



Miracles that follow the plow :: A broken heart

A broken heart - posted by John173 (), on: 2007/2/9 14:15

I just finished posting a response on the prophet thread and feel the need to ask for your prayers. This is part testimony, or perhaps call it confession, part prayer request.

I was saved in 1978 at a church that had the gospel message but not much else. I attended for a year or so, but I had fallen back to my sex, drugs and rock and roll lifestyle within two weeks of conversion. I had so much disdain for society, so much anger, and such rebellion that I took the easy way out of H.S. In California this is called the Ca HS proficiency test. A properly educated eighth grader should pass that thing.

After three years of high wage earning jobs like Wendy's and KFC, along with more pot than I care to admit, I was "forced" (parental tough love) into a drug rehab program. Two days in and I was on my face crying out to God "All I want to do is serve you".

Through His absolute sovereign hand He guided me to a local body that taught the baptism in the Holy Spirit. I never knew that I could have a tangible relationship with him until then. It was an incredible time in my life.

I still had no skills to speak of and got a job at a local pizza parlor in Berkeley CA. I rented a room from a brother in economically depressed east Oakland and commuted 1.5 hours each way by bus. Three years later I was struggling so bad that I had a nervous breakdown of sorts. I had hooked up with an old friend and was playing with the fire of drug use once again, although I continued to attend church (by now I had changed to a different, less vibrant body).

I came to realize that continuing on this course was insanity and quit my job. I told the Lord I needed Him to do something dramatic in my life and lead me out of this mess. I spent six months making \$64 a week helping a friend one day a week on a project for his dad.

This all ended in a most abrupt and sudden manner. In one week's time I was living elsewhere, fellowshiping elsewhere, working a job that ultimately gave me the skills to become a truck driver, and I had met, and knew I had met, my bride to be. The church was the most vibrant and alive body of believers I have ever had the pleasure of knowing. Looking back, some doctrine was a little off the mark, but they loved God passionately.

One year later, May 21st 1988, I was married to the girl of my dreams. There is nothing I am more certain of in my life (aside from God) than the knowledge that this woman was hand picked by His loving hand. To this day we are still deeply in love with each other. I am so thankful for this.

A year or so later this pastor expelled an elder from this church without having any biblical basis for his action. We felt we could not stand with the pastor and left. The expelled elder began a home fellowship and we began attending that. I wish I had known how to listen to the Lord and sought His face in making this decision. Instead it was based purely on my own personal convictions. I believe now that I erred in taking this course of action. It was at this time that we made our first compromise with the world and purchased a TV/VCR combo. Oh that I had never allowed this idol into my life.

Two years later we were so dissatisfied with our lives that we decided to make a change. We moved 70 miles north to Santa Rosa, CA. This was where I had gone to H.S. I had a very good friend from my party days who knew of the Lord but had never surrendered his life to Him. I tried and tried to minister to him. I failed, and instead wound up falling away from God completely, returning to the vomit of my stoner lifestyle. What a hellish time that was in my life. I would try to repent, try to be a good Christian, but to no avail.

Ultimately we decided we needed to make another change. My wife had decided to move back to the city of her birth, Omaha NE. She was going to move there whether I went or not. As I began to seek the Lord on this I had such a peace that I knew that this was His leading. His provision leading up to our move was awesome. We were able to save enough to come here and buy our first house. Simply amazing.

Our time here in Omaha has not been all rosy. I know that we are here because of God's leading. There is much to rep

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air. After a two years of searching for a good church, we finally found a Calvary Chapel and felt led to call this home. We both attended for a year or more, but I began to once again struggle with my faith.

My entire Christian walk up to maybe eight months ago has been one best described as a roller coaster ride. My flesh is so weak, and I have never been able to fully lay hold of the truth that I am crucified with Christ. I understand the concept, but could not walk in its truth. As a result I would put forth a great deal of effort to seek the Lord with my whole heart. I would find myself climbing to great emotional heights through worship and prayer. Inevitably my besetting sin would trip me up and I would fall flat on my face. This would be followed by weeks of despair and deep pit level depression. Eventually I would realize how foolish this was, that God loved me etc. I would speak the truth to my soul and return to seeking His face. Eventually climbing to new heights in the Lord. Thus began the cycle all over again. Each time I would tell myself that this time was different. My wife got to the point that she would just roll her eyes and say "yeah sure."

When this pattern began to show up once again at Calvary Chapel, I despaired of ever having the victory. For the first time in my Christian life I abandoned the church altogether. During the ensuing months my work situation went from bad to worse to downright intolerable. I began to hesitantly cry out to God for mercy.

Slowly I began to hear from Him. I came to realize that change required taking some type of action on my part. I was frustrated with my career as a truck driver. While I was home every night, I was working 55-60 hours a week, which left me no time or energy for fellowship (should I seek it) or much of anything else for that matter. After some soul searching I decided to take the steps necessary to become a real estate agent. This, I felt would give me the scheduling freedom to be at church Wednesday evenings as well as Sundays. It also gave me the freedom to be available for other forms of fellowship and service. One thing I knew, I had no hope of success without the Lord's blessing.

I returned to church, alone, in June of '06. My wife has become so distrustful of my walk that she refuses to go lest I backslide once again. Our hearts are so linked that every struggle of mine has had a great impact on her own walk with the Lord. She is unwilling to put her heart at risk only to be devastated once again. Since that time my walk with the Lord has been growing in consistency. I still struggle with the flesh to some degree, but I am unwilling to let go of the hope that a victorious life is possible and that I will soon know that sanctifying work that will bring it to pass.

When I stumbled upon this community a few weeks ago, my heart began to break over my sin. I have felt such a burning desire to walk in His light, to repent of my compromised worldly ways, to follow Him regardless of the cost. I am full of hope and enthusiasm.

So here, finally are my prayer requests. All during these years of struggle I have felt a calling to teach God's word. I knew better than to enter into ministry in the condition that I was in. Today I recognize that I am not yet ready to go that route, yet the desire will not leave. As a real estate agent, I need to be able to find clients in need of help buying or selling a house. This requires "prospecting". Calling people I know and asking for referrals, calling for sale by owners and asking for their business, calling expired listings etc. The fact is, this has confronted me with the reality that I have a huge fear of man issue. Even calling people I know is almost impossible for me. What was I thinking going into real estate? Actually, I knew this going in. I knew I would be confronted with this personal characteristic and hoped the Lord would show me how to overcome it. So far, He hasn't. This is not to say He won't, only that I am still fearful today.

One of the things that I am seeking to understand is how to go about finding those clients. I know He can provide contacts with people in a sovereign manner. But this won't help me get over my fear. Unfortunately, I don't have the drive to go find them, partly because I don't care anymore about money. I would be content to sell all that I have and go live in a shack if that were His will for me. I have lived with my worldly American consumerism for too long. Enough's enough. I only want basic provision for my needs. I do have a mortgage though, and a wife to care for. As of now I have suspended my real estate career to focus on prayer and bible reading. I need to hear His voice to move forward.

Next, and perhaps my greatest need, is prayer for my wife. She is very angry with me for all the damage I have done over the years to her walk with the Lord. I accept this responsibility. I am her covering. Please pray for her that God would heal her heart and show her His love in a fresh way. I long to have her by my side at church, and recognize that if I am ever to enter into any type of ministry I must have her full confidence and support.

There is much more that I could say, if you have read through this whole thing, thank you. your prayers hold more value to me than you can imagine.

In His Love,

Doug

Re: A broken heart - posted by death2self (), on: 2007/2/9 14:47

Thank you Doug for sharing your heart,

I know by experience that Jesus can restore a broken heart, a broken marriage, whatever it may be. It's a work of his grace through the power of the blood of Jesus. That's the only thing that can cleanse our hearts from sin. Discouragement is a sin brother and Jesus wants to free you from this burden.

I pray that you would seek Jesus with all of your heart and as you allow Him to deal honestly with your own heart, He will begin to supernaturally restore your marriage. This has been happening in my life and it's not been by my hard work or efforts.

It's good to hear that you won't move forward until you hear from God. In our rush to get something done or meet a deadline of sorts, we oftentimes miss God. It's happened to me many times but He's been faithful to stop me and then to teach me how to wait for him.

As my pastor often says, a vocation is not money it's about ministering to Jesus. So the vocation that Jesus calls us to, is about ministering the heart of Jesus to those around us. It's not about money or health insurance or any other benefit. It's about Jesus...

I pray for victory over sin in your life through the blood of Jesus. He has made provision for victory and the discouragement you often experience could very well be the fruit of rebellion. Whenever rebellion rises in my own heart and I come into agreement with it, then I'm extraordinarily discouraged. Unbelief almost always follows rebellion. So if we deal honestly with God about the rebellion, then the unbelief will go away.

I pray that you would ask the Lord about that and He will lead you. Blessings to you Doug in the name of Jesus.

Re: A broken heart, on: 2007/2/10 14:53

Hello John,

I read your post in the Prophets thread, and had to come here to read what you had to say. I found it very challenging, and it brought me to tears. I recognise the roller-coaster, but mine was for different reasons.

Quote:

-----I am unwilling to let go of the hope that a victorious life is possible and that I will soon know that sanctifying work that will bring it to pass.

EDIT: quote added:

When I stumbled upon this community a few weeks ago, my heart began to break over my sin. I have felt such a burning desire to walk in His light, to repent of my compromised worldly ways, to follow Him regardless of the cost. I am full of hope and enthusiasm. EDIT end.

