

Broken or Crushed pt 2 10-23-05

Ten years ago, Nancy Leigh DeMoss delivered a message to Campus Crusade called *What Kind of a Heart Does God Revive*. It was one of those messages that change the way you think and affects your relationship with God. I want to share some of that message with you, and some of my own thoughts on the topic since we have come to that passage in Matthew 21:44 (NIV) "*He who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, but he on whom it falls will be crushed.*"

We have been talking about the hardhearted Pharisees and their willingness to kill Jesus. Some may have had good intentions but found power and position to be so seductive that they would not let their hearts be revived. Miss DeMoss asks, "What kind of a heart does God revive?" Let us look at the Scriptures that address this issue.

Isaiah 57:15 (NIV) *For this is what the high and lofty One says-- he who lives forever, whose name is holy: "I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.*

Psalms 51:16-17 (NIV) *You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. ¹⁷ The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.*

Isaiah 66:2b (NIV) *"This is the one I esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word.*

Matthew 5:3-4 (NIV) ³ *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.*

James 4:8-10 (NIV) ⁸ *Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹ Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.*

In these passages of Scripture we see that God is with the lowly, that He revives the heart of the contrite. Contrite is synonymous with the word repentant. Those who are truly sorry, truly remorseful for their sin find the Lord near to them. God looks upon their need and blesses the poor in spirit. He sees their tears and lifts them up.

Brokenness is a gift of God, not a feeling or an emotion. It is a choice, an act of the will to receive that gift. The worldly definition of brokenness is sad, gloomy, or morbidly introspective. It pictures one in tears of forced humility, but tears may come without brokenness. You may be deeply hurt but remain unbroken. You can come to a great crisis in life, be very sorrowful, and yet be unbroken. Brokenness is agreeing with God about our life as He sees it. It is surrender to the will of God like a horse yields to the bridle after it is broken. It is a lifestyle of yielding to the Master's will, broken so that the life of Jesus might be released. It is being humbly responsive to conviction on a continuous basis. It is living in open communion with God, with the roof off so to speak, with nothing kept from Him. (John 3:21) It is also living with walls down, willing to love and be wounded.

Commented [notes1]: ²¹ But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God." John 3:21 (NIV)

The Scriptures are full of examples of broken men and women. Sometimes they are even set in contrast with one another. The first king of Israel was King Saul. If you asked why God turned from him, the best answer would probably be his incomplete obedience. (1 Samuel 15:22) David, on the other hand, was blessed by God, yet he was an adulterer, a liar, and a murderer. Still, he was called a man after God's heart. (Acts 13:22) What was the great difference? When Saul was confronted about his sin he confessed, but he went on to defend himself. His main concern was that the people not know. (1 Samuel 15:30) When David was confronted, he confessed, and penned psalms of confession for all to read. (2 Samuel 12:13) Broken people do not care who knows. It appears that God is more concerned about our heart attitude and response when we are confronted than the specific sin we commit.

Another clear contrast is the story Jesus told in Luke 18. It is the story of Pharisee and the tax collector in prayer. The Pharisee was confident in his own righteousness. He prayed about himself. He compared himself to others as the proud often do. The tax collector smote his chest and asked God to have mercy on him. It takes a broken heart to plead for mercy. (Luke 18:11-14)

In Luke 7 we read of the sinful women that came into the home of Simon the Pharisee. Simon had invited Jesus to eat with him, but did not wash His feet or anoint Him with oil according to the common custom of that day and culture. This sinful woman came weeping. She stayed behind Jesus at His feet and washed them with her tears and hair. Then she broke her alabaster box of perfume and anointed Jesus' feet. (Luke 7:37-38) Why was she crying? She knew she was a sinner and had experienced the undeserved mercy and grace of her Savior as He washed her black heart to pure white.

