

# ***Broken Heart.***

***'The Lord is close to the brokenhearted...'***

(Psalm 34:18)

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To Katelin

***“All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble... You will trample on the wicked; they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day when I act,” says the Lord Almighty.’***

(Malachi 4:1,3)

## Introduction

Jesus is the authority on forgiveness, and we will talk about what true forgiveness really means.

But Jesus is also the Judge.<sup>1</sup> Jesus spoke very strong words to people who abuse other people. Here is one:

***‘Jesus said, ‘Anyone who sins against one of these children, it would be better for him to have a large millstone tied around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.’***  
(Matthew 18:6)

Sins are not all the same, and judgement for sins is not all the same.<sup>2</sup> This is clear in the Bible, and we all know this instinctively. Even Jesus said about his betrayer, Judas, that it would have been better for him if he had not been born.  
(Matthew 26:24)

Now Jesus forgave people for spitting on him, for rejecting him, for crucifying him, but he did not seem to forgive – or let off the hook from judgement – Judas. Nor does he let off the hook people who sin violently and sexually against other people.

It is not wrong to want justice for sin. It is not wrong to want vindication and restitution. This is what Christ has promised, and what is rightfully

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<sup>1</sup> John 5:22; Matthew 25:31-33

<sup>2</sup> Luke 12:47-48

yours in Jesus. In fact, even if you *didn't* want someone to be punished for what they did to you, they will be anyway. Let me explain...

I am a social worker, and sometimes I'll come onto a scene where there has been domestic violence. The police have usually already been there. Now, if the violence has not been too severe - such as a woman hitting the man on his head with the car keys, leaving a few small cuts - the police might leave it up to the man as to whether or not he wants to 'press charges', or have the matter judged, as it were.

However, if the violence is more severe, the police may choose to press charges themselves against the aggressor - usually the man - whether the woman wants to or not. His violence against her is not just about her; it is about him, about right and wrong, about safety and society as a whole, and about justice on a bigger scale.

There was a time in the Bible when a large group of people were speaking badly about God's prophet. They opposed him, and wanted to remove him. His name was Moses. When Moses heard about this, he actually prayed to God and pleaded with God to have mercy on this group of people (called the 'Sons of Korah'). But this people were not just wronging Moses, they were offending and wronging God. So despite Moses' forgiveness of them, so to speak, God still had an issue with them, and judged them. All of them were killed, swallowed up by the ground

in an instant.<sup>1</sup>

It is important for you to understand that God did not allow you to be abused. He hates what happened to you, and holds it over the head of the abuser. This is biblical truth. Any other 'explanation' is not biblical. Other explanations about God's 'sovereign will' somehow 'allowing' this abuse against you, might be philosophical, and appear consistent, but they are *not* biblical, not true. God hates sin. He never allows it. And he does judge even now, and will judge definitively later.<sup>2</sup>

God calls you to forgive your abuser in the sense of entrusting your abuser to God's judgment. This is how Jesus 'forgave' those who sinned against him:

***'When they hurled insults at him he did not retaliate... Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.'*** (1 Peter 2:24)

I feel that sometimes we victimize the victim. We act as if having been abused, they now have to do the work of forgiveness – and we don't even know what that really means! Often it feels to me like we are asking people to '*forgive and forget*', or just let something go as if it really doesn't matter anymore. Shake it off. I think we do this because we can't handle the weight of the dark

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<sup>1</sup> Numbers chapter 16, note vs.22

<sup>2</sup> 2 Timothy 4:1 (for more on this, read '*This Side of Evil*', in the BOOKS tab at: [www.1peter1three.weebly.com](http://www.1peter1three.weebly.com))

experience. We want it all to be OK, and since we can't catch the bad person, we beg the victim to just let it go.

