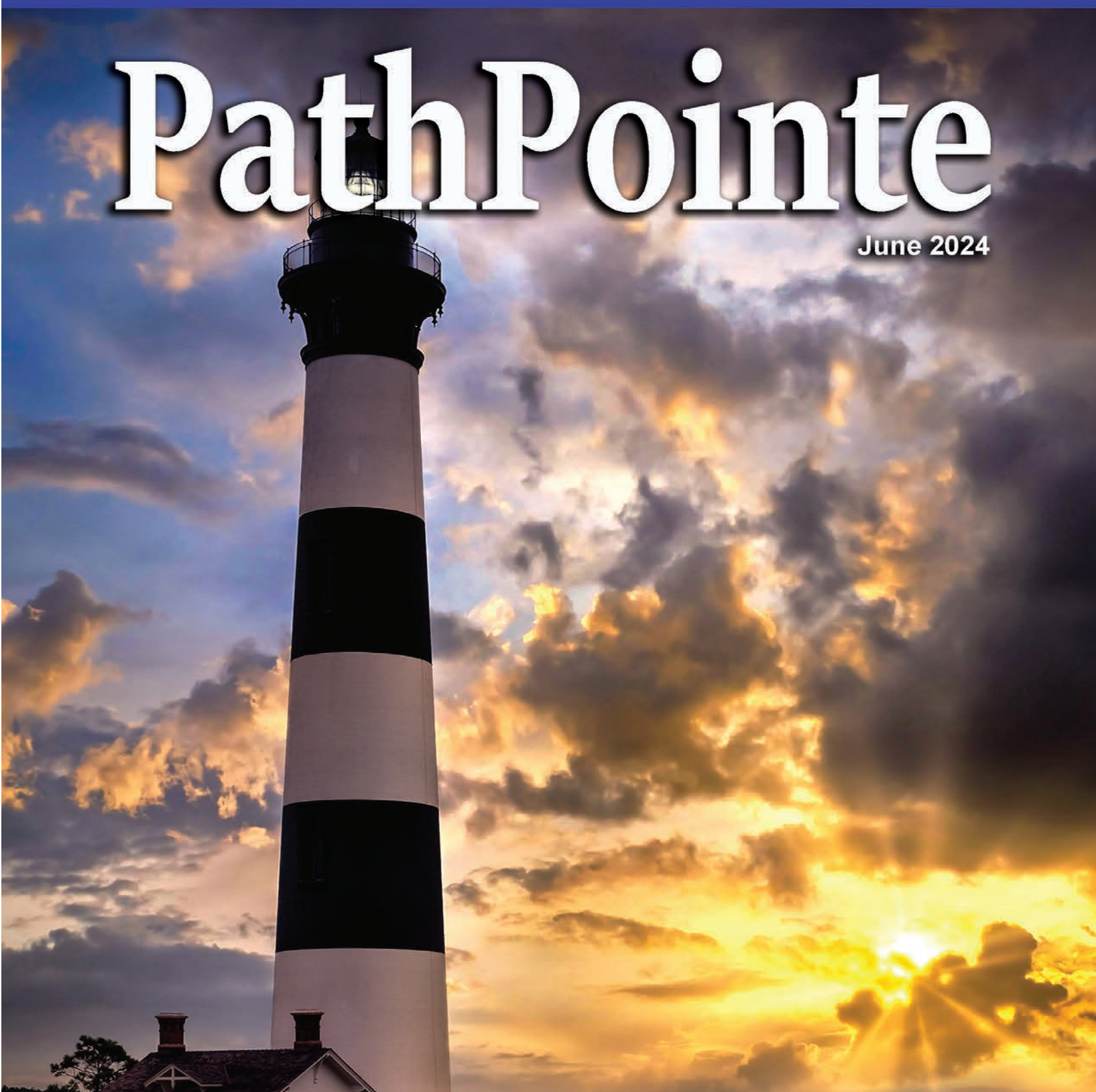


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contents

PathPointe Magazine

Volume 25, Issue 6

June 2024

- Page 2 My Granddad's Heritage
Dr. T. D. Worthington
- Page 6 Radio Bits
Your Christian Superstations!
- Page 8 The Besetting Sin
Mrs. Sherry Worthington
- Page 10 Blessed. Broken. Blessed.
Dr. Glenn Mills
- Page 12 AfterGlow
Mrs. Connie Peters

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It might seem strange for a 74-year-old man to be writing about his granddad, but as we approach Father's Day, I felt such a testimony might be in order.

You see, my life has been forever enriched by the influence of my granddad. Oh, how I love him. I say "love," not "loved," because that's the way love is; love never fails. Love doesn't cease during separations. And this one will be short. Many memories are still fresh although he has been in glory for over 40 years. What I remember most about my granddad isn't his interests or personality traits, it's his extraordinary witness of God. And while it may not have seemed like I was paying any attention, I was. In a hundred different ways he taught me about a life of faith; although at the time, I was lost.

For one thing, he taught me about the importance of church. Mom and Dad didn't go to church, but I would quite often go with my

granddad. He would be dressed in a suit and waiting to chauffeur me to church on time. That meant getting there 15 minutes before the service started or suffering the shame of being "late." I liked to go to his Sunday School class, and I can still seem to hear him boldly sharing the Word of God. I can almost see him serving as an usher, holding a brassy offering plate, walking down the aisle to the altar. Granddad listened to sermons with unwavering attention. For him, worship was centering, life-giving, and holy.