Then Jesus asked Simon a question. "Suppose there were two people who owed their master money. One owed a great sum, the other a small amount. The master forgave them both. Who will love the master more?" Simon replied, "I suppose, the one who was forgiven the most." Jesus told him that the one who is forgiven much loves much, but the one who is forgiven little loves little. I do not think it was because Simon had little to forgive. In fact, I think Simon's sin of self-righteousness was probably as abhorrent to Jesus as the women's sins. Simon just did not realize it.

In Luke 15 Jesus told three stories about the lost. The chapter begins by telling us that the tax collectors and sinners heard Him gladly, but the Pharisees and Scribes were murmuring. (Luke 15:1-2) The sinners considered Jesus their friend. Aren't you glad that we have a Savior that seeks those that are lost and know it? The last of those three stories is the Prodigal Son. He wasted his inheritance on wild living and ended up feeding hogs for a living. When he realized how far he had fallen, he became broken. He humbled himself and recognized his true condition. He realized he never should have left. He decided to return and ask if he could just be a servant. (Luke 15:17-19) He saw how unworthy he was. He threw himself on the grace and mercy of his father. He realized what a blessing it would be just to be a servant in his father's home.

Commented [notes2]: ²² But Samuel replied: "Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams.
1 Samuel 15:22 (NIV)

Commented [notes3]: ²² After removing Saul, he made David their king. He testified concerning him: 'I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.'
Acts 13:22 (NIV)

Commented [notes4]: ³⁰ Saul replied, "I have sinned. But please honor me before the elders of my people and before Israel; come back with me, so that I may worship the LORD your God."
1 Samuel 15:30 (NIV)

Commented [notes5]: ¹³ Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." Nathan replied, "The LORD has taken away your sin. You are not going to die.
2 Samuel 12:13 (NIV)

Commented [notes6]: ¹¹ The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men--robbers, evildoers, adulterers--or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.' ¹³ But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'¹⁴ "I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." Luke 18:11-14 (NIV)

Commented [notes7]: ³⁷ When a woman who had lived a sinful life in that town learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster jar of perfume, ³⁸ and as she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them. Luke 7:37-38 (NIV)

Commented [notes8]: ¹ Now the tax collectors and "sinners" were all gathering around to hear him: ² But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them."
Luke 15:1-2 (NIV)

Commented [notes9]: ¹⁷ "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! ¹⁸ I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. ¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.'
Luke 15:17-19 (NIV)

The father ran to meet him and called for a robe and ring to be put on him. He threw a party for him. But the older brother did not want to have anything to do with it. (Luke 15:28-30) He was the good son. He stayed faithful to his father. He had been working all this time, doing what was right. When he heard the party was for the wayward son, he could not believe it. Instead of seeing the brokenness and humility required to return and say you were wrong, he only saw the attention his brother was getting. He saw the wasted money and all the extra labor. An unbroken spirit only considers its own loss or gain, and cannot rejoice when others are exalted. Years of tenure, hidden desire for recognition, unfulfilled expectations can set us up to be 21st Century older brothers!

Commented [notes10]: ²⁸ "The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him.²⁹ But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends.³⁰ But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!' Luke 15:28-30 (NIV)

When the father went out to see the older son, according to Jewish tradition the party would have to stop and wait for his return. So today, in the church, there is a lack of joy and celebration as God deals with the proud, unbroken, feeling ripped off people. The higher we see ourselves the easier it is to be blinded to our own need, the more we think we have to lose if we are broken.

To whom do you relate? With the proud king Saul, the Pharisees, and the older brother or with adulterous David, the sinful woman, and the Prodigal Son? Are you proud and unaware of your sin, or humble and broken, just hoping the Father will accept you as a servant in his household?

Those caught in the sins of the flesh know they are sinful. Which is more offensive to God, the adulterer, murderer, abortionist who know they are sinners, or the one who knows God's word but refuses to yield to the Spirit, the proud, condemning, self-righteous one who thinks they are closer to God. The respectable elder brother cannot see his own heart.