Jesus does not do this, or work like this, or teach this. Jesus brought a healing balm to the hurting, his own Spirit, his own blood of sacrifice. And he whispered in our ear, ***'Vengeance is mine. It is mine to repay.'*** (Romans 12:19) In this same verse he literally asks us to ***'leave room for God's wrath.'***

So when we are asked to not repay evil with evil, and to forgive, Jesus is saying, *'I'll take care of this. I'm enraged about it. I'll judge.'* He is not asking us to shake it off like it doesn't matter. Rather, he is asking us to give him the sword, give him our hurt, our anger, and let him take care of it completely. He is releasing us of the burden, the pain and the risk of taking revenge ourselves, and promising us complete justice for what has happened – if we step away and allow him to do it. This is, I believe, biblical 'forgiveness' for serious sin. And abuse is serious sin.

Listen, willful engaging in sexual immorality is already on a higher level than other sin – see 1 Corinthians 6:18-20, and basically the whole Bible! So if consensual sexual sin is already on a higher level than other sin – i.e. more serious - how much more when we add to sexual sin robbery, violence, abuse? Truly, this is up there with Judas betraying Jesus, or people sinning

against children. Jesus did not 'forgive' it, but rather spoke a 'wrathful' word about it, and said it would be judged!

Now it is in this context, I believe, a person might find a measure of hope, of courage, to let go of their pain, to 'forgive', so to speak. When we truly believe and know that the Creator God has seen, has heard, and is pressing charges, we can step away from the fight. We can, as Jesus did, entrust ourselves to him who judges justly. We can, by the Spirit of God, move on.

I hope this short booklet brings some insights to the heart of God for you. I hope and pray that words come off the page by God's Spirit, and blow over your soul with renewal, beauty and power, in Jesus' name.

***'Does he who made the eye not see? Does he who formed the ear not hear?'*** (Psalm 94:9)



1.

Jesus told many parables – which were short stories that had a spiritual meaning. One he told was about a shepherd who left ninety-nine ‘safe’ sheep in order to go out and find the one that was lost.<sup>1</sup> Simple as that. The ‘lost sheep’ was the priority.

This is an amazing picture of the heart of God towards the hurting, or the ‘lost one’. You might feel broken, or ‘lost’, even when you’re in the middle of a crowd, or at church. Maybe the pain of past abuse seems to always be invading your heart, your mind, and darkening even ‘good’ times. This matters to Jesus. In a sense – a very real, spiritual sense – Jesus by his Spirit comes to that ‘lost’ place in your heart, your mind, and stays with you. He leaves the happy, the free, to come find you, deep within your own heart and mind.

My friend, it is important to know that complete healing, even **‘a new heart, and new spirit’<sup>2</sup>**, is your inheritance, is your destination, in Jesus. If you don’t ‘feel’ the full measure of his peace at this time, that is OK. But he has claimed you, and saved you, and with every step, every hour in Christ, you move towards more healing – until one day it will overtake every corner of your heart and mind, and peace like a river will flow. The past will be no more, not even a memory,

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 15:1-7

<sup>2</sup> Ezekiel 36:26

definitely not a scar.

***'The path of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn, ever-brighter until the full light of day.'*** (Proverbs 4:18)

***'For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.'*** (1 Corinthians 13:12)

That dark corner of your mind is not a 'secret' to God, and does not have a hold on you. You can breathe easy, you can relax. Jesus is at work in that corner of pain, that memory, that trauma, and he is, day by day, pouring a healing balm over it, into it, and removing its stain.

***'Anyone in Christ is a new creation, the old has gone, the new has come.'***

(2 Corinthians 5:17)

***'Jesus said, 'I am making all things new!''***

(Revelation 21:4)

2.

Wasted Years.

Do you feel you have lost years of your life? Do you feel the pain – not your fault – has robbed you the ability to live? Does panic set in about life passing you by?

