

How God's Heart Breaks

How do we break God's heart?¹ The Message version of the Bible interprets Ephesians 5:30, this way. "Don't grieve God. Don't break His heart."

Reading the whole of the verses and chapters that come before this one leads me to believe the main we we break His heart is by not following what He's told us to do. It breaks His heart when we go our own way and do our own thing instead of listening to Him.

His Holy Spirit has given us life but we squander it. We make our temple a garbage dump for unhealthy food, unhealthy attitudes, unhealthy outlook, unhealthy demeanor. We don't take care of ourselves

Truth here: We don't even like ourselves much. And yet, Jesus gave His very life for us. We cannot wrap our brains around the magnitude of that unfathomable gift. If we can begin to do that, even in part, we will want to redeem the time, change, transform, morph into this amazing creation that He has designed us to be.²

Transformation, being made new, created in the image of Christ, born to fly is not something we make ourselves do. It is something He creates in us when we submit to His grace completely.

I don't know about you, but I take God's gift of grace as something that just is, not something that is as deep as the ocean, as wide as the heavens and as vast as all seven billion people on the earth today and the billions who have lived on the earth.

He loves each and every person, knows them, completely, inside out. I have over 15,000 combined "likes" and "friends" on my

two Facebook pages. There is no way I can know every one of these people.

Only a handful do I know well and fewer than that can I call by name when I meet them on the street. And yet if we were to meet God on the street, He would know our deepest secret, our darkest fears, our most embarrassing moment; the dream that resides inside of us that hasn't even passed our cognitive brain yet.

He knows us and if we will submit to Him, He will lead us a step at a time. We quote Ephesians 2:8-9 a lot, the fact we are not the ones who save ourselves but it is God giving us a free gift by His grace. Available to us if we exercise faith to receive it.

But we many times leave out verse 10. In The Message it says: "We neither make nor save ourselves. God does both the making and saving. He creates each of us by Christ Jesus to join him in the work he does, the good work he has gotten ready for us to do, work we had better be doing."

He created me and you to do something specific. I am understanding that I don't really have to know the specifics of what I am to do. I only need to know who I am in Him. I only need to follow His each and every leading in my life.

A friend of mine has struggled with knowing the specific thing she is to do. She's talented, gifted, inspired and all of that leads her to want to do so many things in the Kingdom. She's learning, as we all must learn, to just listen to what God is telling her to do next.

It's really that risky step of faith. Why am I getting my degree, God? He may not show you why. He may just affirm to you it's your next step.

Planning these days is difficult for me. I try not to plan too far in advance lest the Lord interrupt my plans. I still plan.

I have a full calendar. But God knows He's my calendar keeper. Any time He wants to interrupt my calendar and add a new date, I'm game.

This living not knowing is not scary, but it is an adventure and a new way of life for me. I no longer have to know why. I leave the whys up to God. I leave the hows up to Him as well.

Because I know beyond a shadow of a doubt, that it is God's power energizing me to do anything I do. "God can do anything, you know—far more than you could ever imagine or guess or request in your wildest dreams! He does it not by pushing us around but by working within us, his Spirit deeply and gently within us."³

I realize this life I am living is really about God developing His character in me. He wants me moldable and ready to be a soldier in His army, ready to be placed wherever He needs me. That means I have some work to do to be ready, to be fit, to be moldable.

"We do not have the excuse of ignorance, everything—and I do mean everything—connected with that old way of life has to go. It's rotten through and through. Get rid of it! And then take on an entirely new way of life—a God-fashioned life, a life renewed from the inside and working itself into your conduct as God accurately reproduces his character in you."⁴

What Paul is telling the Ephesian church rings true to me. The truth of the matter is we all have certain things we don't want to give up and yet we want to be useful to the Kingdom.

Usefulness only comes when we allow God to transform us from the inside out. Having God produce His character in me means, I must take off a lot of me-ness (you do notice how the word sounds like meanness when you say it) and put on Him-ness (which if you say it with proper enunciation would be humility, plain and simple.) OK, so it doesn't sound like it

but it should look like it.

We are to be like bricks in His wall, building a kingdom, standing in place, remaining strong and true. We are not necessarily called to be the prettiest brick, the most adoring brick, the brick that can preach the best or sing the best.

We are called to be content with holding place, cooperating with those around us, becoming strong and stable until our character has become strong and secure. Then He may call us to be the foundational brick for some other project. It's all in how adaptable we are willing to be.

All I have ever dreamed of being is an author. I knew God had gifted me with the ability to write, so some day I would write a book, maybe lots of books. I couldn't see past that one thing. It was my focus.

So, He used that to bring me to the place where I now am content with being placed in whatever position He needs be to be in. I've spoken many places to many groups, been on television, radio and in articles. Led workshops. And lead an online coaching group.

What happens next? I don't know. He only ever gives me the next step. That's all. The next step. What's the one after that? Where's it all leading?

God only knows. And that's just fine with me.

Living not knowing means I don't have to have it all figured out. It's a freeing feeling. It's God working in me.

That, my friends, is the best feeling this side of heaven.

¹ Ephesians 5:30 MSG

² 2 Corinthians 5:17

³ Ephesians 3:20 MSG

⁴ Ephesians 5:19 MSG

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