborn child is miscarried, so my ministry and relationship visions also had miscarried, sometimes through circumstances beyond my control. I had the same symptoms of suffering for my shattered dreams that a woman often experiences after miscarrying a child.

Feelings of loss. For a woman, the life lost was part of her body, not a separate person - so no one else knew that life. Since my dreams had been deep inside me, no one else fully understood what I had lost.

Feelings of grief. Without a tangible body to mourn, there's no rite of grieving for the mother's loss; so her miscarriage grief becomes dammed up in a reservoir with no outlet. Not knowing what to do with the pain of losing my visions, I had simply buried them all inside of me.

Feelings of fear. If her past grief is unresolved, a woman will often fear another pregnancy because she may lose that child, too. After losing several ministries that I had helped lead, I became fearful of having anything to do with spiritual leadership again.

Instead of grieving through my losses, I had become stuck in my grief. I needed a funeral for my miscarried dreams. Over the next few months, the Lord took me through a period of healing, out of which I learned some important principles.



I had to acknowledge the pain, because my pain revealed where I needed healing. It was not something to be ashamed of - the reason I had pain was because I had really cared, really trusted.

I had to ask God to heal. I had asked Him for help to forgive those who killed my dreams, but I had never asked God to heal the wounds left by those losses. Some of the pain remained buried within me.

I had to take the risk to love again. Since my shattered dreams involved relationship failures, I had to love again if I ever hoped to be healed. And that meant risking pain all over again.

And then I could dream again! It's never too late to get pregnant with new vision! When God heals the hurt from our spiritual miscarriages, we can face the future with hope instead of fear.

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