I think the big temptation is to hope for a finishing line, which after it is crossed, will spell the end of the struggle. This simply isn't so, but, to believe the meaning of Hebrews 10:14 made a HUGE difference to me. On the surface of my life, the chaos was so overwhelming, that only me and God (and a few dear saints), could have known how serious I was about going through with Him. How close (in fact) I was to the elusive victories, remained hidden from my sight, and certainly could not be measured in units of time, like weeks or months.

Hebrews 10:14

For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. (KJV)

The NKJV says 'that are being sanctified'. This is better understood as 'being glorified', in the same terms as

2 Corinthians 3

17 Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord, there liberty.

18 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, as by the Spirit of the Lord.

I have been thinking about this recently, because of other threads which have discussed marriage and divorce, in which the phrase 'put away' is used. When I was at school, we had regular occasion to hear 1 Corinthians 13 read out (our 'school chapter' - because the school's motto was Ex Corde Caritas - Love (charity) comes from the heart), and Paul uses the same phrase 'put away' there. I am coming to realise that he is saying he *divorced* childish things; I'm wondering how this applies to myself.

I'm going to quote a whole section, because other verses in it tie in with the Prophet thread, which is engaging many of us.

1 Corinthians 13

8 Charity never faileth: but whether prophecies, they shall fail; whether tongues, they shall cease; whether knowledge, it shall vanish away.

9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: **but when I became a man, I put away childish things.**

12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these charity.

It seems to me that in Jewish culture, there was a line between being a child and a man, which it is harder to find these days, with adolescents being invited into the adult world through the voyeurism of film and tv, and many other previously *privileges* being thrown their way, without them having to prove anything to attain to them.

One of the reasons I was so moved by your testimony, is that I've been speaking to a young man for several years now, who still is not formally committed to Christ, but who has begun reading and understanding the Bible. His struggle with ten years of cannabis was *painful*. Latterly, he realised his decision to stop, was based on something to do with being willing to grow up - more than that - to be so *desirous* of growing up, that he simply *had* to leave it behind, because, he said 'It suspends a person in adolescence.'

So, coming back to Hebrews 10:14, the verse which kept me going through the darkness of several years, I trusted that the meaning of it is that *in the Spirit* I have been perfected (which is better translated *completed*) through Christ's offering. I *trusted* that my Father (whom I know and knew that I knew in those days), was seeing me in Him, and I simply refused to believe anything could prevent me from coming into the good *experientially* of that eternal relationship in which He had included me.

Also, I took the advice of Oswald Chambers not to worry about what others might think of my outward appearance - of how far it might fall short of their expectation of Christian behaviour. He said to concentrate on one's inner consistency of relationship with God. I really commend this thought to you.

This I did, and also found the singing of spiritual songs, other words of God, psalms and hymns - however repetitively - was an immeasurable aid in connecting with the Spirit, reminding me that I was (am) indeed, **alive in Him**.

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I'm mindful you asked prayer for your wife. Yes. But also for you, that you may lay down your life for her.

I really hope none of this sounds patronising. The Compassion of Jesus Christ is there for you, to heal and to forgive, and most of all to deliver you from our old man. The sooner his (His) death seems welcome to you, the sooner His life will begin to lift you into tangible victory.

Re: - posted by John173 (), on: 2007/2/11 9:36

I wanted to take a moment to thank you both for your heartfelt replies. I am beginning to understand more and more about some of the root issues of my struggles. It has been a long road to travel. The one thing I can attest to through it all is God is faithful. I am sometimes floored by His consistent, never changing love for me.

I will post a little more when time permits.

By way of clarification. My wife and I are doing quite well in terms of our personal relationship. We are best friends to this day. Things got a little rocky before our decision to leave CA, but this had more to do with her overall unhappiness with church life there than with "us".

In His Love,

Doug

Re: A broken heart - posted by crsschk (), on: 2007/2/11 13:58

Hi Doug,

Lot of similarities here personally. Had the same problems, fears, even the financial means and what money *means* in terms of import ... and yes obligations, your wife, mine, mortgage no, bills, yes.

Broken heart. Broken *man*. There is a very good reason for these things. *Through* this brother. Go on through. Do pray, pray always. Unceasingly means ... what it means, without *end*. How often do we take notice of our breathing unless we are out of breath or ... even being in that uncomfortable position, *the fear of man* ... fear of speaking, gets the heart lodged up in the throat? *Appealing* is something that can go on like breathing because it is you, constant, ongoing, *praying always, with all supplications*. The supplications might be said to be *the out of breath-ness* where we take notice and make known to our own mind and verbalize them back to the Lord. *Setimes* of dedicated prayer, even this analogy hardly touch but the surface ... Prayer as something you *are* rather than just something we do.

Everything is an opportunity to pray, before, during, after ... "*Lord, if you don't help me*" (<https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/mydownloads/singlefile.php?lid3843>) A Call to Anguish). To express thankfulness for all things;

Jon 2:9 But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD.

Heb 13:15 By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.

Ever notice the word 'sacrifice' in conjunction with these? Thanksgiving, praise as sacrifice? Seems almost contradictory.

1Th 5:18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

Possible. It is possible.

1Pe 4:19 Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing

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g, as unto a faithful Creator.

One of the first verses I purposefully memorized. A verse to really slowly chew on. It has the tense of *keeping at it*, commit or 'give over' ... *in well doing*, ... unto. How this all applies to you brother...

To borrow that old cliché about God not making a man until he breaks a man ... Oh, it is so. This may be the very avenue of the shaping of character for you. The escape routes we might think, "something else" we ought to be doing, yours being your present occupation of real estate and being dislodged from some comforts inwardly, up against the difficulties, the confrontational aspects that these 'fears' of man bring. There is no sense in making it all seem otherwise, heaping guilt or scorn upon ourselves for things that are a reality to us. The only ones who can avail themselves of such with a quick wave of the hand are those who have no problems being outwardly vocal, speaking before the public, something more natural and normal for them. Others I would think are those who have come from this same place and moved through it...

Quote:
-----Even calling people I know is almost impossible for me. What was I thinking going into real estate? Actually, I knew this going in. I knew I would be confronted with this personal characteristic and hoped the Lord would show me how to overcome it. So far, He hasn't. This is not to say He won't, only that I am still fearful today.

Love your honesty and forthcoming brother. I had a great deal of the same running my own business especially a great fear of how to rightly estimate and charge customers (for remodeling projects) as a backdrop to the regular anxieties I think you are speaking of. You end up forging ahead despite it all ...

But it was later when everything was turned upside down and I entered into a whole other realm of employment that these things became even more ... succinct. Am convinced now why this is so. It is further refining, character is made by being shown where we are deficient and addressing these things head on. That is often we think by merely pulling up the boot straps and by sheer 'will power' funny notion, that. It is an element, *be strong therefore* but the paradox is in its opposite; dependence, faith, trust in the Lord. If we give over "commit" our souls unto the Lord, well I keep finding Him faithful.

The thing I found remarkable or should say keep on finding is all the other things that are not yet lived out in reality beyond all the internal truths we might have come to understand. It's phenomenal. The intent and motivation very well may be ever so sincere and yet the day to day activities could well prove us otherwise. Quite the challenge, quite the exposure, quite a bit of sheer repentance and pain and suffering and regret, feeling hypocritical, *being* hypocritical. Hopefully it is not the diabolical pretense but more of Paul's ...

Rom 7:15 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

Maybe going a bit past your particulars here but perhaps I am trying to just convey that what you are going *through* is not an end in itself as was mentioned nor something of an escape to get out of. To overcome it is probably not the real goal or rather, the aim. Think if we get stuck there we are extrapolating the future before it arrives. That place is there somewhere, a place to look back on after you have passed it. This may not be any part of your thinking at all.

Degrees I am thinking here brother. Evil notions are many and many are they that we ourselves construct. Fears of all kinds, most of which never come to pass, it's often quite silly of us to be doing so much projection, placing advanced results before actual real time circumstances. I speak from a *great* deal of experience here.

Brother this has taken me almost a couple of hours now and I have a variety of mixed thoughts and emotions. I am reluctant and hesitant in many, many ways... Likely will continue to carry on in this manner for some time, actually I do hope so... You or others may have picked up on the fact that my mother died this past Tuesday. Yesterday (Saturday) was her funeral... Over in (https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id14379&forum36#114096) To all the "Prophets" we had been talking about *guts* and I think even that has a multifaceted definition. Perhaps spilling one's guts is quite different than the sort of '*having gut's*'. Let me be forthcoming as you have here. I do not really do the 'witnessing thing' very well. What I mean is in the many varied ways we have come to think of them, expressing the truth we hold to. *Witnessing to people* frankly would give off or bring up the whole fear of man issues that you speak of. I just cannot do it the way others do and have often berated myself for the whole idea of 'not getting out there' and doing it, whatever

er the fashion. There is a whole backlog of semi-convicting thoughts, reading through all these postings over the years, all the great 'soul winners', the street preachers in our midst and I would often think, '*and just what is it I think I am doing here, speaking of all these deep, penetrating issues of the faith ... am I a hypocrite?*'. "Sharing your faith" ... are you? Isn't this one of the large questions asked, inferred, of others, of ourselves. Is it mode or operation or program? Is it as it is often 'presented' sadly enough just another 'pitch' even by the most sincere? Are there not many who would be doing a greater service if they just quit *doing* what they are doing because they are doing far more harm than good? What I mean is, I think there are far too many who have gone on out with The Great Commission without a *Commissioner*. They know the Lord either not at all or in such a deficient understanding as to be actually spreading all kinds of accurate orthodoxy that is in reality poisonous heresy. To speak in the Name of the Lord all the while harboring pride and bitterness, judgment that is not theirs to give, hypocrisy and duplicity, things gleaned off the surface that have never entered the marrow of being... Listen to these words and the elements that should describe us;

1Th 5:1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

1Th 5:2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

1Th 5:3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

1Th 5:4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

1Th 5:5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

1Th 5:6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

1Th 5:7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

1Th 5:8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

1Th 5:9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

1Th 5:10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

1Th 5:11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

1Th 5:12 And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and administer you;

1Th 5:13 And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.

