

*The Beauty
of
Brokenness*



*by
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Introduction

**"For I know the thoughts and plans I have for you,
says the Lord, thoughts
and plans for welfare and peace and not for evil,
to give you hope in your final outcome"
(Jeremiah 29:11 AMP)**

There are times in our lives when we experience situations that bring such hurt and pain that we may begin to question "Is this really part of God's plan for my life?" I am learning, in every situation, good or bad, to seek the face of God to know His will for me during that situation, as well as, after that experience.

Sometimes it is the will of God that after we've been "through the fire" to be transparent enough to help

provide strength to someone in the same or similar situation. I believe God is having me write this book to provide support and encouragement to others who may be going through the process of brokenness.

When we examine (in the physical realm) a container of a pure substance, it is typically sealed closed. If the seal bears even the appearance of tampering, the entire container is discarded because the substance is considered useless or dangerous to administer. Any foreign substance mixed with a pure substance will contaminate the purity

of that substance. In the spiritual sense, sometimes we experience unpleasant life situations that can contaminate our beings. God desires that we remain clean and pure before Him. When we experience abuse and hurtful situations we become vulnerable to issues of anger, bitterness, guilt, shame, unforgiveness, and pride. Left unresolved, these issues will begin to contaminate our beings. Because God created us in His image and as His vessels, He doesn't just "throw us away" when we become contaminated. But He knows that the contamination will eventually destroy us, so He provides a way for the

contamination to be released through a process of brokenness.

Through all that I have been through I can say that God has continued to show His love and mercy towards me. He's continued to prove His faithfulness and sovereignty in every area of my life. I've had to walk through situations that I thought I would never in life have to encounter. And it seemed as though every time I thought there was nothing worse to experience, I was again broken. Broken, broken, broken... I never imagined that anything good could come out of brokenness – but in

**God's plan for us, we really do have
hope and a future!**

1

"The Lord is close to those who are of a broken heart and saves such as are crushed with sorrow for sin and thoroughly penitent"(Psalm 37:8 AMP)

When we are not "whole" in Christ we feel a consistent void in our lives. We will try to use anyone and anything to fill the void – our family, friends, career, unhealthy addictions, even ministry. The beauty of brokenness is that God can take every shattered piece of our lives and restore us back to a place of wholeness in Him – filling every void that exists within us. The process of brokenness involves being broken, cleansed, healed, and restored.

I know what it's like to be physically and spiritually raped and abused. I know the feeling of spiritual manipulation induced by church leadership. I've experienced the prostitution of my gifts and talents right in the House of God. I know what it's like to take a stand for righteousness and be thrown into a prison. I know what it is like to go through a divorce after almost 20 years of marriage; and begin a new life as a single parent of four children. Within a period of nine months, I experienced a fire in my home (destroying all of my personal possession); writing my only biological sister's obituary, and

having my 13-year-old son begin radiation treatments for a brain tumor.

I can remember the feelings of hurt, anger, and rejection that I encountered in dealing with marital infidelity. An aching heart is one of life's worst feelings. I remember trying to deal with the betrayal of trust and loyalty, crying agonizing tears, and wondering if the pain would ever cease. These were familiar feelings that also accompanied spiritual abuse. But through the process of being broken, I experienced a great release.

Brokenness allows heaviness to be released. Brokenness allows anger, bitterness, envy, guilt, shame, pride, and every other form of spiritual contamination to be released. Once the contamination is released, cleansing, healing and restoration can begin.

2

**"When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and through the rivers, they will not overwhelm you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned or scorched, nor will the flame kindle upon you"
(Isaiah 43:2 AMP)**

In going through the process of brokenness, there is sometimes a feeling of questioning "Why?" and "What did I do to deserve this?" God doesn't condemn us for our immediate responses to life's painful situations. God is an understanding God. Even Jesus expressed a feeling of being forsaken when He was on the cross. It's OK to feel angry, hurt, and forsaken in devastating

situations. But we can't continue to "linger" in the "feelings" of our flesh. Just as Jesus did on the cross, we have to submit to the will of God – in every situation – and allow Him to take us to a "higher" place in Him. Beneath His wings, under the Shadow of the Almighty, we will always find rest.

Being birthed into a Christian household is indeed a blessing. I learned at an early age to reverence the Presence of God. I was weaned on scripture, spiritual songs and hymns. At the age of three I was singing gospel music with my two

older siblings in churches and auditoriums. I grew up singing and playing the piano in a church my father pastored. In growing up, I can remember having a strong desire to remain obedient to what I was taught. Even during times when I may have felt differently about what was being instructed, I remained obedient to those in whom I was accountable. Sometimes when we have a heart to really "do the right thing", it can become easy for others to use this desire to their benefit – over our well being. But, I still believe that through my obedience, God continued to cover me in grace, as I endured the experiences of brokenness.