Let's take a minute to consider. We need to still our hearts and mind first, however. Do you find it hard to be still? I do. Here is a call of God to be still. Notice, however, that it also sets the direction of our heart and mind to achieve this stillness:

***'Be still and know that I am God.'***

(Psalm 46:10)

How do we do this? Well, it is not meant to be another pressure of the soul, or a striving of the mind. We are not meant to be pressing our thoughts towards things of God. We are meant to be still. Rest the mind. Let thoughts leave the mind. In our most quiet moments, even without active thinking, we are creating space for God to draw near. A child, a baby, does not strive to think on God, but just exists in the hands of God, in the palm of God. We need to be still like this before God. Just rest. Close your eyes. Just breathe for a few minutes.

It is here, in this stillness, that we need to hear this promise of God:

***'I will restore to you the years the locusts have eaten.'*** (Joel 2:25)

And this:

***'Women received back their dead, raised to life again...'*** (Hebrews 11:35)

Life does not consist of the few years we find ourselves here on earth. In God, in Christ, life is eternal, earth will become heaven to us, and that ***'life that is truly life'***<sup>1</sup> will go on and on and on. Perfection, completeness, nothing lost, nothing missed. Jesus himself took a very short road in this life – no romance, no bucket list, no retirement. He lived, sacrificed, missed out (or that's what it looked like to us), and went home to heaven at the age of thirty-three.

When you pass through the 'door' of Jesus Christ, you enter into life eternal, life complete, nothing lost. It is a mystery, but it is in motion. He is the mighty Redeemer, and lost years will be given back, lost time with people will be given back. There will be no part of your heart, soul and story that is not filled to the brim with the ***'full measure of God.'***<sup>2</sup>

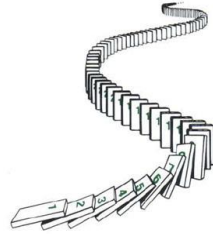
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<sup>1</sup> 1 Timothy 6:19

<sup>2</sup> Ephesians 3:19

3.

Ever played Dominoes? I don't mean the real game, but when you just set them up and let that first one knock 'em all down?



A girl told me once that after being abused since 7 years old, and then violated as a teen, this set her off being promiscuous and sexually active with other boys.

This is common. This pattern – first being a victim, then pursuing or allowing the behaviors – is common in many areas of trauma. Very quickly then, feeling innocent, guilty, ashamed, angry, all start getting rolled into one. And where there has been ongoing abuse, there is deep confusion about feeling 'part' of the abuse, having allowed it or even enjoyed parts of it. At a certain point, pretty early on, it's hard to separate in one's heart and mind the perpetrator from the victim. You feel as guilty as if you had started it.

This is not truth. Where you were taken advantage of, victimized, groomed, you very much were wronged. You had nothing to do with it – even if you were made to feel like you did. You did not! You were *not* part of it. You did *not* want it. You are *not* responsible for it.

And honestly, friend, the 'knock on' of behavior that followed in your life, there is forgiveness for

that.

One day some arrogant, cruel men brought a woman caught in adultery to Jesus. Where was the man, I ask? Well, we don't know. But these men dragged this woman to Jesus for judgement.

After Jesus spoke to these people about their own sin, and famously said, '**Let him who is without sin throw the first stone**', well, no one stayed around. One by one they walked away. Jesus turned to the woman and said,

***'Does no one condemn you?'***

***'No one,' she answered.***

***Jesus said, 'Neither do I condemn you. Now go and leave your life of sin.'*<sup>11</sup>**

Here we see an incredible separation of abuse happening *to* this woman, and maybe her own sin in life that had been happening since. Jesus did not condemn her for sin against her, but also gently called her to walk away from any sin in her own life that might be related. He is setting her free.

As time has gone on, you may have found yourself caught up in sin that looks like or is related to the sin that was done against you.

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<sup>11</sup> John 8:1-11

Maybe you were abused sexually, and then as time went on you were sexually promiscuous. Jesus reaches out to touch you in your pain, in those areas of your soul that were hurt by an abuser. He heals. And regarding the other actions and behaviors that you now have chosen, Jesus forgives and simply calls you to leave that life of sin. To walk away. To be free.