1Th 5:14 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.

1Th 5:15 See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.

1Th 5:16 Rejoice evermore.

1Th 5:17 Pray without ceasing.

1Th 5:18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

1Th 5:19 Quench not the Spirit.

1Th 5:20 Despise not prophesyings.

1Th 5:21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

1Th 5:22 Abstain from all appearance of evil.

1Th 5:23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1Th 5:24 Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

1Th 5:25 Brethren, pray for us.

1Th 5:26 Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss.

1Th 5:27 I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren.

1Th 5:28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

Times and seasons. Sober. Edifying. Faith and love. *esteem them very highly in love*. Peace. The whole of all the commotion regarding prophecy, "prophesyings." Despise them not and yet *prove* them. Above all, and before that, **Quench not the Spirit**.

Still the question, my obligation?

This honesty business is really coming to the fore more and more these days. It just has to be. Have been under the impression that whatever the misunderstanding otherwise, *making disciples* is of the great import, that and prayer and ... this ever so elusive ... *unity* not in sentiment, or sentimental notions but in Spirit and in Truth.

That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. Joh 17:21

It frankly amazes me that we can think we can bypass this cry of our Lords own heart and more bizarrely actually believe we can accomplish the same results, namely ...***that the world may believe that thou hast sent me*** with every other means than this. There is a diabolical notion that frankly just does not believe what Jesus said. Period. We will not have this way of doing things because we are too proud and might actually, secretly, have another overlooked plank in the eye, the antitheses of the *fear of man*; ***that ye do (not) your alms before men, to be seen of them***

This preoccupation if it could really be called that with death that I have is just something that keeps repeating itself all throughout my life. It is the fractured reality that is always before us. More so when it *hit's* in it's full weight and force, it brings a certain clarity that bridges ... the gut's up against the 'theology' we hold to. It is the *place* where facts and faith are the rubber that meets the road.

Pardon my spilling forth here brother and seemingly speaking to everyone (that it might apply to) at your expense. I learned a great deal yesterday, things I can but pray will be forever etched into the marrow of being. Too many small snapshots that I will carry deep within to mention here, too personal ... Forgive me for my stark exposure here, am still in the processing pod of all this. Had mentioned and actually kind of set myself up for a great possible failure in the other mentioned thread, speaking of guts, being real, again will be frank. The thoughts crossed my mind prior that as is often the case, *great swelling words* can be put forth and that the real possibility could be that for all those I might have felt, when the moment came I could shrink back. Or I may have not been allowed to speak and if I didn't the regret ... and on and on it goes. This may sound all so over the top but it was a rather difficult thing at times wrestling in prayer, wrestling with all these preceding things mentioned, the emotions and confusion. I was compelled to be able to give my mother the very honor due her, publicly and without some paltry niceties but real gut level, from the heart and with the greatest appreciation to the Lord, to His Name. The fact of it all did make things much 'easier' and thankfully it all did come to pass. Being a very poor 'orator' I guess it could be said, I can botch everything I know inwardly by just opening my mouth ... I wrote it all out and then read it with the same passion and gut's that I wrote it. I sit here both astonished and humbled by all that transpired, ever thankful for the opportunity to exalt Jesus and honor my precious mother and my father before family, friends and even acquaintances. Truly the Lord was with me. Least I even dare forget how thankful I am for the prayers of those that I know prayed.

But herein lies the very secret brother of all this. It is our self dying out to everything save the Lord. It is to truly put the emphasis on others, to their considerations, to their uplifting, to their honor or praiseworthiness. In this instance it was *for* my mother and *for* the Lord. Think it can and will transpire across these fears that you have as well. I know them well, I know your struggles, they are the very means of advancing, embrace them. My prayers are with you.

Re: A broken heart, on: 2007/2/11 16:04

Dear friends and brethren

I am so grateful for all that has been shared recently on this and the "Prophets" thread.

We all have many inner struggles, no matter what our background and experience in life. And we can probably all identify with some aspect of what has been shared so far. Because of the Fall we are "damaged goods" in one way or another, some more obviously than others.

Some "deeper" things seem to take a long time to sort out. Not because the Lord can't do it instantly, but maybe we aren't quite ready to let Him deal with that particular thing? This has been my experience. I was born again in 1967, but it's only over these last few years the Lord has been dealing with 'hang-ups' I had from a child. Rejection, inferiority, guilt, fear of man (especially of verbal bullying)...

And even in the last few days, something else, something that was triggered through another thread, and reading 1 Timothy 1:5-7, especially verse 7. ***"desiring to be teachers of the Law; understanding neither what they say, nor what they affirm"***

The context is about false teachers who preach heresy, but I realise that its true of me - desiring to teach others when a wrong motive means I actually haven't a clue - in spite of the theoretical knowledge and years of experience!

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The Lord has basically exposed the root motive for joining this and other discussion forums. Pride, yes, but also, it sees, a need to "make my mark" in some way. Especially, on a forum such as this, to demonstrate my knowledge, wisdom and maturity in the Lord. To gain respect of others, to be listened to instead of being ignored.

I can't stop doing it, the thing is too ingrained. even now I'm searching self-consciously for the correct words and way to phrase this and make it clear. Its as binding as a drug in a way, this compulsion to prove myself to others.

BUT the LORD will stop it! The very fact that its now come to the surface means He's about to. When we are getting desperate we are more likely to be willing to let Him sort it, instead of going on trying to cope in our own strength!

Well, now you know. Haven't really been able to share such things with any except close friends before, but the Lord is moving in our midst..

So many hurting, broken hearts, for so many reasons.

But Jesus' heart was broken on the cross, pinned up there in the sight of the world, exposed and emptied and utterly vulnerable, rejected and despised, helpless, weak.

For me, for you, for all of us.

That's what gives hope, that's what gives courage to face even the worst in ourselves, the twists and turns and self-deceptions, pain and vulnerability; knowing that He has already dealt with it all.

In Jesus' love

Jeannette

Re:, on: 2007/2/11 16:18

Brother Doug,

I am myself still young in the Lord, but my life has been a similar story: ups and downs, feeling like I am failing the Lord so often, then making myself right with Him, and again, and again, and again. My failures frustrated me, damaged my faith at times, until God revealed His amazing love for me; when He spoke to my Spirit so audibly and gave me His rest. Now that I look back upon all those times--and I know that will happen again--I am glad: for the Lord shows me how incapable I am of saving myself; how I need to call upon His name constantly, so that I may live in Him. Truly, I have no righteousness of my own, but that which is from Christ through faith...

In the end, I am always down on my knees, begging for His forgiveness, and He is faithful and just, and breaks me so that I may abide in Him. No, there is no salvation apart from God. He alone is my redeemer--I can take absolutely no credit for it. I can do nothing on my own. As for your struggles, brother, the Lord will continue to prune you, to humble you. Remember that he who overcomes until the end shall be saved. So keep up the good fight of faith. Cling to the hope that is in you--clinging to Christ in you, the hope of glory!

A couple of passages to encourage you with are 1 John 1:8 through 1 John 2:2, and Phil. 3:8-11. Remember that you cannot be saved by anything that you do, but by faith alone--and again I say, by faith in Christ alone-- like a little, helpless child who probably doesn't suspect some hidden sin, yet sincerely trusts in the Lord. The passages in 1 Cor. 13 and Hebrews 10 that our sister shared--meditate on these: "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Put your trust in the Lord. Through the power of His might, rely on His for all things, even the gift of faith.

I am just thinking about the apostle Paul, and how he was confident that the Lord would complete His work in the brethren at Philippi until the day of Christ Jesus. And I ask myself, "What gave Paul such confidence, such faith?" I know it was not his unflinching labor in the Lord, the power of his fleshly zeal? He put no confidence in the flesh, even he? He proclaimed himself to be the *chief of sinners*, and he didn't do it to show how righteous he was. It is the same with me: I am in college still, trying to grow the babies in Christ, to lord over their walk in the Lord... It has never worked. I cannot grow them, nor sanctify them--I cannot even sanctify myself. Instead, I need to trust the Lord that He will take care of them

, that He will complete His work in them, and in me also. This is so humbling, so amazing. Paul wrote to the Philippians in the third chapter of his epistle:

12 Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. 13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

If Paul himself was not worthy enough to have any confidence in himself--he who was a Pharisee of Pharisees, as far as the Law was concerned, blameless--and if he was not already perfected (that is, he was still imperfect, yet being sanctified) and was forgetting those things which were behind, then how can we--you and I, and all others--put any confidence in ourselves, even in our human obedience? Let us, therefore, abide in Christ, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him (1 Jn. 2:28). I think, brother, God has been showing you one thing clearly during all these years: that "with men it is impossible." But I would say to you, "not so with God; for with God all things are possible." (Mark 10:27)

I would like to conclude with a passage from the Book of Isaiah, the fiftieth chapter, which the Lord used to speak to me last night (about my own righteousness and view of myself):

*10 "Who among you fears the LORD?
Who obeys the voice of His Servant?
Who walks in darkness
And has no light?
Let him trust in the name of the LORD
And rely upon his God.
11 Look, all you who kindle a fire,
Who encircle yourselves with sparks:
Walk in the light of your fire and in the sparks you have kindled—
This you shall have from My hand:
You shall lie down in torment.*

I realized that even though I knew the Lord and I sought Him passionately, I was still lighting my own torches or fires; I was still looking for something good in my flesh.

