

God's Plan in Your Broken Places

There's a story about a little boy who was very poor and needed shoes. He was standing in front of a shoe store, barefoot and shivering with cold. A woman approached him and asked him why he was standing there, looking through the window. He told her, "Well, ma'am, I was asking God to give me a pair of shoes."

The woman took the boy into the store, washed his dirty, bare feet and put new socks and shoes on them. The boy was so touched by her compassion that he asked her, "Ma'am, are you God's wife?" He assumed if she showed him that kind of love, she must be related to God.

This story is one of the best examples of what it means to walk in love. And our goal as Christians is to show God's love so people see Jesus shining through us.

Matthew 26:26 (NIV) says, "...Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." It's interesting to see here that Jesus blessed the bread, broke it, and then gave it to the disciples.

We usually refer to this scripture when we have communion to remind us of the sacrifice He made for us. And just as He gave His life and was broken for us, we must be broken so we can live for Him.

We don't like to think about God breaking us, but it's really a wonderful thing. See, when we're born again, the seed of God's nature—all that He is—is planted in our spirits.

First Peter 1:23 (NIV) says, "For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the

living and enduring word of God.” And 1 John 3:9 tells us that as believers, “God’s seed [His principle of life, the essence of His righteous character] remains [permanently]” in us (AMP).

This means we have what it takes to be like Jesus and love others the way He loves us. But we all need God to do a work in our souls for us to be able to walk in love. We have to grow spiritually for our soul–mind, will, and emotions—to be molded into the image of Christ.

We don’t need to pray for God to give us love, because we already have His love in us. We need to pray for Him to show us how to *walk in love*...for God to do whatever He needs to do in our lives so His love can flow through us to others. When we do, He will deal with whatever is in us that is standing in the way: pride, unforgiveness, selfishness, insecurity, fear, or any other ungodly attitude or behavior.

Isaiah 64:8 says, “O Lord, You are our Father; we are the clay, and You our Potter, and we all are the work of Your hand” (AMPC). I know what it’s like to be broken and molded by God. I used to have so many problems; I was hard to get along with and harsh. There were a lot of things I didn’t understand because I had been mistreated, and I thought it was good to be hard and not let anyone push me around. I believed everyone else had a problem, not me.

I remember praying so diligently for God to change my husband, Dave, because if he would just be the way I wanted him to be, then I would be happy. But one day God spoke to my heart so strongly and said, “Dave is not the problem.” My response was, “Well, who is? It’s just me and him. What do You mean Dave is not the problem?”

It was devastating to realize that *I* was the problem, but it was also the beginning of a beautiful work God wanted to do in me.

Even though I was hurting and hard to get along with, I really loved God and wanted to live for Him, but I had to give Him control so He could mold me into His image. I began to pray things like, "God, do whatever You need to do in my life to change me. I'm the clay and You are the Potter." Romans 8:29 (NIV) says, "For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters."

The journey hasn't been easy, but I can honestly say that the hardest times in my life became blessings because God used them to bring me close to Him so I could know Him and grow spiritually. That's His plan for all of His children.

I want to encourage you today to spend time with God and search out the promises He has for you in His Word. Trust His wisdom and do what He shows you to do. As you put your faith in God to break you, mold you, and make you what He's created you to be, the Potter will make you an amazing work of His hand!

*For more on this topic, order Joyce's four-part teaching resource **Live 2 Love**. You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, Enjoying Everyday Life, by calling (800) 727-9673 or visiting*

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