

Choose to Find Healing for Your Broken Heart at Christmas

The little olive wood creche was special to me ever since I purchased it at a little tourist shop in Bethlehem. Travel and several moves later, it was badly broken, not much more than a pile of wooden pieces. But I couldn't get rid of it.

The first Christmas after my husband passed away, the only piece of Christmas I wanted in my home was my little wooden creche. I got the bag of pieces out of the drawer and carefully glued Joseph, the sheep and the other pieces back together. It felt like I was trying to glue together the pieces of my broken heart.

If you look carefully, there are significant scars in my little wooden creche. The lamb's ear, Joseph's foot—the broken pieces were too small to repair. But the creche still holds the most honored place in my home at Christmas, reminding me of both the healed scars in my heart that I never want to forget, and the birth of a baby that first Christmas who came to heal our broken selves.

Perhaps you have a broken heart at Christmas as well. Are those places healed scars? Or are they still raw wounds? Complicated relationships, failed expectations, memories good and bad, loneliness—the holiday season makes them feel even more painful. Places you might have been able to successfully keep hidden at other times get opened up at Christmas.

Therefore, don't waste this opportunity to find healing.

Choose to Find Healing

We all get wounded. Some of those wounds are things others do

to us, some are wounds we bring on ourselves and some come simply from living in a sinful, messed-up world.

God does not force healing on any of us. Like the work of a surgeon's knife, sometimes the healing process feels painful. It may mean opening up wounds you had tried to keep hidden, wounds covered over by scabs but that are still raw inside.

Perhaps God is inviting you to another round of healing this holiday season.

Healing doesn't mean you forget what happened, or that everything is as you would wish. Healing means the infection is gone, forgiveness has been chosen and you are not chained to the past. It means Jesus has complete access to all your wounds so that He can turn any badness in your experience into bread by which others can be fed.

Invite Jesus to 'Go There' With You

The only way healing can come is for you to choose to "go there."

Are there memories you need to deal with? Go there.

Do you need to extend forgiveness to someone or to yourself? Go there.

Is there someone you need to ask for forgiveness from? Go there.

Are there difficult conversations you have been avoiding in your closest relationships? Go there.

Are there character issues you know God is wanting to deal with you about? Go there.

And most importantly, invite Jesus to go there with you.

Allow yourself some periods of time to *go there* during this season. Imagine gathering the broken pieces of your heart in

your hands and then offer them to Jesus to mend and heal. Don't rush away. Get quiet enough to listen as He speaks to you.

We each need repeated rounds of healing. The pangs in your heart may be signaling God's invitation for you to make that part of you available for Him once again. If you have a broken heart this Christmas, don't waste this opportunity to do so.

Your Turn: *What will you do this Christmas season to move toward healing? Leave a comment below.* {eo}

Dr. Carol Peters-Tanksley is both a board-certified OB-GYN physician and an ordained doctor of ministry. As an author and speaker, she loves helping people discover the "fully alive" kind of life Jesus came to bring us. Visit her website at .

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