

JESUS AND THE BROKEN-HEARTED

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Is there hope for healing a broken heart? Something or someone has just broken your heart. You were caught off-guard by a betrayal, a shocking behavior, or loss of a loved one. Suddenly you are feeling like you've lost all hope . . . you can feel a physical aching in your chest that leaves you wounded and scarred.

Have you ever experienced what it's like to be broken hearted? Do you know the pain anguish inside? People usually experience a broken heart when they lose a loved one or when a relationship breaks down such as parents divorcing or a boyfriend and girlfriend break up. Divorce is a terrible thing, it does more damage than good. God never intended for divorce, yet today we see more and more family falling victim to divorce. My heart goes out to people who have suffered from divorce, especially the innocent ones—the children. The children go through a lot when such a thing happens to their life. Your sense of security is taken away, its like as if someone has pulled the foundation from under your feet. Worse still their heart has now been torn in two, because they love both their mum and dad and are usually required to choose with whom they wish to live with. How can a child choose one over the other? They love both so much, its not fair for them to be put in such a position. Life is like this though, many storms come our during this journey called life and there are

many things that we have no control over, this is just one of them.

Once there was a young man who proclaimed to have the most beautiful, flawless heart. An old man challenged him. The crowd looked at the old man's heart. It was beating strongly, but full of scars. Some pieces had been removed and others had been put in, but didn't fit quite right. The old man looked at the young man, "I would never trade my heart for yours. Every scar represents a person I've given my love—I tear out a piece and give it to them. Sometimes they give me a piece of their broken heart, which I fit along jagged edges. When the person doesn't return my love, a painful gouge is left. Those gouges stay open, reminding me that I love these people too. Perhaps someday they will return and fill that space."

Each one of us has a particular level at which our emotions overflow and we cry out, "God help me!" We may have just received disappointing results to a medical test or some devastating news from a family member. Our emotions are a mess! We don't know if we're angry, panicked, scared, fearful of the future. . .we do know that we can't continue on our own strength.

Sometimes these emotions are too much for us to handle and they spill onto others. When first diagnosed with cancer, I was fearful of going blind. I vented anger at my caretakers. Did you ever notice that fear and anger are siblings? Harsh words are exchanged between individuals, fearing betrayal in their relationships. Fear concerning a medical test generates anger when cancer is confirmed. It

doesn't even matter if the anger/fear is clearly justified . . . it still continues to ferment.

At the heathen or pagan court of the kings of ancient Persia, if you appeared sad, you could be put in prison. You were required to keep a frozen smile on your face continually, and obviously jokes and comedy were the way of life. The Bible tells how Nehemiah, serving in the presence of the king, was afraid because he was too honest to try to wipe that frozen smile off his face, because he was broken-hearted for the honor of God involved in the ruin of Jerusalem (Neh 2:1-3). God loves honesty, even if it means that a broken heart must express itself. We read in Ps. 34:18, "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." Sounds very strange for 2010, doesn't it? We suppose He is very "nigh" unto the smiling, happy people—if you're not singing for joy there must be something wrong with your so-called "relationship with Jesus." Many assume that it's virtually a sin to be broken-hearted. But by the use of a poetic double negative we are assured in Ps 51:17 of the Lord's special favor to the broken-hearted: "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."

Was Jesus ever broken-hearted? Not in the sense that He yielded to sinful unbelief, no; but we read that He took upon His happy heart our broken-heartedness. For example, we read that He was "despised and rejected of men" and it hurt Him, for He was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Isa 53:3). You can't talk about having "a

friendship with Jesus" without relating to that aspect of His character. The closer you come to Him the more you will appreciate that truth. And because He was very sorrowful on His cross, we read that the human race despised Him for it: "We did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted" (vs. 4). "We" wanted an always smiling Messiah, not a broken-hearted One. How about His great heart of love today? Does He sympathize with all the sorrowing, pain-ridden people on earth? Yes! He longs to put an end to sin and the sorrow it brings. And the closer we come to Him, the more we will share His concern.

