

"HOW TO BREAK YOUR OWN HEART"

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This is what we are talking about throughout this series...

- "How to experience God's Plans, accomplished through His Promises, within Our lives."
- We've been looking closely looking at this set of verses last week, (Vs) 2nd Peter 1:3-4 *"His divine power has given us everything we need..."*
- Today... (Vs) 2nd Peter 1:5-8 NIV – *"For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith, goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge..."*

This week, I am going to teach something long passed down from Christian follower to Christian follower... "How to break your own heart. Living with a Christ-like posture"

- Four different times, God's Word talks about this... Ezekiel 11:19, Ezekiel 36:26, Jeremiah 31:33, and Hebrews 8:10.

(Vs) Ezekiel 36:26 – "And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh."

"If we are going to receive what God's Word really means for us, we first have to read it expectantly, for only from this expectant place, with His will being the end goal, can we truly receive the meaning of what God is offering to do for all of us. Anything else is just pretending to try."

(Vs) Psalm 34:18 – "The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit."

- Consider: We all want to be close to God, but nobody wants to have their heart broken.
- This morning's passage starts, (Vs) 2nd Peter 1:5 NIV – *"For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith, goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; ..."*

The first thing to notice here is that this command is *based on* the verses before that I just read.

- Again, this is reminding us to look at the description of what God has already done for us.
- (Vs) 3: *"His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life..."*

- (Vs) 4 : *“Through these He has given us His very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature...”*
- In other words... *“What I’m about to say matters, not because of my own gifts or promises, but because of the gifts and promises already given.”*
- (Vs) 2nd Peter 1:5b – *“make every effort to add to your faith goodness;...”*

Goodness = “Virtue” or “Moral excellence.” Or better yet, “Godliness”

- “Godliness” fit’s best because “True Goodness is actually a description of who God is and that He is “Good.”

(Vs) James 1:17 – “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.”

(Vs) Luke 18:19 – ... Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.”

Peter starts with this because here in lies a very important shift in perspective one must acquire to advance any further in the heart-breaking process...

- This shift in perspective is also Step One: Trust that God is Good!
- Without this core belief, our hearts cannot not be fully Surrendered to God’s will and ways... and so, ask Him to reach within our souls and hold our deepest heart aches...
- Some may think..., *“I will work out my salvation *in order that* God might work in me.”*
- But the apostle Paul says... *“I work out my salvation for it is God who works in me to will and to do of His good pleasure.”* – (Vs) Phil. 2:13
- Or another may think, *“I press on to make it my own **in order that** Christ might make me His own.”*
- The Apostle Paul says... *“I press on to make it my own because Christ Jesus has made me his own”* – (Vs) Phil. 3:12

With Christ at the helm, your life will unweveringly become more like His. Having a posture more like Christ, your life will look like Christ in spite of...

- Unmet expectations
- Un-returned love
- Pain-filled judgement
- Complete and utter abandonment

(Vs) Psalm 51:17 – “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.”

This is so important to understand, because this is where it begins to get really heavy...

- Last Week: We talked about how, “God’s goodness to you, when lived out through your life, will bring Him glory.”
- But, once this, narrow road of “goodness” is realized, it tends to have a very interesting effect on a person’s story.
- For within it, a difficult to ignore dilemma occurs... A tearing if you will.

“Every day it feels more and more like I have to make a choice between breaking God’s heart or the heart of someone I love.”

- Here in lies perhaps the most common ache of all humanity... “Do I choose to deny God’s will and choose to honor both my own desires and the desires of others above Him... Keeping our hearts protected?”
- Or... “As Christ did for us, do I choose through faith to hold God’s promises and glory above ourselves and anyone else, and so suffer the process of a tearing heartache?”

This is Step Two: “Choose to Die to Your own Selfish Desires.”

- To die to self is to set aside what I want in this moment and focus instead on loving God with everything I’ve got, and valuing others as highly as we value ourselves...

“Dying to our own selfish desires moves us away from self-centeredness and closer to becoming vulnerably hearted followers of Christ who care deeply for others.”

(Vs) Matthew 16:25 NASB – “...for whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.”

- It’s much easier to pay attention to the concerns, interests and needs of people when our own interests no longer consume us.

(Vs) Phil. 2:3-4 – “Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.”

- **Remember:** Christian means “Little Christ” and you cannot avoid feeling that truth if choosing His path!
- “To follow Jesus... is to consciously make a decision to break your own heart.”
- And yes, it’s going to hurt!

Once you make the choice to follow God, inevitably His “virtue” and “goodness” will be added to your faith, allowing you to step into the wondrous “Knowledge” of who He is...

(Vs) 2nd Peter 1:5 NIV – “For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness, and to goodness, knowledge;...”

“Knowledge” = “Wisdom to follow God’s will”

(Vs) Col. 2:2-3 “My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”

- Perhaps we could render it like this...“As you have obtained faith in Christ and stand in it, do not be satisfied, but press on to increase your knowledge of God's will.”

The Bible is crystal clear about God’s will for all His children...

- “That we advance in all the qualities of Christ.”

(Vs) Rom. 12:1-2 “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

(Vs) 1st John 2:6 “...whoever says He abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which He walked.”

(Vs) Eph. 5:2 “And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.”

- The irrefutable evidence that God's power has been given to you by faith is that you are now making every effort (as verse 5 says) to advance in the qualities of Christ and so suffer as Christ suffered and Live as Christ lived...

This leads us to the Third and Final Step: Complete and Total Reliance

(Vs) Isaiah 53:5 “But He was pierced for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with His wounds we are healed.”

I wish I could make this last step easier for you... But I cannot...

- If you want to stop pretending to try...
- If you want to Love God and value others higher than yourself...
- If you want to make every effort to add goodness ‘Godliness’ to your life...Then you have to go where Jesus went and love how Jesus loved

(Vs) Matt. 16:24-26 “Then Jesus told His disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?”

- These aren’t just words, they’re a pathway through heartache to life.

“For to follow and so live out the posture of Jesus, is to have your heart broken and replaced by His...”