

K.P. Yohannan:

After the initial excitement and tremendous joy over our salvation ebb away a little, we make an amazing discovery: God isn't satisfied yet with what we look like! We learn from His Word that God didn't create man to tend His garden, and He didn't save us to have workers for His harvest field. God's original and sole purpose for man has always been to manifest His image. That's what He is after when He begins to seriously deal with our human nature.

Perhaps at first we are confident that He can complete this job in no time at all, because we don't look so bad in our own eyes. To help us understand how far away from His likeness we really are, He shows us His true image in Scriptures like these:

For thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones (Isaiah 57:15).

For all those things My hand has made, and all those things exist, says the LORD. But on this one will I look: On him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word (Isaiah 66:2).

God actually expects His children to possess the same kind of deep humility and total submission that Jesus had, so that we too will have rivers of living water flow from our lives to this dying world.

But how can we ever become like this when by our very nature we are proud, stubborn and selfish? In addition, we are part of a world that has taught us from birth to fight for our own rights; to be ambitious and unbending; and to value success, ability, and position above all else.

The Bible tells us, without a doubt, that God is indeed able to change us into His likeness but only through one way: the process of brokenness.

We must recognize that being born again is just the beginning of God's work in us. Ninety-nine percent is yet to be done. God is continually at work in our lives, breaking us, changing us and putting to death our selfish desires, until His nature shines through.

How important really is this brokenness for our service in God's kingdom? Could we somehow get by without it? A.W. Tozer once said that he doubted seriously if God could ever use a man until He had broken him thoroughly and empowered him.

I once received a phone call from some of Gospel for Asia's leaders in India. A very well-known, highly educated man had showed an interest in teaching at our seminary. These leaders wanted to know what I thought about it. I simply said to our leadership: As far as academics are concerned, he would be one of the greatest assets we could have in our school. We could not find a more intellectual man or one so incredibly gifted and able to communicate. However, his coming would be dangerous and disastrous for our institution. The reason is simply this: you know as much as I do that this man is not broken. He is so self-sufficient, strong and sure of himself. If there is an argument, he always wins. In a group, he acts important so he will be noticed. He has been to many places, but he's never remained anywhere. It's not because he's not able; it's due to his lack of humility. Even if he gave us thousands of dollars and begged us to allow him to teach, I would never allow it. If he were at the seminary, he would produce unbroken, stubborn students just like himself. God is not looking for able people, but for broken people.

Above all else, God's greatest concern is our brokenness. Just like our potential professor, we will only reproduce what we are ourselves. And only in the same measure in which we allow ourselves to be broken can we experience resurrection life and rivers of living waters flowing unhindered from our innermost being.

In the work of the Lord, the need to fill a position is often so great that we end up searching for someone with matching gifts and abilities but ignore their unbroken condition. What are some of the clear signs of unbroken people?

They focus on the failures of others.

They must be in control of their situation.

They exhibit a self-protective spirit, guarding their time, rights and reputation. They will not allow anyone to walk into their private world.

They are driven to be recognized and appreciated. They will do anything, even spiritually, to find that appreciation from others.

They are wounded when others are promoted and they are overlooked. They feel confident in how much they know and feel the organization they work with is privileged to have them on staff. They are quick to blame others and become defensive when criticized.

They work hard to maintain their image and protect their reputation. Consequently, they find it very difficult to share their real spiritual need with others. They try to make sure no one finds out about their secret sins.

They have a hard time saying, I was wrong; I sinned. Would you please forgive me?

They compare themselves with others and feel deserving of honor. They are blind to their own heart's true condition.

Rivers of Living Water

â€¢ They donâ€™t see any need for repentance . . . and the list goes on.

When you read this list, do you find yourself in it? By our human nature, all of us are unbroken. Our usefulness to God and our ability to reflect His likeness are directly linked to our giving Him permission to break us and our willingness to yield to Godâ€™s work rather than resist it.

Take some time to open your heart before the Lord. Allow Him to shed His light on areas of your life in which you have refused His work of brokenness. Instead of fearing loss and pain, you can rejoice that God is making you more like Himself. His life can now flow through you, bringing many to His kingdom.

Rivers of living water will not flow out of us unless the earthen vessel is broken.