

19-051-2-The Blessing of Brokenness

brokenness, humility, will

Psa 51:17

Brokenness can become fertile ground for spiritual renewal.

INTRODUCTION:

–The Holy Spirit came uniquely at Pentecost. But *church history* tells of spiritual outpourings called *revivals*—special times when God *renews* the spiritual life of His people. *How can we have this renewal?* [**Nancy DeMoss**, editor of *Spirit of Revival* magazine, says, “*You and I will never meet God in revival, until we first meet Him in brokenness.*”] **HOM.idea.**

–I call this message, **The Blessing of Brokenness**, from the words of **Psa 51:17**, *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.* [**Alan Nelson**, a pastor writing in *Discipleship Journal*, said, “...my period of brokenness grew from a sense of personal failure in ministry.... For some it takes a shattered marriage, the loss of a loved one, a failed job, or ruined finances. For others the discovery of cancer or an emotional collapse may trigger a season of brokenness. God can use any of these episodes.... The source of the situation is not nearly as important as how we respond to it.”] I agree. It is *how we respond to our brokenness that can bless us with spiritual renewal.*

I. Brokenness is a Universal Part of the Fallen Human Condition

- A. God created us intact; human *brokenness* began with *sin*. [**C. G. Barnes**, in his *Pastoral Counseling* course, says: “*We’re all fallen people in a **broken** fallen world, raised by **broken**, fallen parents, associated with **broken**, fallen family and friends and enemies; and we’re all under attack by Satan.*”]
1. But we can’t blame *all* brokenness on the sin of Adam and Eve. (Although we’re born with a fallen human nature, we each make our own painful way through the *University of Hard Knocks*.)
 2. The more intimate the *cause* of brokenness, the stronger its *pain*. (*Family & friends hurt us*: our heart breaks; *our body gets ill*: we endure pain; *our will acts wrongly*: our conscience suffers guilt.)
- B. God’s *salvation plan* fixes our brokenness in *body, spirit & soul*:
1. Resurrection gives us *new bodies*; new birth gives us *renewed spirits*; but God gives *our souls* the progressive work of renewal.
 2. That *soul-work* yokes Christ’s strength and our *effort together*—**Mat 11:28-29**, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”

TRANS: When “weary and burdened” from *brokenness*, we’re ready for Christ’s offer, “Take my yoke.” When we do, He pulls on the other side of that “yoke,” but often in the form of a *brother* or *sister in Christ*. [Nancy DeMoss calls *brokenness* “a willingness to live with the ‘roof off’ in my relationship with God and the ‘walls down’ in my relationship with others.”] We confess, “*I’m broken and need help getting whole again.*” James 5:16 encourages this: “confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.”

II. A State of Brokenness Must Become an Attitude of Brokenness

A. When the will acts wrongly, the healthy conscience suffers guilt.

1. This was King David’s case in writing Psa 51. (His peace with God was *broken* by his premeditated sin of *adultery & murder*.)
2. But after *confessing his sin* and *acknowledging his brokenness*, he was led to pen these words: “*The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.*”

B. *Brokenness becomes a blessing only when our broken condition moves us to seek the face of God.* [Alan Redpath: “*God will never plant the seed of his life upon the soil of a hard, unbroken spirit. He will only plant that seed where the conviction of his Spirit has brought brokenness, where the soil has been watered with the tears of repentance as well as the tears of joy.*”]

TRANS: Whether it’s from *ours* or *others’ sins*, or from *life in a fallen world*, **brokenness is fertile ground for spiritual renewal**. It takes *broken soil* to grow wheat, *broken clouds* to water soil, *broken grain* to make bread, *broken bread* to feed the hungry. Our brokenness produces *spiritual hunger*, and Jesus was *broken on a cross* to feed and renew us. *Only by knowing our need as broken people*, can we rightly feed at the Table of *His broken body* and *blood spilled* for our *spiritual renewal*.

III. How Can Brokenness Bless Us with Spiritual Renewal?

A. *How we enter that blessing begins with how we respond:*

1. *Do we perceive how HOLY God is?* (As we approach closer to Him, we see *our moral brokenness* in the light of *His holiness*.)
2. *Do we seek His mercy?* [The Pharisee, by his unbroken attitude, failed to join the tax-collector in crying out, “*God be merciful to me, a sinner!*”]
3. *Do we verbalize our need?* [A revival song to sing publicly: “*Not my brother, not my sister, but it’s me O Lord, standing in the need of prayer!*”] (*Personal brokenness becomes a seed for contagious revival* when it’s planted in the hearing of those who also need *renewal*.)

4. *Are we ready to do God’s will?* (Our *obedience* shows the *depth of our surrender*, and can even break us further in areas of pride:
 - a. breaking up our *bitterness* by forgiving someone; or
 - b. breaking us *into humility* by asking for forgiveness; or
 - c. breaking our *excuses* by repaying a debt we’d rationalized; or
 - d. breaking our *hardness* by befriending a despised enemy; or
 - e. breaking our *timidity* by sharing the testimony of our faith.)
- B. The *full blessing* is in what our response accomplishes spiritually:
 1. Our brokenness allows His abundant life to flow out through us, just as His abundant life flows *into us* from His broken body.
 2. Our brokenness increases our fruitfulness. (He blesses *whatever brokenness* we turn over to *His wisdom and power*. [The boy’s few fish and loaves was *blessed and broken* by Jesus to feed the multitude.])
 3. Our brokenness increases our capacity for loving worship. (We freely love and worship God despite others’ opinions. [Someone’s “*Why this waste?*” did not stop the weeping sinner who broke her expensive flask of fragrant oil to anoint Jesus’ feet. *No... He welcomed her devotion.*])

CONCLUSION:

–[In Jesus Calling, Sarah Young turned God’s words in the Bible into personally spoken words: “*I AM A GOD WHO HEALS. I heal broken bodies, broken minds, broken hearts, broken lives, and broken relationships.*”] But we must respond.

–We enjoy ***the blessings of brokenness*** only by letting its pain lead us to seek God’s face. [The healing point of a bone fracture becomes stronger than before it was broken, if it gets properly set.] When we bring what’s broken to God, our **brokenness becomes fertile ground for spiritual renewal**.

–[A final quote by Nancy DeMoss, “The heart that has been emptied of itself and broken of its willfulness and resistance, is the heart that will experience the filling and the reviving of our glorious, holy God, Who humbled Himself, that He might lift us up.”] Always **remember...** that He *took up our brokenness*, when broken for us on the Cross. Always **remember...** that His words, “This is my body which is broken for you,” are words of comfort for *our brokenness* and words of His divine hope for *our spiritual renewal*.