

Coping with the Brokenness of Life

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We live in a broken world. The world is filled with anger and hostility. We can see this on a large scale when nations war with one another. However, brokenness is also experienced on a smaller scale. We bear the pain of sin in our lives. We are responsible for some of the brokenness. Yet, we also feel the pain of brokenness through the sins of others.

Families can suffer brokenness. Try as we might, we are unable to control the hearts of other people, even those whom we love the most. What are we to do when we suffer hurt by the actions of others? How are we to respond when we cannot put the pieces back together?

Steps to Take

1). Find consolation in Christ. Disappointment and or rejection from those we love the most is devastating. Being hurt by a spouse, child, or parent is disorienting. Life as we know it may crumble around us. Especially, during times like these, we must seek consolation in Christ.

Christ will not leave us. He will not forsake us. He will not disappoint us. When we suffer rejection, betrayal, and loss, He will be there to save us. No one knows the pain of brokenness more than Him.

The Bible says, “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:15-16).

2). Seek reconciliation. The work of Christians has been described as a “ministry of reconciliation” (2 Cor. 5:16-21). We are to be known as peacemakers (Matt. 5:9). As difficult as this may be, we must do our best to live peaceably with everyone (Rom. 12:18).

We must do our part to try to mend the broken relationship. If we have been wronged, we need to make that clear to the one who has wronged us. We must appeal for their reconciliation to God and us.

3). Establish and maintain boundaries. What if, despite our best efforts, we are unable to repair the broken relationship? What if our loved one refuses to acknowledge his or her sin? What if he or she will not take responsibility for the pain they have caused? We must establish and maintain boundaries between that person.

Jesus once said, “Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a person's enemies will

be those of his own household. Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it” (Matt. 10:34-39).

Jesus knew how people would respond to Him and His teaching. Jesus was and is for everyone, but everyone is not for Him. Jesus illustrated this truth with the family. Jesus does not expect us to maintain relationships with anyone who would cause us harm.

On another occasion, Jesus said, “Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea” (Matt. 18:5-6).

We may reach a point in a relationship when we must tell loved ones that we cannot be around them. They are harmful to our mental well-being. They are a hindrance to our faith. They are an ungodly influence on our children. We cannot compromise our integrity by allowing them to be part of our lives.

4). Pray. James wrote, “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him” (Jas. 1:5). Dealing with broken relationships requires wisdom; wisdom that we may lack. We need to pray. Seek the counsel of God. He welcomes our asking. He will generously guide us through the most difficult of circumstances.

Ask God to soften the heart and open the eyes of the one who has hurt you. Ask God to bring a wise Christian into your life to support you. Ask God to assure your heart in the stance you have taken for the truth. Remember, Jesus taught, “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened” (Matt. 7:7-8).

Conclusion

Our lives are complex. The problems we must navigate are often dim and winding. By the light of our Savior, we can find our way through the darkness. Never feel guilty for doing what is in the best interest of salvation. Never feel ashamed for protecting your family from the influence of sin.

The decisions and sacrifices we may have to make as Christians can be very difficult. With the grace of God and the love of like-minded Christians, we can find courage and strength. And, in time, our demonstration of devotion to Christ may change the heart of the one who has hurt us.