My prayer, Doug, is that the light of Christ will shine in you, and transform you into His likeness, to present you blameless in the day of His return. Peace and grace be with you!

In Christ,
Slavyan

Re: An honest heart - posted by crsschk (), on: 2007/2/11 19:10

Quote:
-----And even in the last few days, something else, something that was triggered through another thread, and reading 1 Timothy 1:5-7, especially verse 7 . "desiring to be teachers of the Law; **understanding neither what they say, nor what they affirm**"

Oh there is a verse ...

Quote:
-----The context is about false teachers who preach heresy, but I realise that its true of me - desiring to teach others when a wrong motive means I actually haven't a clue - in spite of the theoretical knowledge and years of experience!

The Lord has basically exposed the root motive for joining this and other discussion forums. Pride, yes, but also, it seems, a need to "make my mark" in some way. Especially, on a forum such as this, to demonstrate my knowledge, wisdom and maturity in the Lord. To gain respect of others, to be listened to instead of being ignored.

Miracles that follow the plow :: A broken heart

Would liken part of this back to *desiring to be teachers* which proves out a different motivation ... To be known over being of some help. That is far from the case here I think sister even with your honest assessment and forthcoming. Think to many of our 'prophets' of the day have this as a backdrop. It's often pride disguised as concern, to test it is to dislodge the effrontery ... but that is another thread altogether.

(Edit: Just realized I made something of a muddle out of that, I ended up repeating what you had already stated, perhaps I just hadn't taken any notice of this from what you have shared. Can't seem to find the motivation being misplaced)

Quote:
-----I can't stop doing it, the thing is too ingrained. even now I'm searching self-consciously for the correct words and way to phrase this and make it clear. Its as binding as a drug in a way, this compulsion to prove myself to others.

BUT the LORD will stop it! The very fact that its now come to the surface means He's about to. When we are getting desperate we are more likely to be willing to let Him sort it, instead of going on trying to cope in our own strength!

Well, now you know. Haven't really been able to share such things with any except close friends before, but the Lord is moving in our midst...

Think you are in wonderfully safe surroundings here with this. Reason being there is often nothing to do but to give place to those who have gone even further and recognize that they too are still finding more things to ponder and question, be challenged by. Think there was a place early on where I really thought I knew something, now I pray that I have not miss poken at each letter typed here. All this, all the reading of past saints on being humbled and broken, on pride and hypocrisy and giving place to others ... Bitterness and division and the hidden things that must come to face honesty as it is in truth ... There is a great hesitancy most often, a tension that is far more expression than 'teaching' ... There is a great shrinking from the whole notion of it. Besides, it is Jesus who should be the object in view if that can be said with the right reverence. Then the desires are put rightly and we could care little if we be 'known' as teacher, prophet, evangelist. We come full circle back to office over 'title'.

Cannot seem to shake Ravenhills "The more I know the more I realize I do not know" Or know next to nothing, something to that effect. He wasn't the first to say it, but to hear it towards the *end* of his life ...

Re: - posted by John173 (), on: 2007/2/11 20:58

Just a quick thank you to all who have responded. I never anticipated the affect my post would have. Each one of you has given some insight to my walk.

It is my intention to post separate responses to each of you individually. This may take some time, so if I don't get to you, please know that I simply ran out of time and will get back at it when I can. Tomorrow will be a busy day so be patient!

In His Love,

Doug

Re: - posted by John173 (), on: 2007/2/11 21:26

Death2self,

Discouragement is a sin brother and Jesus wants to free you from this burden.

It has never occurred to me to label discouragement as sin, yet as I thought about it I have come to agree with you. Everything that is not of faith is sin.

as you allow Him to deal honestly with your own heart

This is the hardest part of all. I think we humans have a high resistance to truly accepting our utter wretchedness. While I can theologically believe that I can do nothing apart from Him, or tell myself that I am not putting any more confidence in the flesh. It requires true brokenness for us to come to terms with this reality. Highly uncomfortable and resulting in some agonizing times of prayer. This is the current state of my walk.

It's good to hear that you won't move forward until you hear from God.

Miracles that follow the plow :: A broken heart

I honestly don't feel that I have a choice in this regard. As I look back I can see too many times when I did not wait to hear from Him and leaned on my own understanding instead. Almost without fail this led me down the wrong avenue.

the discouragement you often experience could very well be the fruit of rebellion. Whenever rebellion rises in my own heart and I come into agreement with it, then I'm extraordinarily discouraged. Unbelief almost always follows rebellion. So if we deal honestly with God about the rebellion, then the unbelief will go away.

This is a tough one to swallow. I would rather lay the blame elsewhere, or at least come up with a kinder gentler term! Unfortunately you have hit home. Whatever term I use, I find myself at times resisting or rejecting His guidance, call, or nudging. This does indeed lead to unrest in my soul, which in turn creates disillusionment and ultimately discouragement. Pride comes before a fall, and pride is the root of rebellion.

As for the real estate, I believe I am beginning to get some clarity. Tomorrow will be a big day and should bring some answers.

In His Love,

Doug

Re: - posted by John173 (), on: 2007/2/11 22:19

Dorcas,

I think the big temptation is to hope for a finishing line, which after it is crossed, will spell the end of the struggle.

This is oh so true. How often I have thought, if I could just...then I would be OK. I have this mental picture of who I want to be (or think I should be) in Christ and tend to berate myself for falling short of this ideal. If I could just be that person...

My tenacious pride causes me to think that with just a little more effort on my part this time around I might actually get there. How foolish. I don't quite comprehend why I have clung to this notion for so long when I know better.

It seems to me that in Jewish culture, there was a line between being a child and a man

In many ways I feel as though I did not cross that line. I still catch myself stomping my feet like a little boy and angrily crying "that's not fair." Ugh, such confessions hurt to admit. God grant me repentance from such whining.

'It suspends a person in adolescence.'

This is all too true. The friend I mentioned above has been smoking it his whole life, and at forty years old still has the thought processes of a teenager to some degree. I hate to think of how my growth may have been different had I never touched it myself. At least I know I am forgiven.

Also, I took the advice of Oswald Chambers not to worry about what others might think of my outward appearance - of how far it might fall short of their expectation of Christian behaviour. He said to concentrate on one's inner consistency of relationship with God. I really commend this thought to you.

Thank you, this really must be my focus. I must also toss aside my own expectations. In many ways I have begun to settle this matter in my heart. I still must do battle with it, but I recognize the pattern sooner and get back on course, that is to say I let go and rest in His grace.

I really hope none of this sounds patronising

On the contrary, you have been nothing less than a blessing in all you've said.

I found it very challenging, and it brought me to tears.

I am moved and very thankful that my tale has somehow ministered to others. This is truly humbling.

Miracles that follow the plow :: A broken heart

In His Love,

Doug

Re: - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2007/2/11 23:07

Jeanette, can so much appreciate and relate to what you shared here...

"The Lord has basically exposed the root motive for joining this and other discussion forums. Pride, yes, but also, it seems, a need to "make my mark" in some way. Especially, on a forum such as this, to demonstrate my knowledge, wisdom and maturity in the Lord. To gain respect of others, to be listened to instead of being ignored."

Had a similar experience right around the time I joined the forums, one year ago today, if I'm not mistaken. Here's a sort of record of it that I posted here on the forums

(https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id9686&forum35&4) Covetousness(My Own)

During this time as I was seeking to share the Gospel as much as possible I was also noticing all sorts of rotten motives surfacing. Still do. At the same time have been dealing with a mysterious pain and in and through it all am believing that this is God's way of dealing with all of this in me.

At the same time, I feel like God is taking me to depths I've never even thought of. I want to be real sister. If there is one thing I believe our God hates it is hypocrisy. I want to be real, through and through and through. At the same time I can't see in myself so much that is false false false! It stinks.

I feel like God has given me some deep deep things and yet I lack the substance of those very things?! It's like being able to paint an ocean but never being able to sink into its depths.

Something which a brother gave me right as I was entering all this was a verse from Job:

But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

Amen.

Re: A broken heart - posted by Goldminer (), on: 2007/2/11 23:23

Dear Doug,

I must say this is probably the most incredible thread I have read so far. The honesty exhibited by precious members breaks my heart. Your testimony and LittleGift's, oh my. These are both things to spend much time and prayer applying to my own life.

I have been saved for since 1976 and for all that time I felt I followed hard after the Lord. I'm sure that was part of my difficulty, "I" followed hard after the Lord. I had a few issues along the way, but I wasn't like most guys, at least not in my own brain.