After I was married, I began directing choirs and ministering and teaching in music ministry in various local churches. I've also served as Minister of Music, Music Administrator, and Praise & Worship Leader. But even in the midst of all of this "ministry", I continued to be broken. It was through brokenness that God was able to deal with my "heart" issues like "the spirit of religion", submission, and pride. Many times God has to "break" us in order to help us deal with issues that exist within us – which we don't readily choose to acknowledge. God had to destroy my "religious" mentality that caused me to believe

that because I lived such a "righteous" life, there were certain situations that I would never have to encounter. He had to help me realize that "life happens". No one is above the ups and downs that life brings. And when you choose to acknowledge and walk in the call of God on your life, you will encounter situations that will cause you to be broken – to keep you humble before God. I have learned that the process of brokenness will allow you to occupy a place in the presence of God where you can experience true cleansing.

At times, the process of brokenness may appear to be a punishment. At times it may even appear to be a curse. It's difficult for us to imagine in times of brokenness that we are exactly where God wants us to be. But we are. It is through the process of brokenness that we encounter a memorable experience with God. It's hard to forget a place of brokenness. When Jacob was fleeing for his life in fear of his brother Esau, Jacob experienced a memorable encounter with God (Genesis 32:22). It was through this experience that Jacob received a blessing and a name change from God, as well as, a "limp" that he carried for the rest of his life.

Although a limp in the physical sense carries an indication that something is wrong, or that an injury has occurred; a spiritual limp is an indication of having had a personal encounter with God.

I remember receiving a prophetic word a few years ago, about a "spiritual limp" that I would forever carry. The prophetic word also stated that it was through this "limp" that I would be able to minister "wholeness" to others. If you receive a "spiritual limp" that comes forth out of brokenness, you must understand that this is not a curse. A "spiritual

limp" will keep you in a better place of humility before God, thus allowing Him to use you all the more. And because his grace is sufficient in everything He's designed for your life, you will experience no lack in being what God has called you to be and doing what He has called you to do. God's grace will sustain you in all of your ways, when you have allowed God to "break you" and humble you in His presence.

3

"We are all assured and know that (God being a part in their labor) all things work together and are (fitting into a plan) for good to and for those who love God and are called according to (His) design and purpose" (Romans 8:28 AMP)

I can remember when my – then – husband and I first separated. I was unemployed with four minor children to support. I can remember applying for public assistance to help supply food for my children and help with daycare expenses once I found employment. This was an experience I never imagined I would have to walk through. Having, in past times, exhorted others and myself in the Word of God that says "all things are

working together for the good of those who love God...", I found myself being challenged in my faith to believe that any of this was working for my good. But it was! The beauty of brokenness is that through this process, every unclean thought, word, act or attitude that has been deposited into our beings is cleansed. Our brokenness becomes an opportunity for God to cleanse us of ALL unrighteousness.

Through the process of brokenness, God graced me to deal with the spirit of fear and rejection that had caused me to try to prove my "worth" as a

person through my "works" – mainly church ministry. Through my experiences in marriage, divorce, and single parenting, I've learned to depend completely on God – not man - as my source of everything I am, everything I need, and everything I could ever desire. This is the place God desires for all of us to occupy. And sometimes, in order to come into the full understanding that God is our source of everything we are, everything we need, and everything we desire, we must go through situations that cause us to be broken.

The Word of God tells us that "while we may be distressed by trials and suffer temptations", that we can be uplifted in knowing that these experiences are "testing the genuineness of our faith" (I Peter 1:6 AMP). When we can maintain our faith and trust in God through harsh times, our faith is strengthened. We must "be assured and understand that the trial and proving of our faith bring out endurance and steadfastness and patience. Therefore, we must let endurance and steadfastness and patience have full play and do a thorough work, so that we may be perfectly and fully developed, lacking nothing"

(James 1:3-4 AMP). More importantly than going through the process of brokenness is the “way” we go through the process. We must consistently pursue the Presence of God. We must intentionally press into the Presence of God.

