

No Brokenness, No Revival



Thus saith the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also who is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. - Isaiah 57:15

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. - Psalm 51:17

Pride is what holds the sinner together. Without his pride, he wouldn't be anything. Deprive him of his pride, his self-esteem, and he becomes a cringing, frightened coward.

On the other hand, God demands brokenness of spirit, meekness, humility, or a contrite heart in those with whom He would hold close communion.

If, as Christians, we insist on holding onto our pride to hold us together, we lose our real fellowship with the Christ of humiliation. Our relationship with God may seem ever so satisfactory, but basically we remain users, milking Him for everything we can get out of Him.

We may offer Him, as an incentive, our energetic service or our efforts to be good, as though we could earn His favor. But in all likelihood, we'll continue to be users, milking God for everything we can get from Him until He intervenes to change our hearts!

Persistently Sinful and Rebellious

We have no idea how persistently sinful and rebellious we really are, even as His children, nor what it will take to draw us to the Lord out of our native rebellion, resistance, and resentment. So the pain and suffering He allows in our lives to break our hard, proud hearts, takes us by surprise. And we react in rebellion, resistance, and resentment that we think is directed toward the circumstances or the people we think are creating the circumstances.

Our favorite question when we're in trouble is, "Why?" We pretend we just want to understand what's going on, when what we're most often doing is asking in full-blown resentment, "If You really love me, why are you letting this happen to me?" We deny that our frustration and anger at our circumstances is actually directed toward the God of all circumstances.

Nothing Else Will Work!

We can try to abide in Christ, die to self, live in union with Christ, be filled with the Spirit or follow any other wonderful Christian doctrine, concept, or experience. But, none of them will work until we're broken, and humbled, and needy, and dependent.

But, you ask, "Is anyone like this?" No. Not as we would want them to be. My greatest disappointment in life is that in all the things God has shown me, taught me, or done for me, I continue to fail. Oh, how it hurts that I fail. I don't want to be a failure. I want to be a success.

It's, however, only in my failure, and weakness, and need, that He teaches me to be dependent on Him. My only hope is in turning again and again from my failure to the perfect One, and letting Him relieve me of my native rebellion, resistance, and resentment and letting Him restore to me His brokenness of spirit, His contrite heart, His meekness, His humility, His dependence on the Father and His love. Only then will I be able genuinely to live in Christ and more readily receive the inflow of His life into this poor, needy sinner's life. Only then will He be able to give me all He longs to give me, to do for me exceedingly abundantly above all that I can ask or think (Ephesians 3:20).

Let's look at how God taught the apostle Paul this lesson:

Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore, I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong. Corinthians 12:7-10

Without the constant thorn, pride would have continued to rule Paul.

Only through infirmities, reproaches, necessities, persecutions, and distresses was Paul broken, humbled, and made dependent on God. Otherwise he'd have remained dependent on himself and been robbed of the fullness of the life of God that should have coursed through His being.

His conclusion was two-fold:

- 1) Only when he was willingly weak and needy could he have Christ's strength.
- 2) So he'd take his pleasure in his infirmities, reproaches, necessities, persecutions, and distresses. He'd glory in them rather than in his achievements!

Why?

He was no sadist! So, why? What was his answer? - "So the power of Christ might rest upon me."

So he might be broken, needy, humble, and dependent enough that the almighty life of God might flow into his poor needy being.

Is God hard on us?

No, a thousand times no!

He simply sees further than we do. He sees us a thousand years from now freed from pain and strife. He sees us 10 thousand years from now reigning with Him. He sees us 100 thousand years from now flitting from star to star to reign over uncounted worlds scattered in space. He sees us a million years from now basking in the sunlight of His uninterrupted love. He sees us 10 million years from now worshipping and serving Him in constant enjoyment.

Yes, and He sees all of this as being ours in direct proportion to how we learn right now to respond to Him, yield to Him, fellowship with Him, commune with Him, worship and adore Him, please Him, and serve Him out of love alone.

What a small price, then, the pain, the humiliation, the disappointment, the struggle in exchange for eternal glory with our Lord and Savior! For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord. -II Corinthians 4:17,18; 3:18

No Easier Way

Let us no longer falsely accuse Him in our pain. Let us allow Him to teach us to thank Him that He loves us so much that He cannot leave us to our own devices to unnecessarily suffer eternal loss.

Yes, it would be so much more pleasant if Adam and Eve hadn't sinned, if we hadn't inherited their sin nature, if we didn't pridefully rebel against God's love call.

Oh, how we might wish for an easier way. But now there is none. Let us let God teach us to thank Him for what He has stored up for us of eternal glory. Let us let Him teach us to thank Him for how He's working to give us just as much as He possibly can of eternal glory with Him.

Let us submit to the breaking, bending, purging, and drawing work of God through our circumstances as well as through the Word. Let us allow Him to teach us to resign ourselves and our wills to Him and His will.

Even when we're hurt and pained to approve of what He's doing, we can let go our resistance to His love, to rest our case and ourselves in Him.

God's Tranquillizer

I find that when in prayer I come to a place of tranquility where I claim nothing, need nothing, seek nothing, and relax into Him, my rebel spirit is softened and made sensitive and loving to God and others. When I'm too self-centered, too hurried, too fearful, or too much in need of being in control to let myself go restfully and peacefully into Him, I tend to remain more demanding, more pushy, more unkind, and more readily angry.

Don't Remain Grounded

Learning to walk with God is serious business. It deserves your best attention. A million years from now you'll know it if you don't know.

Oh, my dear friend, for your eternal benefit don't let the lure of the world, the flesh, and the devil keep you grounded in your heavenward flight to endless glory.

May your craving for the easy life not rob you of the divine peace and joy without which there is no ease of mind and spirit even in this life, something far more necessary than bodily ease could ever be.

May you not, by clinging to your native pride, your natural rebellion, resistance, and resentment deprive yourself of the constant inflow of the divine life that is the secret to receiving all God's gifts here and now, the abundantly above all we can ask or think -and fullness of glory through an endless eternity hereafter.

Trust God to know and give what is best for you even if it is totally unacceptable to the flesh. Relinquish yourself into His hands once for all and over and over again whenever you sense the need.

Give Him your permission to use His best tools to purge, and purify, and cleanse, and transform you into His own image and prepare you for fullness of glory.

Then start spending sufficient time with Him, and His Word, and really helpful devotional literature. Let Him take from you your awful hunger for the husks of this world. Give Him your attention in heart resignation. Let Him give you an increasingly broken, tender heart and spirit, a neediness, and dependence on Him that will allow Him to pour His omnipotent life into your poor needy life and with it fullness of glory evermore.

We acknowledge with appreciation that this message appeared first in its original form in the Christian World Report.

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