Well last year I went through a period where the "tiny" sins that I did and repented of took a strong grip upon my life. I blatantly did these things, although nobody around me would have known it, except my attitude began to stink at times. But what happened is I lost that tangible awareness of His presence. One day I realized just how far I had slipped and it had taken me unawares. I began to seek God again and couldn't find Him. I wept and thought of my self as Esau who had sold his birthright for a plate of stew. I had the verse come before me about it being almost impossible for those who had tasted the good things of God to be restored if the trample under foot the blood of Christ. I experienced the dark night of the soul and feared there was no remedy for me.

Miracles that follow the plow :: A broken heart

I begged and cried, repented and repented some more and began to saturate myself in His word and worship and little by little He began to reveal to my heart the "small" places of rebellion I had succumbed to all along in my Christian walk. They seemed very small at first and even at times seem justified because of circumstances in my life. I saw that that thread was woven into everything. There were several areas and I'll tell you one. I would spend money here and there and not share that with my spouse, I could hide it ways, not big money, never big money. However it's the little foxes that spoil the vine. There were other areas as well more personal that I won't go into specifically. Just know that I came to realize that it all came to a head because of little rebellions along the long way of my walk.

I feel part of the problem was because the road had been so long and difficult and I grew weary of the journey and so I just gave into my sinful ways more fully.

I am happy to say that in my despair I came to the place where I knew that even though I had walked a long time and did adhere to God's ways more than many, it wasn't good enough. I could never be good enough in myself. I acknowledged I was destitute of any ability to help myself and with the acknowledging I was set free.

My joy and awareness of God has returned. I find myself all by myself smiling and rejoicing over the littlest things. Truly He gives us beauty for ashes and the oil joy for mourning and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

I have also learned that little sins or compromises are rebellion and with God nothing is little. It is just too bad that it took over thirty years to learn. But then the steps of a righteous man are ordered of the Lord and maybe I couldn't have learned it until now.

Know this Bro. Doug, He who began a good work in you will complete it. Rejoice that He has given you a woman who loves you. Know that He will bring it all together for His purpose and plan in His perfect timing.

I will pray for you and your wife. Again thanks to you and to the others who shared so honestly, especially LittleGift. It has given me the boldness to confess my sins to you that I might be healed.

Re: A broken heart - posted by John173 (), on: 2007/2/12 9:40

Dear Saints,

I must skip the personal replies to all this for the moment. I have been shown a deep root to my difficulties with my walk and wanted to share it as it seems many of us are going through similar dealings.

I am angry with the Lord! This morning I had to forgive Him. This is a very strange concept, as forgiveness is what we must do when we are sinned against, and God cannot sin. However, forgiveness is more a matter of our perception of another's actions toward us. It is the method we must use to remove bitterness. Forgive us our debts as we forgive those who are indebted to us. This connotes a sense of "them" owing us retribution.

I come from a highly successful family. Mom and Dad have masters degrees, sister has BA plus some secondary degree in Christian ed. Step sisters (3) all college grads, most of them (incl blood relatives) had near 4.0 GPAs throughout school. I was blessed with the same DNA that enabled these marks. My IQ is in the 135-140 range. Oh how great in the kingdom of God I should be! This is the pathetic pride of my turmoiled soul at work.

The reality is that I tested out of H.S. I was a fast food specialist, stoner, truck driver etc. All things that fall way short of my high and mighty potential. Why won't you raise me up into leadership O God? I have such great and marvelous insights into the kingdom! Do you not see how valuable I would be to the body? This reasoning in my subconscious pride produced a deep bitterness in me against God. It is to eradicate this bitterness that I must therefore forgive Him. Not due His sin (I tremble to even put those words together) but for my own sin in this anger, bitterness and rebellion.

God have mercy on me. Break me of this horrid, wretched pride. Grant that I would have the humility of genuine thanksgiving, for You have never let go of my hand in spite of the depths of my sin against You. Truly Your grace is amazing.

I humbly offer these thoughts to you all, pray for me please. This is very difficult to admit to myself. Yet I feel hope stirring in my heart as a result of baring this wretchedness to you all, my faithful and beautiful brethren.

In His Love and by His Grace,

Doug

Ugh, this is ugliness of the worst kind. No wonder I have needed to be broken.

Re: - posted by death2self (), on: 2007/2/12 11:25

Praise God Doug for your honesty,

It's the blood of Jesus that can break this prideful heart. That's been the only hope of mine as the Holy Spirit has shown me the depths of pride in my own heart. The devil will tempt you to run for a fig leaf of some sort and hide in despair, discouragement and unbelief.

Trust in Jesus Doug, He will purge this pride from your heart. He is faithful to do it. Praise God he has given you eyes to see. Do you know what a blessing that is my brother?

Re:, on: 2007/2/12 19:29

Slavyan said:

Quote:
-----...Remember that you cannot be saved by anything that you do, but by faith alone--and again I say, by faith in Christ alone-- like a little, helpless child...

A pattern is beginning to emerge, more and more. As Jesus said, "unless you become as little children..." The Kingdom is lost to us (we may still be "saved" but we will not be able to operate in the good of it). That childlike trust and helplessness that overturns the sin of Eden. Not helplessness alone, or we despair, but that childlike trust... The Lord wants to deal with the "old Adam", and this was the sin of Adam, working from his own strength, independence instead of dependence on God.

Mmmm is that one of the reasons Jesus had to come first as a helpless baby, to show how it's done from the beginning of life?

And not only to show but so that the same thing could be actually *wrought* in us, in Him

But how hard we find it to come there!

This is the "letting go" that is required of us, this is the essential "death to self"...

And part of that letting go and that trusting is in trusting Him to *work* this trust in us, that we can't attain to by ourselves!

Don't know if that makes sense but it makes sense to me as if it were totally new - fresh minted revelation.

Strange how that happens, even with truths one knows so well in theory, they suddenly come alive as if never heard before.

This is a bit rambling but I don't care any more!

What a blessing this thread is!!!

Jeannette

Miracles that follow the plow :: A broken heart

Re: woundings, on: 2007/2/12 19:55

Quote:

crsschk wrote:

Quote:

----- Think you are in wonderfully safe surroundings here with this

I know.

Re:, on: 2007/2/12 20:03

Quote:

John173 wrote:

Just a quick thank you to all who have responded. I never anticipated the affect my post would have. Each one of you has given some insight to my walk.

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In His Love,

Doug

Thank you Doug. Your original message, written out of your own pain and perplexity, has caused so much of the Lord's healing balm to flow out to all. Like the alabaster vase of ointment that was broken, and the perfume filled the house.

Because the heart that was broken was poured out firstly at HIS feet, not ours.

Love in Him

Jeannette

Re:, on: 2007/2/12 20:19

Quote:

John173 wrote:

Death2self,

...as you allow Him to deal honestly with your own heart

This is the hardest part of all. I think we humans have a high resistance to truly accepting our utter wretchedness. While I can theologically believe that I can do nothing apart from Him, or tell myself that I am not putting any more confidence in the flesh. It requires true brokenness for us to come to terms with this reality. Highly uncomfortable and resulting in some agonizing times of prayer. This is the current state of my walk.

It's good to hear that you won't move forward until you hear from God.

I honestly don't feel that I have a choice in this regard. As I look back I can see too many times when I did not wait to hear from Him and leaned on my own understanding instead. Almost without fail this led me down the wrong avenue.

Been there, done that!

the discouragement you often experience could very well be the fruit of rebellion. Whenever rebellion rises in my own heart and I come into agreement with it, then I'm extraordinarily discouraged. Unbelief almost always follows rebellion. So if we deal honestly with God about the rebellion, then the unbelief will go away.

This is a tough one to swallow. I would rather lay the blame elsewhere, or at least come up with a kinder gentler term! Unfortunately you have hit home. Whatever term I use, I find myself at times resisting or rejecting His guidance, call, or nudging. This does indeed lead to unrest in my soul, which in turn creates disillusionment and ultimately discouragement. Pride comes before a fall, and pride is the root of rebellion.

There's also the kind of unrest that comes from the Lord's "wrestling" with us, which isn't unnecessary a bad or wrong thing - its different from deliberate rebellion. To me it sometimes feels like the dentist is trying to pull a s

tubborn tooth. I want to co-operate, and resist the urge to jump out of the chair, but it isn't a comfortable experience!

Rebellion would be avoiding the dentist, and trying to pretend the tooth isn't aching; or running away in the middle of treatment.

Re: Honesty, on: 2007/2/12 20:42

Quote:

ChrisJD wrote:

Jeanette, can so much appreciate and relate to what you shared here...

"The Lord has basically exposed the root motive for joining this and other discussion forums. Pride, yes, but also, it seems, a need to "make my mark" in some way. Especially, on a forum such as this, to demonstrate my knowledge, wisdom and maturity in the Lord. To gain respect of others, to be listened to instead of being ignored."

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At the same time, I feel like God is taking me to depths I've never even thought of. I want to be real sister. If there is one thing I believe our God hates it is hypocrisy. I want to be real, through and through and through. At the same time I can still see in myself so much that is false false false! It stinks.

I feel like God has given me some deep deep things and yet I lack the substance of those very things?! It's like being able to paint an ocean but never being able to sink into its depths.

Something which a brother gave me right as I was entering all this was a verse from Job:

But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

Amen.

I believe that, for many of us, what is being challenged in this thread is the nature of our deeds. Salvation is not in doubt, but how are we following? How are we serving? Are we "doing Truth", will what we do stand the test of 1Corinthians 3:11;

"For no other foundation can any one lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12; No w if any one builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— 13; each man's work will become manifest; for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. 14; If the work which any man has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. 15; If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire."