I can remember times of tribulation in my life when the only way I could acknowledge God was with two words, "help me!" And God responded. The wonderful thing about the Presence of God is that He will meet you wherever you are, and in any situation – if you just call out to Him. When we yield our mind,

**body, and soul to God, He becomes
our El Shaddiah – all that we need
and more!**

4

"Blessed (happy) is the man who is patient under trial and stands up under temptation, for even when he has stood the test and been approved, he will receive the (victor's) crown of life which God has promised to those who love Him" (James 1:12 AMP)

It can be very challenging to remain happy and content while enduring unpleasant, hurtful, and sometimes devastating situations. I've been through experiences in my life that I thought would utterly destroy me. It's only in hindsight that I understand the importance of patience and endurance during these times. The Word of God tells us that

His strength is perfected in our weakness. The beauty of brokenness is that if we have the “will” to endure, we can experience the strength of our Abba Father – even in our weakest state.

Another difficulty in going through the process of brokenness is allowing God to heal those areas of hurt, anger, bitterness, and unforgiveness that we’ve tried to hide and bury. Too often, when going through the process of brokenness, we are tempted to apply some type of "anesthetic" or "bandage" to try to ease the pain. We will do this because we find it difficult to wait - in

the Presence of God - for His divine healing. The anesthetics and bandages are "things" of the physical world that we feel will provide some level of pleasure. We may try to pour ourselves into a new career, a new relationship, or even relocate to a different city or state. The problem with this is that the anesthetic or bandage will only provide temporary comfort. Once the anesthetic wears off, and the bandage gets "old" and falls off, the discomfort returns. This only prolongs the process. We must learn to wait for God's divine healing and restoration. When we turn our hearts and minds toward God, rather than toward other "things" during

times of tribulation, God will keep us from lingering in shame and pride – as we go through the process of brokenness.

There are times God will take us through situations that are not just for us. When Jesus went to the cross, He died for the sins of the whole world. Through His endurance of the process of brokenness in His life on earth and His death, burial and resurrection, He not only experienced the beauty of restoration and wholeness with Father, but He also restored man back to his (man's) place with God. Just as Jesus did,

**we sometimes experience
brokenness so that God can, not only
restore us back to a place of
wholeness in Him, but also that we
may help restore others back to a
place of wholeness in Him.**

5

**"And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace (who imparts all blessing and favor), who has called you to His (own) eternal glory in Christ Jesus, will Himself complete and make you what you ought to be, establish and ground you securely, and strengthen and settle you"
(I Peter 5:10 AMP)**

Through our brokenness, we can say "yes" to God with our entire beings – not just with our words. Many times our "will" must be broken in order for the "Will" of God to be manifested in our lives. It's often a challenge to lay our goals and agendas aside when we feel that they will help us attain the "things" we need and desire in life. But if our desires and goals for our lives do not line up with God's

"plan" for our lives, our "will" must be broken.

When we are broken, we are in the best place to experience God's cleansing, healing, and restoration. But we must be willing to say "yes", not only to the "will" of God, but also to His "way" – the process in which He manifests His will in our lives. God desires that all of us are "whole" – completely restored. But only He knows what our restoration will look like. We don't know. This is why it is so important that we learn to trust God completely, and in all things.

I can remember when my sister, Vicki was ill. Our entire family had joined in prayer and agreement that she would be healed and completely restored. I can even remember her receiving prophetic words about her healing and restoration. So, despite the doctors' reports that she would not live much longer, I believed God – whole-heartedly – for her total restoration. On the day of her passing, I can remember questioning God concerning His word that He would "grant whatever I asked in His Name" (John 14:14). God's comforting grace covered me as He responded lovingly that He HAD answered my prayer. He told me that

total restoration for Vicki was with Him. He took me back to one of my final hospital visits with Vicki. During this visit, there was a brief period of time when no one was in the room but the two of us, and God. God made His presence known in such a profound way, as I began to read scripture and worship with Vicki. It was during this time of visitation that God gave me the final words to a song that I had started writing two years prior to that time. As I began to sing that song, there was such a peace that permeated the room. "Let Your Will be done. You deserve the glory. Let Your Will be done. Forever in my life. I commit my ways

**to You. My will I yield in reverence.
Let Your Will be done. Forever, Lord
in me". Although, I will always miss
my sister's physical presence (and
there are still those painful times),
God consistently and lovingly
reminds me that she is completely
restored! But through this
experience, God allowed me to see
that complete restoration doesn't
look the same for everyone. And
only He knows what it will look like
for each of us.**