Healing for what has been done against you.  
Forgiveness for what you have done since then.  
And a path of freedom before you now – to walk away and start again in Jesus.

4.

Intimacy is about being known and loved.

When I was a kid I wanted to fit in. Well, honestly, I think we want to fit in our whole lives, but particularly as a child, before we experience and understand the cost of 'fitting in'.

***'Fear of man will prove to be a snare...'***

(Proverbs 29:15)

I observed what was admired, enjoyed, laughed at, cool, and changed my core 'shape' to fit in. I was brought up to not swear, but I remember the day I decided to start swearing, when I was twelve years old. It was a conscious decision, and honestly it made things easier on me right away. I used to often get asked why I didn't swear, and this would tap my moral code, my convictions about right and wrong, and that is always a hard conversation. So I started swearing and decided I was not going to 'believe' in swearing being a problem. This got me off the hook of the moral conversation, and also I was one more degree part of the crowd.

By the time I was sixteen I had made a lot more changes and compromises to what I knew was true and right. In this place, distant from my faith in God and from moral living, I remember a deep experience.

One day a guy in my group of friends told a joke



about Jesus Christ. It was dishonoring, mocking, everyone laughed. In an instant I felt deeply ashamed. I believed in Jesus, but I could not stand with him here – for so many reasons. And the betrayal was mine. I had to just feel it. For one, I was living an immoral lifestyle with these guys, not following Jesus or living my belief in any way. So how could I take issue with a joke about Jesus? The truth is, this guy's joke was much less offensive to God than my life at that time.

Another reason I could not say anything, is because really I should not have even been part of this group. I should not have heard the joke, should not have been in this circle – at least in the capacity of comrade or one of them. I could not say anything here, because God didn't want me here in the first place. This was not my place of testimony. I was not free to speak. I had to go a much longer road to get right with the Lord, before I had the privilege and opportunity – Spirit-filled opportunity – to share the gospel with these guys. By God's grace I did get that opportunity, many times, but only after God had broken my heart in repentance, led me away from my sin and away from these relationships. Then God circled me back around, many months later with a new 'name' and a new reputation, to share the details of my faith with them.

Intimacy is not just about being 'loved' or accepted. It is about being *known* and loved.

This is why we can find ourselves in relationships with people – either by choice or circumstances – where we feel distant from them, because we feel they don't really know the true us. They might like or love what they know, but they just don't really know.

In my case as I describe above, all of my social relationships had been built on a persona of mine, not on the true convictions I held deep within. So what this meant is that all the 'acceptance' I felt from these people, was acceptance not of the true me. I built a lot of relationships on false foundations, so when the Lord actually called me to account, and called me to repent and be true to Jesus, I lost all my friends very quickly. Truly, as soon as I changed my lifestyle, my choices, my language, and explained to people when asked that I had made a decision to believe in Jesus and follow him, well, we no longer had anything in common. I lost everyone. The breakdown in this 'intimacy' was my fault, my false life.

But there can be breakdown in intimacy that is not our fault. In the case of having experienced abuse, for example, you might feel deeply about past hurt, and this might come between you and some people in your life now. It may be a type of cloud of darkness lurking, by no choice or fault of your own, that somehow makes you feel false, or like you are not really known by this other person or these people. And because you can't shake this feeling, it is like you are hiding something,

and then you feel a bit guilty or like it is your fault, this cloud, this pain, this distance.

My friend, listen, the pain you have felt or do feel from past hurt and abuse, is not your fault. And the impact this pain has had on intimacy in your relationships, is not your fault.

The intimacy issues I had socially as a teenager, were brought about by my own false living, the denial of what I knew was true. I was denying my faith, living immorally, and so the 'true' me could not be known, could not be accepted. It was not on offer.