There is no condemnation, and no need to fear this; but the Lord is searching our hearts and and bringing the Light there in a new way

John 3:20; "For every one who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. 21; But he who does what is true comes to the light, that it may be clearly seen that his deeds have been wrought in God.

We may find the Light difficult to bear sometimes, but we are not as creatures of darkness that try desperately to escape when you turn over a stone, lest the light destroy them!

in Him

Jeannette

Miracles that follow the plow :: A broken heart

Re: a broken heart, on: 2007/2/12 21:09

Quote:

John173 wrote:

Dear Saints,

I must skip the personal replies to all this for the moment. I have been shown a deep root to my difficulties with my walk and wanted to share it as it seems many of us are going through similar dealings.

I am angry with the Lord! This morning I had to forgive Him. This is a very strange concept, as forgiveness is what we must do when we are sinned against, and God cannot sin. However, forgiveness is more a matter of our perception of another's actions toward us. It is the method we must use to remove bitterness. Forgive us our debts as we forgive those who are indebted to us. This connotes a sense of "them" owing us retribution.

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The reality is that I tested out of H.S. I was a fast food specialist, stoner, truck driver etc. All things that fall way short of my high and mighty potential. Why won't you raise me up into leadership O God? I have such great and marvelous insights into the kingdom! Do you not see how valuable I would be to the body? This reasoning in my subconscious pride produced a deep bitterness in me against God. It is to eradicate this bitterness that I must therefore forgive Him. Not due His sin (I tremble to even put those words together) but for my own sin in this anger, bitterness and rebellion.

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I humbly offer these thoughts to you all, pray for me please. This is very difficult to admit to myself. Yet I feel hope stirring in my heart as a result of bearing this wretchedness to you all, my faithful and beautiful brethren.

In His Love and by His Grace,

Doug

Ugh, this is ugliness of the worst kind. No wonder I have needed to be broken.

Ugh indeed, Brother, but don't despair, the Lord has it all under control - His control not ours.

And you are far from being alone in this. Again, been there, done that, the T shirt is in rags but sometimes I try to use it as a "security blanket" still - especially if I feel I'm being "patronised"!

The most ridiculous example happened a few years ago. I was at a meeting where a lovely man of God was speaking.

At the end he invited anyone who wanted to come out for prayer in response to his message. I knew I should go, but he had, in his talk, happened to mention his age and how long he'd been a Christian.

I sat there wrestling with the fact that I was older than him and had been a Christian longer. therefore how could I humble myself and ask him to pray for me?!!!:oops: In the end the Lord won, but it was only when I cried out to Him because I *couldn't* move, that it became possible.

But the GOOD NEWS is that we don't have to go on and on being "miserable sinners" as the Anglican service puts (or used to put) it

The LORD is able to pull us out of this pit (Psalm 40), and He is already doing so)

We have to repent when He shows us our sin, but then He picks us up, dusts us off and sends us on our way rejoicing.

And others will "fear and trust in the Lord" because of the new song in our heart and mouth.

Hang on in there and wait for His salvation!

in Him

Jeannette

Re: - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2007/2/13 0:16

Hi everyone. Wonder if we shall gather enough bruised and broken grapes here to make wine.

Doug, wanted to touch on something you mentioned as it came to mind in prayer in my own seeking to be washed and purged of all this...

Quote:
-----My IQ is in the 135-140 range. Oh how great in the kingdom of God I should be! This is the pathetic pride of my turmoiled soul at work.

Can so much understand this(not that my IQ is that high!), enough maybe to understand the inner workings of it through my own experience. We, in our own hearts or maybe at the promptings of some suggestive spirit, we recognise enough ability of some sort or another in ourselves and we then consider ourselves usefull.

For myself I think it is an issue of vainglory. At some level I must want God to allow me to have some of both, some His glory, some my own. Even just a little.

I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.

And anything less than an empty vessel, is it not such an image?

Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: they have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them. Psalm 115:4-8

Who then is the life of all these in us, is it we ourselves? Or the life of God in Christ? If it is yet us, are we not such an idol, not made of wood or stone, but of flesh and blood?

How long before we shall be purged of this thought forever, *I can.*

... when I am weak, then am I strong

Re:, on: 2007/2/13 10:12

Quote:
-----ChrisJD wrote:
Hi everyone. Wonder if we shall gather enough bruised and broken grapes here to make wine.

:lol: **Lol, Brother Chris! Maybe we needed that.**

Doug, wanted to touch on something you mentioned as it came to mind in prayer in my own seeking to be washed and purged of all this...

Quote:
-----My IQ is in the 135-140 range. Oh how great in the kingdom of God I should be! This is the pathetic pride of my turmoiled soul at work.

Can so much understand this(not that my IQ is that high!), enough maybe to understand the inner workings of it through my own experience. We, in our own hearts or maybe at the promptings of some suggestive spirit, we recognise enough ability of some sort or another in ourselves and we then consider ourselves usefull.

For myself I think it is an issue of vainglory. At some level I must want God to allow me to have some of both, some His glory, some my own. Even just a little.

That's so true; although for me it was mostly an attempt to compensate for the huge sense of inferiority and rejection.

Is there, I wonder a kind of pride that is more rooted in pain than arrogance; more an attempt to prove yourself just a little more important than the worm you are convinced you are? (and that you are convinced everyone thinks so too)

Even a harmless worm will wriggle and violently coil itself like a snake in self-defence, though unlike a snake its totally unable to cause any damage.

...Not to make light of the sin, but just wondering...

I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.

And anything less than an empty vessel, is it not such an image?

Indeed it is. All forms of "self" - even self-defence, guilt, rejection etc - are still "self" and therefore not of Him, and therefore an idol! Why should I want to be anything else but a worm? Very useful things, worms. The soil would be much poorer without them. Yet their activities are unseen, under the surface. And they are content (if a worm can experience contentment) just as to be and do what they are made for - unlike so many of us foolish and rebellious humans who want to be "as God"

Its like the story by Paul White (if you know of the Jungle Doctor fables) of a goat that wanted to be a lion, when he was really only a silly old goat. He tried to pretend he was a lion, went to join them, and of course the lions ate him!

Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: they have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them. Psalm 115:4-8

Who then is the life of all these in us, is it we ourselves? Or the life of God in Christ? If it is yet us, are we not such an idol, not made of wood or stone, but of flesh and blood?

How long before we shall be purged of this thought forever, *I can.*

... when I am weak, then am I strong

AMEN!

Jeannette

Miracles that follow the plow :: A broken heart

Re: - posted by John173 (), on: 2007/2/13 17:34

Mike,

I finally have had a chance to reread your initial reply. Let me say this first. Everything you said ministered to me. I cannot begin to express my gratitude for the way you poured yourself into that post. I am humbled by this in so many ways, not only by your gift, but the gift everyone has brought to this thread. I am humbled too, to see how this has touched off so much growth in our little "fellowship" here.

Quote:
-----Broken heart. Broken man. There is a very good reason for these things. Through this brother. Go on through. Do pray, pray always
. Unceasingly means ... what it means, without end.

He is pulling me through, I am to some degree, at least at times, going kicking and screaming, but I am beginning to recognize the fruit of what the Lord is doing. It is like having a thorn bush ripped out through my heart, whose roots have grown down every artery in me. Ack! Praise God that in the midst of this He is granting me some sweet times of fellowship with Him. I suspect this has some similarities to the times of grieving you are going through. I read a post elsewhere where someone gave you the same advice...go through, it is at times like this that we experience the greatest growth. This is much like the rings in a tree. The wide parts are from the spring and summer, while the thinner bends are produced during the harsher winter months. The interesting part is that the wide parts are the softer, the narrow is what makes the wood hard. I relate hardness to firmness, or internal strength of character...as a result of trial, difficulty or even drought.

Prayer as something you are rather than just something we do.

I am finding this to be more and more true. There are times where my verbal communication to the Lord consists of "O Lord," yet I know He is hearing a far deeper cry of my spirit.

1Th 5:18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

Oh that we could get this one into the depths of our hearts. It is our sacrifice of praise when we do so in the midst of our trials. Though the fig tree may not blossom (does anyone remember that song?)...yet will I rejoice in the Lord. Hab 3:17

character is made by being shown where we are deficient and addressing these things head on. That is often we think by merely pulling up the boot straps and by sheer 'will power' funny notion, that. It is an element, be strong therefore but the paradox is in it's opposite; dependence, faith, trust in the Lord. If we give over "commit" our souls unto the Lord, well I keep finding Him faithful.

I often struggle with this seeming contradiction. Be strong...Strength is perfected in weakness...having no confidence in the flesh etc. This has much to do with our need to be broken. We may read and even agree with the concept, yet it takes brokenness to come to terms with our inability to be strong by simply "pulling up the bootstraps".

May be going a bit past your particulars here but perhaps I am trying to just convey that what you are going through is not an end in itself as was mentioned nor something of an escape to get out of. To overcome it is probably not the real goal or rather, the aim. Think if we get stuck there we are extrapolating the future before it arrives. That place is there somewhere, a place to look back on after you have passed it. This may not be any part of your thinking at all.