What are some of the characteristics that would set us in one category or the other? I share these not that we might judge others, but that we might examine our own hearts. The unbroken focus on the failures of others, instead of being overwhelmed with their own sense of spiritual need. They are critical and quick to find fault. The broken are compassionate, think the best of others, and forgive much. They esteem others better than themselves. (Philippians 2:3) The proud are independent and have a self-sufficient spirit, but the broken are dependent on others and especially upon God. The proud have to prove they are right, while the meek are willing to accept that they may be the ones who are wrong. The proud protect their time, rights and reputation, while the broken are self-denying. The proud demand to be served, while the broken seek to serve others. The proud desire to be a success, while the broken just seek to be faithful. The proud are after self-advancement, but the broken promote others. The proud are driven to be recognized and feel wounded when they are overlooked. The broken always have a sense of their unworthiness and are just thrilled that God would use them in spite of themselves. They do not mind others getting the credit and rejoice when they are lifted up. The proud are self-conscious and think the ministry is lucky to have them and their gifts, while the broken know they do not deserve to have any part in the ministry and know that all they can offer is Jesus through their broken lives. The unbroken are confident and proud in what they know, but the broken are humbled by how much they have to learn. The proud

Commented [notes11]: ³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Philippians 2:3 (NIV)

think they have nothing to repent of, but the broken know they are in need of a continual heart attitude of repentance. The proud do not think they need revival but are sure everyone else does. The broken continually sense a need for a fresh encounter with the living God and a renewal of the Holy Spirit.

Why would you want to be broken? Brokenness brings blessedness. God is near to the humble, but resists the proud. (James 4:6) If you want to be embraced by the Father, you need to have the repentant heart of the Prodigal Son. Brokenness brings new life. Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and its outer hard shell is cracked, the new life will not spring forth. (John 12:24) When the hardness is broken, life flows out and produces fruit in others lives. Brokenness brings an increased capacity for worship. That woman in Luke 7 was oblivious to the scowls of the Pharisees. Her eyes were on her Savior. She was abandoned to all else but worshipping Him.

Brokenness leads to repentance, which leads to forgiveness, which brings freedom and a new capacity for love and worship. It brings a greater capacity to love God and others. That leads to deeper brokenness, and the cycle continues as we grow ever more like our Savior. Increased brokenness leads to fruitfulness.

Jacob's natural strength was broken at Peniel so that he could be clothed with true spiritual power. (Genesis 32:25) When the rock at Horeb was broken by Moses rod, life-giving water flowed out to meet the needs of the people. (Exodus 17:6) It was when Gideon's 300 men broke their pitchers that the light shone forth and panicked their enemy. (Judges 7:19-20) When Jesus broke the five loaves the bread was multiplied to meet the hunger of the multitude with an abundance left over. (Matthew 14:19) It was the broken alabaster jar of Mary that released the fragrance of worship. And the greatest example of all is the broken body of Jesus that gives life to the world. (1 Corinthians 11:24)

Brokenness brings revival. Revivals begin with prayer. People see there is a need and pray for God to meet it. Recognition of our need is a sign of brokenness. The Welsh revival's theme chorus was the words, "Bend me lower, lower, down at Jesus' feet." Their humble recognition of need transformed their communities.

The Shantung revivals of the 20s and 30s in China were led by CL Colepepper. They prayed for revival, but nothing happened until Rev. Colepepper was convicted late one night. The next morning he confessed sins of spiritual pretense and spiritual impotence. He told of how praise for his work had caused him to become proud and steal God's glory. He said his heart was so broken he did not think he could live. The results were conviction among the leadership and an outpouring of God's Spirit that changed many lives.