Here's a shocker: the closer you come to Jesus Christ, the bigger you will realize your problem to be. Come VERY close to Him, and you will "taste" the depth of the darkness He experienced on His cross when He cried out, "My God, why hast Thou forsaken ME?" If one has never grown up out of innocent childhood, he may never think or feel on that level; but Jesus did. "Why doesn't God DO something?" is the heart-cry of the person who dares to think, not only about his own tiny little problems.

When Jesus was on the cross on Calvary: in that total darkness, while He hung there in that deepest perplexity and despair, He made a choice-to BELIEVE that His Father was good even though everything was shouting in His ears that His Father was unjust. In total darkness, in the vastness of empty heart-broken space, He built a great bridge between alienated humanity and God. It's called the Atonement, the at-one-ment. If His Father has

forsaken Him, HE WILL NOT FORSAKE HIS FATHER. On His cross He built something out of nothing like He had created a universe out of nothing. At any cost, He will believe Good News. He will create Good News. You don't have to build that Bridge; all you have to do is, well, believe that He built it.

Have you been hurt, lied to? Do you feel that there is no one you can trust? Have those you loved and trusted abused and laughed at you?

Jesus is the Divine Psychiatrist. He is listening twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Tell Him what is troubling you. He will take your burden. He loves you with an "everlasting love" that exceeds your wildest imagination. Jesus will never leave you stranded on the roadside or forsake you when the chips are down. He is always there. If you will let Him, He will pick up the pieces of your life, rearrange them, and put them in perfect order. All you have to do is recognize your need and believe that "He is able!"

There is no greater joy or peace than falling into the arms of our Redeemer. To the devil-possessed Jesus said: "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace" (Luke 7:50). To the woman tormented 18 years He said: "Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace" (Luke 8:48). To all of us Jesus says: "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

Is there healing for painful childhood memories? Is there healing for abused women and men?

Yes, the Lord "has a desire" to free you from the painful burden of those memories. But to make you a mental zombie with no memory and no susceptibility to pain would not enhance your personality. Happiness is not a mindless, vacuous euphoria. A grand piano makes beautiful music because its strings are under constant tension. The Lord does not propose to remove your memory tensions, but to give you strength from Christ to bear them in such a way that your life makes music by triumphing over the pain.

He may permit you to carry painful memories for the purpose of enabling you to comfort others. Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-6.

Think of the painful memories Christ must carry of the sufferings of His cross—the cruel rejection, the heartless scourgings, the mockery, the abuse, the pain, the horror of that great darkness, the guilt He felt as He was "made to be sin for us, who knew no sin." Does He forget all that? No, He remembers it but also triumphs over it. Thus He can "succor" [help] others (Hebrews 2:18).

Hold your head high, for you are a partaker of Christ in His sufferings. Accept the comfort for you in Colossians 1:24. "Of all the gifts that Heaven can bestow upon men [and women], fellowship with Christ in His sufferings is the most weighty trust and the highest honor" (Desire of Ages, p. 225).

How can you "give something so deeply ingrained in your psyche to Him"? As your High Priest, Christ is your divine Psychiatrist. You could go to an ordinary psychiatrist and pay over a \$100 an hour. He would listen as you verbally articulate all your

fears, horrors and resentments. Such therapy would run into weeks and months. But Christ charges you nothing, and He does a better job. On your knees, verbalize and articulate these memories and fears. Learn from Job, David and Jeremiah, how to pray. Out with everything before Him alone! Guard against the tendency to lay the burdens on other people—they can't endure them. Unload all the evil onto the divine Sin-bearer. I guarantee that He will listen and He will respond. He will give you peace of heart, but with it He will give something vastly more precious—compassion and understanding of how to comfort other people. (1 Peter 5:7-10; Psalm 37.)

Someone who loves you more than life itself is waiting for you with open arms.

Do you know your Psychiatrist? You may say, "I don't need a psychiatrist! I'm OK! Only sick, crazy people need a psychiatrist! You are insulting me—suggesting that I need one!"