This very much speaks to an error in my thinking for years and years. It is probably why this process of growth is taking so long. My yearning for the destination has caused me to rebel against the process. This time I am staying put. Or at least trying. I still find myself trying or wanting to run away from this time, no one much enjoys any painful process, yet His grace is helping me to submit myself to His dealings.

Let me be forthcoming as you have here. I do not really do the 'witnessing thing' very well. What I mean is in the many varied ways we have come to think of them, expressing the truth we hold to. Witnessing to people frankly would give off or bring up the whole fear of man issues that you speak of. I just cannot do it the way others do and have often berated myself for the whole idea of 'not getting out there' and doing it, whatever the fashion. There is a whole backlog of semi-convicting thoughts, reading through all these postings over the years, all the great 'soul winners', the street preachers in our

in the midst and I would often think, 'and just what is it I think I am doing here, speaking of all these deep, penetrating issues of the faith ... am I a hypocrite?'. "Sharing your faith" ... are you? Isn't this one of the large questions asked, inferred, of others, of ourselves. Is it mode or operation or program? Is it as it is often 'presented' sadly enough just another 'pitch' even by the most sincere? Are there not many who would be doing a greater service if they just quit doing what they are doing because they are doing far more harm than good? What I mean is, I think there are far too many who have gone on out with The Great Commission without a Commissioner. They know the Lord either not at all or in such a deficient understanding as to be actually spreading all kinds of accurate orthodoxy that is in reality poisonous heresy. To speak in the Name of the Lord all the while harboring pride and bitterness, judgment that is not theirs to give, hypocrisy and duplicity, things gleaned off the surface that have never entered the marrow of being

How in the world did you get into my head like that? :-)

This honesty business is really coming to the fore more and more these days.

This touches on something I have long grieved over. When we walk in the light...how to say this...when there is true fellowship in the Spirit amongst brethren, we should be able to be transparent with each other. I long for those relationships, as our dear sister relates elsewhere, where we allow each other full access to our lives and our hearts. This requires transparency. Jam 5:16 Confess faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. . The word for faults here, often translated sins elsewhere is a word which in the Greek connotes side slipping. I am convinced that James is not telling us to confess our specific acts, but rather to be open and honest about the places in our lives that our footing is unsure. As we pray for each other over these trials we find the freedom of God's healing, or firming up the ground under our feet. The word for healing is, I believe, translated elsewhere; delivered. But herein lies the very secret brother of all this. It is our self dying out to everything save the Lord. It is to truly put the emphasis on others, to their considerations, to their uplifting, to their honor or praiseworthiness. In this instance it was for my mother and for the Lord. Think it can and will transpire across these fears that you have as well. I know them well, I know your struggles, they are the very means of advancing, embrace them

I have no thoughts on this other than this is so important, I thought it worth repeating.

I have not even touched on all that is happening in my spirit. I can feel your prayers dear saints. Col 2:5 For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. I am not sure how this relates except that I pray that over the miles and even oceans we are all together in spirit, that somehow that which I fail to communicate hear in this forum will be heard in your spirit. I know how I feel as I read each of these posts. There is a fellowship, a kindredness if you will, that is not in body or mind but transcends them both.

In His Love,

Doug

Re: - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2007/2/13 23:26

Evening all.

Jeannette,

"Is there, I wonder a kind of pride that is more rooted in pain than arrogance;"

This is bigger than we probably know. Think of this the same way as money; the covetousness of a rich man is more obvious to everyone than that of the poor. A preacher once said (in so many words) that it's just as much pride to park your beat-up car in the back of the parking lot as it is to park your fancy one in the front!

I've fallen into this side of pride's ditch too. The way it has happened with me is encountering other 'religious people' on the streets. Often times, instead of these encounters being an encouragement, it's been more like sword fighting. And not just with other believers but people in general. The tendency has too many times been to defend myself, with weapons of words. Yeah, that's real sheep like.

Miracles that follow the plow :: A broken heart

When I first set out to share the Gospel, I had it in my mind that God wanted me to do this because I was somehow better, or more, or especially suited to it. I think I've come to believe that it had more to do with dealing with things in me. The broken-down walls of human life that you encounter on the streets have a way of searching you out. At least it has for me.

Appreciate everything you've shared :-)

Doug,

"...we should be able to be transparent with each other."

Was thinking about this thread the other day and had a similar thought. This phrase came to mind:

a culture of dishonesty in the kingdom of truth

Re: - posted by John173 (), on: 2007/2/15 0:08

I am late getting home from church this evening but wanted to take a few minutes to give this update. All this trial and struggle is beginning to pay dividends. I have learned so much this past week. It would be difficult to express it all tonight, I am simply too tired and a bit fuzzy around the edges.

Praise His Holy Name. Changes are occurring on a deep inner level. Changes I have longed for my entire walk. I am coming out from under a cloud of self condemnation. The truth *is* taking hold of my heart. I *am* redeemed! I *am* a new creation! All my sins *are* washed away! **Hallelujah!**

Thank you all so much for your prayers. The prayers of a righteous saint availeth much.

In His Love,

Doug

Re: A broken heart - posted by John173 (), on: 2007/2/22 23:46

I just wanted to post an update as to the work the Lord is doing in my life. Today, Thursday 22 February 2007 has been a landmark day.

But first I must regress to Tuesday. You all know what a difficult time I've been having. The wrenching prayer, confrontations with the "wormy flesh" staring at me in the mirror. Had I known what lay ahead on that winters night in '79 I just may have said "Gee, thanks but no thanks!" It's too late now!

Tuesday was the worst yet. I have known how much I need to be broken. I yearn from the core of my being to be useful to God here on planet earth. I have recognized that the broken are the most useable of all His vessels. Yet I have the spirit of a wild stallion. I buck and rear something fierce at every light touch upon my will. If you heard the piercing screams my soul utters you may need a hearing aid afterwards.

Tuesday...I'm gettin there...was sheer anguish. I was alone in an empty, unfurnished house I was holding open. Weekdays never see any traffic. I tried to pray but felt miles away from God. Instead I began to weep, then to wail. This turned to prayer...of sorts. I felt like Jacob, wrestling. In utter despair I told Him to just get it over with! Just break me already! I was at the brink of a mental collapse. Eventually the wailing turned to sobbing and slowly turned to mere tears and 1/2 a roll of toilet paper. I was exhausted and numb.

Wednesday I was still so numb that I stayed home all day, I don't think I even brushed my teeth. I know, I know, grrross maan!

Miracles that follow the plow :: A broken heart

Today dawned like it always does. At 7:45am I realized I had 1/2 an hour before I needed to start getting ready if I wanted to get to my office by 9:00. I heard the Lord ask for that 1/2 hour. Just read My word, try Isaiah. I reluctantly grabbed my bible and flipped it open directly to:

Isaiah 61 The Spirit of the Lord GOD upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.

This is far and away my favorite passage in the entire word of God. To me it represents God's mission statement in sending His Son to us. It represents my heart's cry for ministry. I believe this should be the mission statement for every believer who wants to do Christ's work here. It is also where I have always stopped reading, the rest just never spoke to me, to day I read on...

And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien your plowmen and your vinedressers. But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves. For your shame double; and confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them. For I the LORD love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they the seed the LORD hath blessed.

This felt very much like a promise to me that my shame and confusion were drawing to an end.

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth with her jewels. For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

WOW! Is He really saying to me that my life will soon bear fruit?

Isa 62:1-7 For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp burneth. And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the LORD delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married. For a young man marryeth a virgin, shall thy sons marry thee: and the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, shall thy God rejoice over thee. I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence, And give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

This is very telling regarding the very thing I have wrestled with God over. I know that He has called me to speak forth His word. As I read this I knew that the time for silence was over. I can no longer afford to hold my peace.

The morning was not complete. Knowing what I was being called to do is not the same as being empowered to do it. Neither does it mean that I had surrendered myself to it. I felt a great weight on me as I considered what I had just read and what His Spirit was saying to me through it.

I began to pray in tongues. I do this a lot as I usually can't find the words to express what is going on in my inner man. This prayer was like a dam burst open. Out came a rushing torrent of words like I have never known. The tone was loud, emphatic, bold and insistent. What it was not was pitiful, whimpering or reserved. When I get to heaven I want a transcript of the interpretation. It must have poured out for ten minutes or so.

Miracles that follow the plow :: A broken heart

At the end my heart was flooded with such joy as I can't begin to describe. I felt like I had come upon a garden setting with the perfect temp, the perfect sunlight, the perfect everything. I was basking in His presence. Somewhere in all of this my heart had yielded. That which I could not accomplish no matter how hard I tried, God had done at long last.

Hallelujah!

In His Love,

Doug

Re: A broken heart, on: 2007/2/24 16:17

John173 said

Quote:
-----I began to pray in tongues. I do this a lot as I usually can't find the words to express what is going on in my inner man. This prayer was like a dam burst open. Out came a rushing torrent of words like I have never known.

John, I read this the day you posted but didn't know what to say. Mainly I want to encourage you by saying I'm encouraged you are going on with such a determination.

I think some of us (at least some of us) identify with the stricture you've been feeling, and that the only way forward is through. We *expect* to hear of God meeting you.... but, I know it's not an anti-climax from your perspective. It's an essential endorsement of both you and the word He's already spoken, which is its own landmark in your spiritual life.

Now it's your turn to endorse God's word, by putting the power of your body and your word behind His call on your life.

Quote:
-----**Knowing what I was being called to do is not the same as being empowered to do it. Neither does it mean that I had surrendered myself to it.** I felt a great weight on me as I considered what I had just read and what His Spirit was saying to me through it.

