

This Heart-Wrecking Revelation Makes You Unshakable in Life's Storms

Life can sneak up on us with shakings that leave us scared stiff, or at the very least, overwhelmed. Pressures swell to deafening levels with all the storms and stresses of life. Bills rise. Bodies break. Losses wound. Relationships fail. And on top of these personal shakings, the world is filled with trouble, with more instability than ever and a storm on the horizon that Jesus said would only increase as His return draws near (John 16:33, Matt. 24:3–14).

Do you presently have a storm you're facing? Do you find yourself in the midst of a shaking that is forcing desperate questions? *How do I hold on? Can I bear another blow? Will I make it through?*

The Lord has an answer for us in these anxious times, and it may surprise us. He wants to stabilize us in every storm by first undoing us at the heart level with His beauty and with His love.

The most unshakable people alive are those that have been most wrecked by Jesus—those who have been most undone by His love and most riveted by His beauty. Gut-level circumstances must be answered with gut-level revelation of Jesus. We will only be immovable when we have first been moved deeply by Him.

Wrecked by Love

In Ephesians 3:16–19, Paul prayed for a strengthening with might in the inner man—a rooting and grounding in the love of Christ that gives strength to comprehend the breadth, length, height and depth of Jesus' love. Paul tied the revelation and experience of the love of Christ to stability of soul. Inward

strength is knit to rooted affections in Christ Jesus. Thus, we cannot exaggerate the power of being overcome by His superior love as the way to becoming steadfast in all the distresses of life.

It is common for us to attempt to be unshakeable before being wrecked by the affections of Christ. Jesus knew that that the order was opposite. Peter—after boasting of his willingness to die for Jesus—denied the Lord three times in a critical moment. Yet, after the scandalous forgiveness and tenderness of Jesus leveled him, he became the rock (John 21:17).

John started as a brash and self-absorbed son of thunder, but he became the apostle of love after he stood before the piercing affection of Jesus, exhibited on the cross. In the wake of that love, he never recovered (John 13:1; 19:25-37). Paul the apostle, though first plotting against the believers of Christ, was encountered by the man Christ Jesus and became a devoted bondservant, so wholly compelled by love for Christ that he counted all else as rubbish in comparison (Phil. 3:8).

The pattern we see in Scripture is clear: first we must get in the way of Jesus' fierce love for us, making our hearts vulnerable to His affection, then we will be strengthened like a rooted tree and a firm foundation—our own love for Him made strong and burning (Eph. 3:16-19; 1 John 4:19).

Heart-Wrecking Revelation

So how do we position ourselves for conquered affections? One of the ways that the Lord wants to do this is as we behold Him as the Bridegroom. For me, nothing has been more revolutionary to my inner life than understanding and experiencing the affection of Jesus the Bridegroom.

When I was 20 years old, I experienced this love in a way that absolutely undid me and I've never recovered. Week after week—for 20 sessions in a row—I sat as a young Bible school student, hearing teachings from the Song of Solomon about the

tender affection of Jesus the Bridegroom. Though I had loved the Lord all my life, this was totally new to me. The idea that the Lord would say over me, "You have ravished My heart, My sister, My bride ... with one glance of your eyes" (Song 4:9, MEV), rattled me to the core. It exposed and disrupted so many things in me—my wrong conclusions about how the Lord felt toward me and my false confidence in my own performance.

I was confronted with a God who delighted in me, who was tender with me in my weakness, and who was moved by my responses to Him. I was undone by how He redeemed me while I was far off and His enemy and by the understanding of His jealousy—of His full intention to take my immature sincerity and bring it forth into shining, holy love for Himself (Eph. 5:27; 1 Thess. 3:13). I could hardly conceive of how He could be so moved by my love for Him, though it was yet immature. "Jesus," I would weep, "how are You so moved by my weak heart?"

The revelation of Jesus the Bridegroom has to be the most heart-wrecking identity of Jesus. It's meddling. It's invasive. It's indelible. Just like the marriage relationship gets into every space, the revelation of the Lord as the Bridegroom gets to parts of us like nothing else. It gets underneath the hard-to-reach areas of fear and shame and condemnation and fills them with the light and truth of the Gospel.

When we consider the cross—the pinnacle moment of God's love demonstrated—as the Bridegroom giving His life in death for a wayward bride, Jew and Gentile, deep places in our hearts get accessed and exposed. When we see ourselves as Gomer and Him as the greater Hosea who gave His life to buy us back from our harlotry, we're pierced to the heart by His holy love and His desire that we would be wholly His. Nothing is so compelling as the revelation of the Lord's heart, calling us back to Himself. As one of my favorite songs voices, the Lord beckons us:

I want your heart. I want it all./Not just a part. I want the whole./I've given up everything—given you all of Me.

Would you open your heart again?/Would you open your heart to Me?/Just look at My nail-pierced hands,

Put yours in My wounded side./I'm asking for all your heart 'cause/I've given you all of Mine.

—I want Your Heart by Jon Thurlow

Vulnerability Becoming Stability

When this love of Christ touched me so deeply, I honestly had no idea it would turn out to be the single most stabilizing revelation of my life—the source I would return to countless times over in moments of pain or trouble. And though I am certain many shakings lie yet ahead, I believe what Corrie Ten Boom assured: “There is no pit so deep that His love is not deeper still.”

Have you made yourself vulnerable to this tenacious love? Have you been overcome by the way He receives and takes personal your love? I believe this is when tears come. The one who is forgiven much loves much and when we begin to receive His love deeply and personally—not just as a truth we give intellectual assent to, but as a lifeline that's laid hold of us, a tenderness pervades our souls (Luke 7:47). An ache to respond to Him with holy abandonment through any adversity we may face grips our hearts.

No matter the storm we find ourselves in, we are to open wide our hearts to Him and to His Word, continually allowing Him access to every space. Wherever we are pierced and cut through by His love—wherever His tender affection has prevailed over our striving, our condemnation, our fears and our resistance to Him—there we will be strong. Wherever His beauty—unlike any other—has ruined us for lesser things, there we will be

steadfast (Psalm 45:2; Song 5:10). Troubles will come. Shakings will sift. Yet the Lord is bringing forth—both today and ultimately—a radiant church, overcome with love for Himself and more than conquerors through Him who loved us (Eph. 5:27; Rom. 8:37; Rev. 19:7)). To be wrecked by the love of Jesus is to be unshakable.

Have you experienced this heart-wrecking love of Jesus? How has it stabilized you? {eoa}

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