

Do You Choose Healing or Carrying the Costly Burden of Brokenness?

Who's binding up the brokenhearted?

It usually happens for me when it's dark; that's when the walls begin to close in.

That's when it's quiet, and it's hard to avoid the thinking. It comes to the surface. It always does. It's as if someone took a sledgehammer to my soul.

Burying it doesn't always work. I've tried it. That's because when I bury something, I bury it alive—and my heart can *always* tell. It starts slowly, a small teardrop falls to the ground, but it makes way for a river. The cry comes from our bowels. It's as if the silent scream we've held inside is attempting to release weeks, months, even years of unspoken hurt and pain.

What becomes of the brokenhearted? Who hears our cries? Who tends our pain? And why do we hide it? Why do we do our tears the injustice of denial?

Those tears, the ones we all hold onto so tightly, are the heart's attempt to water the dry and empty places of our souls.

Brokenness is a costly burden. But we don't have to carry it alone. Someone else has already paid the price for it. Someone else *really does care about our hearts*. Someone has already gone before us, making a way. He knows how it feels. And somehow, there is comfort in the knowing that someone else understands. We are not alone.

How do I know? It's because my heart has been broken. I've

walked through shattered dreams, unmet expectations and that bone-chilling wilderness the Bible calls “the dark night of the soul.” Wilderness journeys always require something of us, don’t they? That something is our hearts.

So I offered mine up as a living sacrifice to the only One who could tend to it with the kind of care I needed. Unfailing love. It’s the only love that can heal a heart that is hemorrhaging.

That’s why He came. That’s the message of the cross. Listen to the words of Isaiah 61:1:

“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor; He has sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound.”

We have a choice. We say we want healing—but we often choose to walk in the shadows. We say we wanted freedom—but there are times we choose bondage. We say we believe He is near—but we often don’t draw nigh.

This is the Easter season, and resurrection is here. Christ came to give us a new heart, something to replace our hearts of stone. We must choose wisely, rise up and let the Savior of mankind give us the gift of unfailing love. One that will never perish, spoil or fade because it was paid for in full. Paid with blood. Lest we miss it, it cost Him everything.

This Easter we need a reminder that God got messy with the story line of His one and only Son so that you and I will not grow weary and loose heart. So read the Easter story. Then read it again, slowly. Breathe it into your soul. Let it show you about the Savior’s heart. Let it show you about unfailing love, and let it help you decide some things about His love for you.

Accept the only gift you need this season. Let Him in to bind up your broken heart and experience the freedom of resurrection.

Rita Schulte is a board-certified licensed professional counselor with a private practice at Harbor Counseling and Consultation in Fairfax, Virginia, where she specializes in the treatment of depressive and anxiety disorders, eating disorders and loss issues. She is the author of *Shattered and Impostor* and is the host of the Heartline Radio.