These are real words of wisdom.

If you can pace yourself to keep pressing on, and to do the little things He gives you to do *for real*.... Don't think of them as 'practise' that doesn't really matter He will continue to establish His word in you, ever more deeply. (I speak to myself in this, also.)

Re: - posted by John173 (), on: 2007/2/24 18:00

If you can pace yourself to keep pressing on, and to do the little things He gives you to do for real....

Thank you brother for your wise encouragement. In spite of the glory of the other day, I continue to recognize the need to go through the process. At least I have begun to express for real what is in my heart. For 30 years I have only done this in the imagination of my own heart. It doesn't do anyone any good in there.

Thanks again,

Doug

Miracles that follow the plow :: A broken heart

Re: - posted by Nellie, on: 2007/2/24 18:13

Doug,
Praise God!!!!
I'm so thankful you are sharing what God did, and is doing for you.
I long for Him to complete the work in my own heart and life. Phil. 1:6
Just keep sharing Brother.
There are people who want to hear, even if it is just a remnant.
He is able to do exceeding, abundantly , above all we ask or think, according to the Power, {His Power}
that worketh in us.
Praise God for Victory through the Blood of Jesus Christ.
God Bless
Nellie

Re:, on: 2007/2/24 19:14

Quote:

Nellie wrote:
Doug,
Praise God!!!!
I'm so thankful you are sharing what God did, and is doing for you.
I long for Him to complete the work in my own heart and life. Phil. 1:6
Just keep sharing Brother.
There are people who want to hear, even if it is just a remnant.
He is able to do exceeding, abundantly , above all we ask or think, according to the Power, {His Power}
that worketh in us.
Praise God for Victory through the Blood of Jesus Christ.
God Bless
Nellie

Yes indeed! How wonderful that you are **seeing** progress. We "walk by faith, not by sight, but sometimes we need a little vision as well, lest we be tempted to despair.

This is major surgery you're having, Bro! As someone said, others have been though or are going through similar things . I don't know why it takes some of us so long, but we know the Lord is able.

An illustration I found helpful is of someone having suffered serious burns. They may need several operations for reconstruction of the damaged areas. The surgeon could probably do it in one big operation but the patient couldn't cope.

At least that's how He dealt with me (rejection, inferiority, guilt, fear - you name it - all the negative things were there!)

...Or maybe you are one that only needs, and can cope with, one big "operation". The main thing is that in the end its done.

You won't be "perfect" when this is finished, but you will be **whole!** Which in the original Bible languages means almost the same thing.

... = Shalom! Peace, wholeness, completeness, the end of the work.

Bless you, Brother!

Jeannette

Miracles that follow the plow :: A broken heart

Re: - posted by John173 (), on: 2007/2/24 20:48

Jeannette,

:-) :-) :-) :-) :-) :-) :-) :-) :-) :-)

Bless you my sister.

Re: A broken heart - posted by John173 (), on: 2007/2/27 17:41

Brethren,

I desperately need someone, anyone, to care enough to intercede on my behalf. I have backed myself into a corner. Several weeks ago I was very concerned about my new career in real estate. I made mention of this in my previous posts. I cannot say that going this direction was the Lord's leading. I went this way because I wanted to force myself into a position requiring utter dependence on Him. I have been licensed since August and have had three people from church express a need for my services.

The first must sell their home out of state first, I am still waiting on that. The second was going to sell her home, but the process of getting it ready for market caused her to re-evaluate her life. Ultimately she kicked her alcoholic husband out of the house and decided to wait to sell until these relational issues were resolved. The third is a couple with five kids. We spent two months going through the process of finding the right home. When we did find that house it was such an answer to prayer. The closing was set for mid march. Last week the husband lost his job. No loan, no sale.

During all this I have been seeking the Lord to understand how to proceed. Am I even supposed to be in real estate. If so, how? Do I need to just buck up and prospect all day looking for business? I can't say that I was getting any answers. I finally decided that what I needed to do was join one of these high powered sales programs. I had some uncertainty about this so I put a fleece before the Lord. When it didn't come to pass I went ahead and joined up. For reasons that I still don't understand I kept this all to myself, without telling my wife what I was doing. I told her about it after the first session and after it was too late to get a refund. The cost involved is \$795. You can imagine her reaction.

After the second session (held Mondays) I was supposed to make fifty cold calls and ask if they wanted to sell their home. I was also supposed to add fifty names to my "sphere of influence" database. I didn't make the connection that these fifty were one and the same. Tuesday morning I decided to try and call area pastors to introduce myself in the hopes of getting a referral from them. I made a few calls and became discouraged. This led to the events detailed in my last post.

As a result of this sudden infusion of faith I truly felt like I was supposed to stop prospecting almost entirely and focus my time and attention on prayer, studying the word and writing. This meant leaving this sales program even though the \$795 is not refundable. What's that to the Lord? Nothing! I really felt confident taking this path.

Yesterday I didn't go to the class. Yesterday my faith was assaulted. I knew my wife wasn't going to be happy with my decision. As I waded through the day I began to become more and more depressed at the prospect of facing her. By the time I got home I felt like an absolute failure as a man and husband. It is after all, as the man of the house, my responsibility to provide; and here I am doing nothing to support us.

When I arrived home I told her these things and that I thought she would be better off without me. When I told her my decision to abandon the sales training to "trust God", she snapped. She told me that she can't take this anymore and has asked me to leave until I can get my head on straight and start earning a living. I have until this weekend to make arrangements.

It is the oddest thing, but as I write this I am feeling His peace. Still, I am struggling to understand what He is doing and what I need to do. In some ways I feel as if I might be guilty of justifying not working and using spiritual means as an excuse. I feel like perhaps I am simply being lazy. I do truly believe that God has placed in my heart a needed gift that needs to be brought into reality. These things lie in two areas and are closely linked, although the connection is not readily apparent. One is exposing the schemes and methods of our adversary, the other is reaching out to the emotionally crippled in order to strengthen their relationship with the Lord and thereby helping them themselves to exercise their gifts in the church.

As I close this I plead with you to intercede, not only for me to understand how to proceed, not only that somehow my m

Miracles that follow the plow :: A broken heart

marriage would be saved, but more than anything that my wife's faith would be restored.

I have made a huge mess of this. I am more than a little broken up over my own stupidity, lack of faith, and especially my lack of integrity in communication with my wife. Had I told her of this program to begin with she may have knocked some sense into me from the get go.

In Christ
Doug

P.S. Following I have included some relevant excerpts from previous posts in case your interested in some background to all. I have also included a link to my real estate website. Sometimes putting a face to all this can help.

<http://dougfussell.cbshome.com/AgentHome/Homepage.aspx>

One year later, May 21st 1988, I was married to the girl of my dreams. There is nothing I am more certain of in my life (a side from God) than the knowledge that this woman was hand picked by His loving hand. To this day we are still deeply in love with each other. I am so thankful for this.

My entire Christian walk up to maybe eight months ago has been one best described as a roller coaster ride. My flesh is so weak, and I have never been able to fully lay hold of the truth that I am crucified with Christ. I understand the concept, but could not walk in its truth. As a result I would put forth a great deal of effort to seek the Lord with my whole heart. I would find myself climbing to great emotional heights through worship and prayer. Inevitably my besetting sin would trip me up and I would fall flat on my face. This would be followed by weeks of despair and deep pit level depression. Eventually I would realize how foolish this was, that God loved me etc. I would speak the truth to my soul and return to seeking His face. Eventually climbing to new heights in the Lord. Thus began the cycle all over again. Each time I would tell myself that this time was different. My wife got to the point that she would just roll her eyes and say "yeah sure"

When this pattern began to show up once again at Calvary Chapel, I despaired of ever having the victory. For the first time in my Christian life I abandoned the church altogether. During the ensuing months my work situation went from bad to worse to downright intolerable. I began to hesitantly cry out to God for mercy.

Slowly I began to hear from Him. I came to realize that change required taking some type of action on my part. I was frustrated with my career as a truck driver. While I was home every night, I was working 55-60 hours a week, which left me no time or energy for fellowship (should I seek it) or much of anything else for that matter. After some soul searching I decided to take the steps necessary to become a real estate agent. This, I felt would give me the scheduling freedom to be at church Wednesday evenings as well as Sundays. It also gave me the freedom to be available for other forms of fellowship and service. One thing I knew, I had no hope of success without the Lord's blessing.

I returned to church, alone, in June of '06. My wife has become so distrustful of my walk that she refuses to go lest I backslide once again. Our hearts are so linked that every struggle of mine has had a great impact on her own walk with the Lord. She is unwilling to put her heart at risk only to be devastated once again. Since that time my walk with the Lord has been growing in consistency. I still struggle with the flesh to some degree, but I am unwilling to let go of the hope that a victorious life is possible and that I will soon know that sanctifying work that will bring it to pass.

Today dawned like it always does. At 7:45am I realized I had 1/2 an hour before I needed to start getting ready if I wanted to get to my office by 9:00. I heard the Lord ask for that 1/2 hour.

At the end my heart was flooded with such joy as I can't begin to describe. I felt like I had come upon a garden setting with the perfect temp, the perfect sunlight, the perfect everything. I was basking in His presence. Somewhere in all of this my heart had yielded. That which I could not accomplish no matter how hard I tried, God had done at long last.

Edits were added space for ease of reading