However, if you have suffered abuse by another, the scars, the wounds, that impact your thinking, your feelings, and therefore your relationships, are honest. Your pain is honest. It is not a hidden conviction, but rather a true struggle caused by another. You will be healed. You are being healed day by day, by the Holy Spirit and the blood of Jesus.

But in the meantime, as you journey this path of healing, don't believe that these people would not love you if they knew the true you, or all the details of your pain and suffering. This is not truth. The truest you is the one with the pure intention to love, to be known, to be healed, to be free. And this you are! You can't control elements of the pain from a past not your fault. What you can do – and are doing – is being true to your very best self, the person made in the

image of God, and moving in the light of Jesus, the love of Jesus and his healing power.

You are true. As a hurt person, your struggles with intimacy are not the same as those of a person being false. A hurt person struggles with intimacy *honestly*, open to truth, open to healing. The false person struggles with intimacy dishonestly, because they are not open to truth in themselves, in God, and so cannot be truly 'known' by others.

I finish this section with this last point:

Being true is not about being 'fixed' or all put together; it is about an honest heart and mind before God, and others. It is a spirit truth. So even as a hurting person, on the path of healing and redemption, you may have deep and dark winds in the background – or the foreground – of your mind, but these are not the same as 'secrets' or 'falsity' of an untrue person.

You may be hurt, and you may be working through some things, but you can be (and I believe 'are') fully known and truly loved.

5.

Jesus said, '**Nothing that goes into a person makes them unclean...**' (Mark 7:15)

I think this is a really important truth of God. Nothing that anyone does to another person, can defile that person.

Yes, we all have sin of our own, and for that we do need to repent before Jesus. He forgives and cleanses us of all sin. But nothing another person does to us makes us unclean, and we do not need to repent of *their* sin. Their sin may make us feel dirty, but it does not *make* us dirty. No matter what it is, or how deep the scar.

Many of us have scars from another person's sin. They marked our skin, as it were, or even our emotions and way of thinking, but they did not touch our soul. This is God's truth.

Your soul – that which is the true you – can never be touched by a human. It stands alone before God, accountable for only itself.

And you know, it is important to understand that even some things we do, other people made us do. And God holds that person – the one who pushed us into sin – accountable for that. Jesus said,

**'Anyone who causes one of these little ones to sin, it would be better for them to have a**

***millstone tied around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.'***

(Matthew 18:6)

You see, in this word of Christ there are two 'senses' or meanings. There is the meaning of a person sinning against a child – or simply, another person. And there is the meaning of a person causing others to sin. The responsibility for both of these actions falls on the perpetrator.

Jesus does not say that the 'little one' that was caused to sin, should be punished for their sin. Jesus is pointing out that a person has power to compel others to do wrong, or to push them in that direction, and that 'pusher' will be held accountable.

Maybe after being abused, you found yourself doing things that you should not do, but the truth is the behavior came from the abuse. You were 'caused to sin'. This is very common, and even understandable. For so many reasons – fear, a sense of guilt and shame, some pleasure, etc. We can find ourselves involved in behavior that originally came from being taken advantage of.

For our part, we can simply come to Jesus and ask for forgiveness. But it is OK to think about it, and to really believe and say, *'This was not really my fault. I was abused, and so much of what I did after that, came from the abuse.'* This is a true statement. It is OK – and even right – to let this sink in, and go on the record.

Now, regarding our *own* sin in life, Jesus invites us to come before him and allow him to forgive us. Look at this amazing verse:

***‘Come, let us reason together,’ says the Lord. ‘Though your sins are like scarlet, I will make you white as snow. Though they are red as crimson, I will make you like wool.’***

(Isaiah 1:18)

Jesus paid for our sin by his own blood. It is a deep story, and a spiritual story. If you think of sin, it really is about blood. It kills. It spills blood. Even cruel words, Jesus said, are on the same path as murder.<sup>1</sup>

So Jesus, who was God in the flesh<sup>2</sup>, came down from heaven and paid for our sin, or our bloodshed, with his own blood. There is a beautiful verse that speaks about the difference between the blood of our sin, and the blood of Jesus. It says,

***‘The blood of Jesus speaks a better word than the blood of murder.’***

(Hebrews 12:24)

Jesus has paid for all of our sin by dying for it. He then rose again from the grave and offers us forgiveness for our sin. Only Jesus can offer forgiveness of sin, because only Jesus has paid for it. We receive this forgiveness by lifting our

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew 5:21-22

<sup>2</sup> John 1:1,14; Matthew 1:23

eyes to him, believing in him, and simply asking for it.