The Lewis Island revivals of the 50s in New Heberides began with a group of men praying through the night in a barn. One night, one of the young deacons quoted from Psalm 24, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, and who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to vanity nor sworn deceitfully." "Gentlemen," he said, "Until we get right with

Commented [notes12]: ⁶ But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."
James 4:6 (NIV)

Commented [notes13]: ²⁴ I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.
John 12:24 (NIV)

Commented [notes14]: ²⁵ When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man.
Genesis 32:25 (NIV)

Commented [notes15]: ⁶ I will stand there before you by the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it for the people to drink." So Moses did this in the sight of the elders of Israel.
Exodus 17:6 (NIV)

Commented [notes16]: ¹⁹ Gideon and the hundred men with him reached the edge of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, just after they had changed the guard. They blew their trumpets and broke the jars that were in their hands. ²⁰ The three companies blew the trumpets and smashed the jars. Grasping the torches in their left hands and holding in their right hands the trumpets they were to blow, they shouted, "A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!"
Judges 7:19-20 (NIV)

Commented [notes17]: ¹⁹ And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people.
Matthew 14:19 (NIV)

Commented [notes18]: ²⁴ And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.
1 Corinthians 11:24 (KJV)

God, there is no use asking for revival." Those men did humble themselves and the results are still talked about in Scotland today. People that set foot on the Isle of Lewis overcome by the Spirit of the Lord repented even before they could be preached to.

In Romania, in the 70s, believers were called repenters. The pastor of one of the largest evangelical churches in Romania told his congregation that it was time for the repenters to repent. He challenged them to repent of things we would think were insignificant, but when they did, the reviving power of God touched Romania.

Are you broken, surrendered to God's will above your own? How do you begin? We must see our sin in the light of God's holiness. We must see what He sees. Job, egged on by his counselors, declared his own righteousness. But when he heard from God he said, "I had heard of you with my ears, but now I see you with my eyes and repent in dust and ashes." Job 42:5-6

In Isaiah 5, Isaiah pronounced woe upon the immoral, woe to the proud and woe to the materialistic, but in chapter 6 he saw the Lord. In the light of a holy God he could only say, "Woe to me!" (Isaiah 6:5)

Paul saw the Lord on the road to Damascus and it totally transformed his life. He went from being persecutor of Christians to an evangelist overnight. (Acts 9:3-5) As he grew spiritually he also increasingly saw his own need. Early on he wrote of himself as the least of the Apostles. (1 Corinthians 15:9) Later he said he was the least of the saints. (Ephesians 3:8) Near the end of his life he called himself the chief of sinners. (1 Timothy 1:15) In God's presence we see self as it really is. That is why Jesus said whoever falls on the Rock will be broken. It is not about others; it is about me! I can quit blaming others; I am the sinner. When the finger is pointed at others, we know we are not yet broken. I have been broken through the consequences of resisting the Holy Spirit. I have been broken through circumstances. I have experienced brokenness through a greater revelation of Jesus, but what matters is am I a broken vessel for the Master's use today, or am I growing hard, set, and unresponsive?

We cannot see our emptiness unless we see Jesus. Then we know we are nothing and can do nothing without him. Acknowledge that need to others. There is no brokenness without openness. Even this week the Spirit of the Lord convicted me of some of the things I had said about a brother and sister in Christ. I confessed to the Lord, asked Him to change my heart. But I also confessed to my wife. Now when she hears me go that way again she can help me be accountable before God.

Do what God wants you to do but you know your flesh hates. Have you exaggerated? That is lying. Confess it to God and to those you spoke to. Has your thought life been impure? Confess it to God and a trusted friend. Are you feeling downcast? Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord and He will lift you up. Have you felt a lack of God's reviving power? If you are need of revival, fall on the rock and let your heart be broken. He will revive you!

Commented [notes19]: ⁵ "Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty." Isaiah 6:5 (NIV)

Commented [notes20]: ³ As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴ He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" ⁵ "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. Acts 9:3-5 (NIV)

Commented [notes21]: ⁹ For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 1 Corinthians 15:9 (NIV)

Commented [notes22]: ⁸ Although I am less than the least of all God's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, Ephesians 3:8 (NIV)

Commented [notes23]: ¹⁵ Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners--of whom I am the worst. 1 Timothy 1:15 (NIV)