**I can also remember when my 13-
year-old son had to go through 28
days of radiation for a brain tumor. I**

can remember getting up each morning and preparing two younger children for school, before transporting my son to his treatments at 7:30 a.m., then to school; and afterwards reporting to work. I remember his headaches and bouts of fatigue as he struggled to attend and perform well in school. But, I also remember him telling me about the wonderful care, concern, and even prayers that he received from his teachers and care providers, while at school. Through all of this, however, I continued to hold to the Word of God that my son was already healed. Saying "yes" to the will and way (process) of God can be

challenging – especially when we look at our situation in the natural. But when we become broken in the Presence of God, He gives us great grace to say "yes" to Him – even in our brokenness. The beauty of brokenness is the cleansing, healing, and restoration that occur. When God restores, He restores better than what existed before. We can read in the Word of God about the life of Job. Job experienced brokenness in every area of his life. But when Job endured the process, God restored even better than what had existed in Job's life before.

I can, again, remember when I experienced a fire in my home. No one was injured – praise God! However, all of my personal belongings were destroyed. I can remember the three months of sleeping on the sofa; but I, more so, remember that after those three months, and since that time, I've enjoyed a more beautifully furnished and decorated home than had existed before the fire!

6

**"For I will restore health to you, and I will heal
your wounds, says the Lord..."
(Jeremiah 30:17 AMP)**

**The beauty of brokenness is
...wholeness! Only God can take the
pieces and remnants of what existed
before, and make something better.
It is in a broken state that we are
transparent enough for God to do
just what He desires to do in our
lives. And He will do just that.
Again, and again. In the Word of
God, God spoke to the prophet
Jeremiah and told him to go to the
potter's house. As Jeremiah watched
the potter mold the clay, the Word of**

the Lord came to him "O House of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter does? Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O House of Israel" (Jeremiah 18:6 AMP). In everything that you go through, remember that you are in the hand of our Sovereign God. His Word promises that He will never leave or forsake you. When you are in the hand of the Almighty God, His divine Presence will protect you in all situations. Jeremiah observed the potter, as he (the potter) took the same marred piece of clay and remolded it into something better. God is the divine Potter. When you are experiencing brokenness, you are in

the best place for Him to mold you into all that He originally created you to be.

Jesus said, "The thief comes only to steal kill and destroy. I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance (to the full, til it overflows)" (John 10:10 AMP). What the enemy will use to try to destroy you, God can make work for your good. The situations and circumstances that cause you to be broken do not always "feel good" in the physical; but if you can endure the process and allow God to complete the work, your end result

will be complete restoration! I am now a single mother of four, a public educator just completing my Master's degree. I have a loving and supportive family, wonderful friends, and I am experiencing liberty in ministry that I've never known in past times. But this did not come without a cost. The cost was brokenness. I had to be brought to a place of total humility before God.

In concluding, I would like to leave with you words from the Apostle John "And I am convinced and sure of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will continue until

the day of Jesus Christ (right up to the time of His return), developing (that good work) and perfecting and bringing it to the full completion in you." (Philippians 1:6 AMP). The Beauty of Brokenness is... Wholeness!

Epilogue

I finished writing this book in the year 2005. However, it has taken me a few years to get this book published. I know now that there is a reason for this. There was yet more for me to add to my testimony of brokenness. There was yet more for me to experience. More challenges to overcome and more victories to share.

At the completion of my writing this book in 2005, I was very active in music ministry in my local church. I

served as the music administrator and primary worship leader. I was also teaching and directing a children's choir; as well as, teaching a Sunday morning bible class. In September of 2006, I felt a need to "slow" the pace of church ministry in order to attend more to the needs of my children. I had learned in the past (from previous church ministry endeavors) the importance of making sure that my life is prioritized according to the Word of God. I've learned through my own mistakes (and the mistakes of others) that this is a necessity. In this particular season of my life, I was beginning to feel as though everything that I was

“attending to” in church ministry was causing me to leave a “void” in my first ministry – my home. The Word of God teaches us that “in all of our ways, we are to acknowledge Him (God), and He will direct our paths” (Proverbs 3:6). I began seeking the Will of God for my life all the more. My desire was for Him to show me how to bring proper balance to my life. As I sought God, I felt the need to take a personal “leave” from church ministry in order to attend more to the needs of my children. I had previously moved into a better home in another part of town; and I had begun attending a church in my home neighborhood. Although I was

still in a place of transition – where church ministry was concerned; I was very much enjoying my family life. It was during this time, also, that I met a wonderful man who would later become my wonderful husband.