***'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins, and purify us from all unrighteousness.'***

(1 John 1:9)



6.

The Lord says, ***'I will lead her, and speak tenderly to her. I will give her back her vineyards, and will turn the Valley of Trouble into a door of hope.'***

(Hosea 2:14-15)

The door of hope that God has provided, is Jesus himself. He calls us to come to him, to come through him:

***'Jesus said, 'I am the door, and anyone who comes through me will be saved. They will come in and go out and find pasture.'***

(John 10:9)

We have talked about forgiveness, and how real forgiveness is about not being vengeful or hateful, but trusting God to judge. He will judge your perpetrator, and call him to account. Justice will be done.

We have talked about your own sin, and how it is very important to understand that a lot of your sin may have been put in motion by the sin against you. It is OK to see this, to say this. Your sin is not the same as that which was done against you. So we step away from that guilt, that shame, that confusion. We step into the courts of God, and stand alone with him. We ask Jesus to forgive our sin, to purify us from our sin.

We have also considered that nothing done to a

person by another person, actually makes that person unclean, or even touches their soul. Even if they leave a scar – on our body, or our emotions or mind – this scar is a record of *their* wrongdoing, not ours. This scar is a reminder that God has not forgotten your case, the wrong you suffered, and will call it to account!

I want to finish this short booklet by considering ‘healing’. Healing of your heart, your mind, your spirit.

In heaven, we are told, there are trees with leaves for the healing of the nations. It is a beautiful picture.<sup>1</sup>

Jesus often healed, touching people’s eyes, their bodies, and even without touching, just speaking a word of healing. He healed small things, and big things, and even brought people back from the dead.

Your healing has begun. Every passing day and hour the Spirit of God moves about your spirit, your path, and is making you new. Truly! The transformation is like a caterpillar to a butterfly, but even more complete.

The changes – and the complete healing – never take place quickly, and never are fully accomplished in this life. It is a process. The complete and glorious transformation will be

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<sup>1</sup> Revelation 22:2

experienced by all of us when we die and rise again in heaven, or when Jesus himself comes down from heaven.

Until then, our healing is day by day – but it is true and powerful! It is truer than what we suffered, and more powerful than abuse or even the grave!

***‘Jesus Christ will transform our lowly bodies to be like his glorious body.’***

(Philippians 3:20-21)

***‘Listen, I will tell you a mystery: ... we will all be changed – in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye... the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised immortal, and we will be changed!’***

(I Corinthians 15:51-52)

***‘Our present suffering is not worth comparing to the glory that will be revealed in us.’*** (Romans 8:18)

I leave you with this: Your healing is a process. Don't get discouraged if you have flashbacks, or pain, or anger, or fear... Sometimes things feel like there's been no healing, when actually it is just stuff coming up to come out; it's at the surface – so you feel it – but it's at the surface to finally be seen, dissolved, disappeared forever.

So every day in Jesus, just keep stepping forward. Keep believing his Word, his promises, his Spirit, his kindness, his presence with you.

***'The path of the righteous [You!] is like the first gleam of dawn, ever-brighter until the full light of day!' (Proverbs 4:18)***

*Thank you for your heart of faith, and your journey of healing with Jesus.*

*On my website and the 1Peter1:3 APP are free devotionals and videos to encourage you in your faith.*

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***'For you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its rays. And you will go out and dance.'***

(Malachi 4:2)