David the psalmist needed a psychiatrist; his psalms are full of appeals for healing, such as Psalm 6, "Lord, don't be angry and rebuke me! ... I am worn out, O Lord; have pity on me! ... I am completely exhausted and my whole being is deeply troubled" (vss. 1-3, GNB). And also Psalm 22:14, 15: "My heart is like melted wax. ... [I am] left ... for dead in the dust."

In modern English, he said he was about to come unglued. He felt himself abandoned in a black hole for all eternity. Anyone who feels that way needs a psychiatrist, but not an ordinary one. And if you are a normal human being, you have very likely known what that feeling is, or at least, tasted it. Only a

mindless person without intelligence or feeling has escaped it.

As they rode home from the hospital, she chattered constantly, exhibiting her paranoia by saying: "Watch out, there's a car up there; I don't think it's going to stop." Or: "I'm not used to riding in cars, but don't worry, I won't jump out."

The closer they got to her home, the more anxious she became. Crying softly, she said: "My husband hasn't called me in three days, I know he's left me for his ex-wife. He's done that before."

As the tears streamed down her cheeks, rocking back and forth in the back seat of the car, she moaned: "I just know he's dead. He attempted to kill himself several times. He drinks himself stupid when I'm in the hospital. No one has seen him in several days; I know he's dead."

The best definition of the term "high priest" that appears throughout the Book of Hebrews is "Divine Psychiatrist," a physician of the soul. Several important truths about Him: (1) He is chosen "from among men" because He knows their troubles and temptations so He "can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that He Himself also is compassed with infirmity" (5:1, 2). (2) He has suffered and endured every temptation that has ever come to you (4:15). (3) He has conquered the fear that has plagued you all your life from the time you were born until today—conquered it because He suffered the second death that is always the focal point of your fear (2:14, 15). (4) Thus because "He Himself hath suffered being

tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted” (vs. 18).

The Bible specializes in ministering to some people who otherwise get little help: the broken-hearted. Jesus said of them, “Blessed [meaning, happy] are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted” (Matt. 5:4). Not just those mourning a bereavement, but those whose hearts are heavily burdened so they can’t do what everybody tells them to do—“just smile!” Jesus wants to give them some hope—“you shall be comforted, you will be happy again!”

Let HIM do it; give Him some personal time. Don’t expect drugs or medicine, or vacations, or new clothes, or TV comedies, or “fun,” or even psychology to do it. Any superficial remedy only drives the wound down deeper, to poison the soul in time to come. Be honest, as Nehemiah was. You “shall be comforted,” says Jesus, the Expert in brokenness of heart.

No matter what your problem is, He knows, He understands, He sympathizes with you, and you can trust His goodness. But it doesn’t mean that He sympathizes with the sin or that He excuses you for going on to commit it. He knows the sin will kill you, which is why He hates it. If you were standing on the windowsill of a skyscraper, He wouldn’t say sweetly, “I know how you are discouraged, so it’s OK with me for you to jump.” No, He would yell at you, “Get back in here! Don’t you dare do this! I know how you feel, for I too have been tempted to despair, but I overcame it, and I freely give you grace to overcome it too!” Why would He talk so

strongly? Because He loves you. You will appreciate Him more when you understand why He can’t stand your continued sinning. He has a better life for you.

That same grace which has justified you is given you to overcome every sin, every addiction. It is not merely offered to you provisionally IF. It is given to you: “Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” (verse 16).

Suppose you are an alcoholic. (a) The “mercy” gives you hope for forgiveness; (b) the “grace” assures you that you don’t deserve it and that you can’t save yourself—the basic principle of the famous Twelve Steps; (c) the “help” is deliverance from the addiction itself, not merely transferring it to other drugs or nicotine; (d) the “throne” tells you that the true so-called “Higher Power” is Jesus Christ, the Son of God Himself; (alcoholism is more than a disease, it is sin against Him and against His holy law that says, “Thou shalt not kill”); (e) the deliverance is from the root of it all—self-indulgence. The Good News is this: the deliverance gives you the grace to say “No!” to temptation every time it comes up. You “overcome” as “also [He] overcame” (Revelation 3:21). You are never alone, for you are with Him. His Holy Spirit gets to the root of your problem; healing is from inside out.