Then, something unexpected occurred. I'll never forget that date. It was Friday, September 7, 2007. I had finished my “teaching” workday and was talking on the telephone to my (soon to be) husband. While we were enjoying “sharing” our workday experiences, I suddenly felt a sharp pain in my head. It was a very excruciating pain that I had never felt

before. I told my fiancé that I would need to call him back (thinking that I would just lie on the bed for a minute and the pain would subside). I was wrong. The pain did not subside – but worsened. I knew then that there was something very wrong! I asked my 8 year old daughter (who was in the room with me) to pray for me because I had a very bad headache. She began praying for me, but the pain continued to worsen. Fearing that I may soon lose consciousness, I asked my daughter to get my 16 year old son (who was downstairs with my other son). When he came into the room, I asked him to call 911. I heard him talking on the phone, but I soon

lost consciousness. I awakened to a paramedic “coaxing” me to “please stay awake”. I was still experiencing excruciating pain in my head. I was in and out of consciousness as the paramedics placed me into the ambulance and transported me to the closest hospital. I later learned that I had suffered a stroke while in route to the hospital. I remained in and out of consciousness as a CAT scan was performed, and it became evident that I was experiencing a ruptured brain aneurysm. During this time, I can remember the words to a familiar song resting upon my heart and lips: “I am the Lord that healest thee. I am the Lord your healer. I spoke My

Word and healed your disease. I am the Lord your healer". I was then air lifted by helicopter to another hospital where I underwent brain surgery to repair the aneurysm. To this day, I can remember very little of what transpired between Friday evening, September 7, 2007, and Monday, September 10, 2007 when I regained consciousness in the hospital's intensive care unit. My mother was at my bedside and began talking to me. I can't remember a lot that occurred over the next few days; but I do remember my family being there with me and providing the support that I needed. My father stayed with my children in my home

– feeding them, taking them to and from school, and providing for them in ways that I did not have the capacity to do. My mother remained at my bedside providing the emotional support that I very much needed. My fiancé (who lived in another state), also came to my bedside and stayed with me while I remained in ICU. It was expected that I would remain in the intensive care unit of the hospital for at least twelve days; however, I was removed after only five days. Although the prognosis for my full recovery was not good, God was working in me all the more. I was transported to yet another hospital to begin

rehabilitation. For the next three weeks I remained in the hospital while receiving physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech and language services for one hour each - twice each day. I had to re-learn how to walk up and down stairs, get into and out of the bathtub, and how to cook simple meals. My eyesight during this time was so diminished that I couldn't see well enough to read a book – even when wearing my eyeglasses. I had depleted all of my sick days at work. But, there were various schools within the district in which I taught who poured finances, gift cards, and emotional support into my life, as

**well as, into the lives of my children.
This was a tremendous and much
needed blessing!**

**Through my three weeks of vigorous
rehabilitation, I had good days and
not-so-good days; but God gave me
the strength to endure this process.
On Friday, September 28, 2007, I was
able to return to my home. I was
placed under very strict physical
restrictions during this time. I
couldn't drive or go up and down
stairs; and I had to spend most of my
time in bed. During this time, my
family continued to care for my
children, and provide me with the**

support I very much needed. My fiancé would make a 500 mile (one-way) trip each weekend to check on me and also provide the support I very much needed. Co-workers and principals whom I had worked with visited me and brought my family food and monetary gifts. I continued to battle bouts of fatigue; but also continued to get stronger each day. My eyesight also began to return. After three weeks, I was released from my restrictions, and began receiving physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech and language services again on an outpatient basis. It was initially thought that I would need each of

these services three times a week for three months; however, I was released from receiving all of these services after just one month!

I know that it was through many prayers, and the divine healing of God that I am now walking in total healing from the ruptured brain aneurysm! I suffered no permanent physical, mental, or emotional deficiencies. I was united in holy matrimony to the wonderful man in my life on November 22, 2007 (Thanksgiving Day), returned to teaching in my classroom in January 2008, and completed all of the

requirements (including passing the licensing exam) for public school administration in December 2008. PRAISE GOD FROM WHOM ALL BLESSINGS FLOW!

Many times in our lives we go through hardships and we do not understand why. But God has a reason for everything He allows to occur in our lives. The scripture which has been implanted on my heart through all that I had to encounter is found in the book of Isaiah chapter 55. “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, says the Lord.

For as high as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain and snow come down from the heavens, and return not there again, but water the earth and make it bring forth and sprout, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, So shall My word be that goes forth out of My mouth: it shall not return to Me void [without producing any effect, useless], but it shall accomplish that which I please and purpose, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it” (v.8-12AMP).

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