Suppose you are addicted to drugs. While Christ was in unspeakable agony on the cross, kind people offered Him a drug that would ease His pain. He was terribly tempted to bite down on that saturated sponge and get relief, but “He would not

drink” (Matthew 27:34). He chose to keep His mind clear so He could finish His work of becoming your Savior from addiction. He was tempted as you are, “yet without sin.” You can never duplicate what He did, but by His grace you can keep your mind clear so you can appreciate what He did for you.

Suppose you are into gambling. This insidious habit eats the soul out like acid. But what you could not do, “God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh” (Romans 8:3). If He “condemned sin” it must mean that He outlawed it, trampled it under foot, defeated it. In Christ you have freedom from this addiction. Use “the hand of faith” to grab it, and hang on to it. Don’t make the vain promise never to gamble again, but (1) choose not to, and then (2) ask your Savior to save you from it, and (c) thank Him for it. That’s the ABC of conquering this problem.

Suppose you are a slave to appetite. Same struggle, same victory. When Christ began His ministry, His first battle was with appetite, and He won a total victory for us (Matthew 4:2-4). Again, your victory has already been given you by grace; but you realize it “through faith.” Immerse yourself in the story of Christ’s battle and His victory. Let your mind grasp what happened. It’s useless to pray the Lord to take away temptation, for food is everywhere. He couldn’t answer your prayer unless He shut down all the supermarkets and restaurants in the world. But you can pray that His Holy Spirit may help you to grasp how grace is stronger than sin. Thus your faith will grow in strength. You don’t

need to fall even once. You simply let the Lord hold you by the hand. All He must have is your permission!

Sin is the murder of the Son of God, all over again. Those who refuse repentance “crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame” (Hebrews 6:6). The healing medicine will burn like healing acid down to the toes, but it will cleanse away this love of self. It’s a heavenly work, but this is what the High Priest does as our Divine Psychiatrist—He cauterizes and heals the wound. The blessing is coming, for He has promised to “pour” on us “the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they have pierced. In that day a fountain shall be opened for sin and for uncleanness” (Zechariah 12:10, 13:1). Blessed “fountain”!

Don’t try to take a detour away from God’s holy law, and skip around that cross. Fall on your knees, let the tears come freely, let your soul be melted, beg for Him to do His work, because, like a surgeon who will not operate without your full permission, He is too polite to do His work of cleansing your heart and healing you unless you give Him your full consent for the necessary “surgery” to take place. He has never lost a patient!

Worst of all, suppose you are a hard-hearted, selfish, worldly professed “Christian.” You are lukewarm, and you don’t know how to get over it, for it’s like a drunken stupor. You want to wake up but you’re paralyzed. You know in your own heart you are a disgrace to the Savior. Like the self-sufficient scribes and Pharisees who crucified Him,

you make people think you are pious and religious, but you know it's a lie. Yes, your case is the most difficult for Him to handle. Saving perverts and criminals is easier than healing a lukewarm church that is deluded, thinking it is "rich, and increased with goods, and [has] need of nothing" (Revelation 3:17, KJV). Jesus said that "harlots enter the kingdom of God before you" (Matthew 21:31).

But there is hope. He commands us, "Be zealous and repent" (Revelation 3:19). It's useless to think we repent when we try to confess the few "little sins" we add up. Real repentance includes the sin we didn't realize was in our hearts. Deep down, we are no better than anyone else. That stabs us awake, but it's true, because we have no righteousness of our own (Isaiah 64:6). Therefore, the sin of somebody else would be our sin but for the grace of Christ. The entire human race would be in ruin if Christ had not saved us, and you and I are a part of it. If the sin of the whole world was Adam's, then it's our sin. When we confess that, then we are ready to repent. Remember, the greater we recognize the sin to be, the greater the joy of realizing our forgiveness from it.

The Savior is the Lover of your soul. He has His hand on you now. Let Him lead you all the way. Welcome Him into your life and into your heart.

There is a classic picture of Jesus standing at a cottage door knocking, but there is no door handle on the outside. Jesus is knocking on the door of your heart, and it is time to open your heart to the Lord so He can heal you.