Granddad prioritized church until his health began to keep him away. He went faithfully to feed his soul. I always felt so comfortable, safe, and loved when I was around him. I think perhaps others did also. He always greeted people at church. His interest in them was genuine. He remembered facts and details of other people's lives and brought them up whenever they spoke. He remembered their infirmities and

the problems folks were facing and would often ask about them. He did this because he wanted everyone he met to feel loved, seen, and known; the way God loves us.

He loved his pastor. He and grandma had the preacher over for a meal several times a year—that was the custom back then. My granddad kept his eyes fixed on Jesus. I can still see him sitting in his rocking chair and reading the Bible. His faith still inspires me daily. In a way, granddad taught me how to see. He was always profoundly awake to see and experience the simple things. Just to wake up in the morning and be aware of the warm bed, the pleasant weight of the blanket on your feet, the warmth of the sun rays, the soft murmur of the distant traffic, the sound of the birds chirping, and the sheer being of things.

Just when I thought there was nothing else to see, granddad would show it to me from a new angle, then another angle, and then another. It was through his eyes I learned to see and to be alive to what is really there. Wonders in the world God created, that is what he helped me see, again and again. I guess I could say he was gently amazed at the amazing; and to him everything seemed to be amazing. Now I know it is true. Everything, rightly seen, is amazing. And, rightly experienced, everything is eye-opening and instructional.

Granddad was never glib or gloomy. He did not wear the heaviness of his troubles on his sleeve. Yet, he took life seriously. He was not a party pooper nor the resident clown. I felt safe around him because he always

seemed to be calmly unshakeable, although there was one time, I felt a little threatened. We were on the sidewalk in downtown Farmville. A man approached him and began to fuss about something. Granddad handled it with firm grace. He would later explain to me that although nobody likes to be criticized. According to granddad, critics either help keep us sane, or by our reactions, prove us to be temporarily or permanently insane. Whether a critic's manner is gracious or malicious, whether the timing is good or bad, whether the intention is constructive or destructive, whether the content is accurate, half-true, or utterly false, in any case the very experience of being criticized reveals who you really are. This was a way of seeing things that I would never forget.

My way of seeing things, and handling things has been formed by ten thousand experiences in life. Some have been harmful, others helpful and some both. But, through granddads eyes, I saw life as a comprehensive, God-centered, Christ-exalting vision of Scripture. Which in turn, would show the world as a place of endless wonders.

With Christ as Creator and Teacher, the universe becomes a university of discovery. Maybe that is one of the reasons that man's world has never really impressed me. I didn't want to be shaped by a limited vision of the world. I wanted to see things the way granddad saw them. I wanted to understand the riches and nuances of life that you could never understand just from living on the planet and obtaining man's wisdom. I wanted to become a bigger person with a wider scope

of perception. These are just some of the things my Granddad taught me, and I didn't even realize it at the time. But, now I understand that the things he taught me in that wonderful inspiring classroom were illustrating and amplifying the Word of God.

I was blessed in that for the first eight years of my life I had granddad all to myself. Mom was an only child, and my little brother wasn't born until I was eight. There was no competition—well except for his job, chores, and my grandmother. It is unlikely I will have the influence over my grand-children that my granddad had over me. For one thing, my grandchildren have Christian parents. I am so thankful for that. But it is a privilege I didn't have, so granddad was the one who was my Christian influence.

What is the biblical role of a grandparent? Biblically, every member of the family has been given an important, God-ordained

role that is not interchangeable with other members of the family. The Bible also clearly defines the role of grandparents. Yet, although the Bible is clear on the subject, American culture is not, and many Christians have unintentionally adopted a non-biblical view of grandparenthood. There are at least three modern day messages grandparents must reject.

You need to live your life independent of your family.

That means don't interfere, don't overstep, and don't be a burden. While there is some truth to that, it has also rendered countless grandchildren as grand-orphans who do not have the intimate influence of a grandparent in their life. In others words, grandparenting is viewed as an extra, a role not essential to the functioning of the family or the development of grandchildren. Sherry and I are blessed that our grandchildren are close by.





Your role is to be a babysitter, companion, and playmate to your grandchild.

The role society gives grandparents is obvious when we look to children's literature about grandparenthood. Many children's books suggest that grandparents are for playing hide-and-seek, singing a lullaby, building a sandcastle, and playing games. Biblically, although all these things might have a place, a grandparent's role is far more than being a babysitter, playmate, or companion.

You've worked hard, and now it's time to enjoy yourself.

The world tells you that you did your time, and now it is time to rest, travel, and play. The essence of this message is that you are to indulge yourself with whatever makes you happy. I warn you, The Bible never speaks positively about a self-focused, self-indulging season of life, and this is what retirement has become for many Christians. Quite the opposite, this is God's message to grandparents:

“Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart

from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons;”

Deuteronomy 4:9

So, in conclusion, the one word that seems to describe a grandparent's role biblically is the word heritage. In **Psalm 78**, God provides a four-generation vision for families: fathers, children, children yet unborn, and their children. God wants you to think multi-generationally and gives you a large vision to leave a lasting legacy in Christ that will last for generations to come.

Apart from a heritage of faith, another aspect of a grandparent's role is to tell God's works: ***“shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done” (Psalms 78:4)***. God wants us to report to our grandchildren (*generations to come*) what God has done in our life.

Another responsibility is to teach God's law: ***“For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children:” (Psalms 78:5)***. Teaching is a central element of a grandparent's role. The Hebrew word “teach” means to instruct or guide. Guidance is a goal-oriented word. It suggests that there is a specific outcome you are working toward, and teaching is a method to that end. A good guide knows the end destination, shows others the path, and instructs along the way.

We are to aid the parents in teaching our grandchildren that God is the source of morality. We must help teach them the

Gospel. Every grandchild has broken God's law and needs the free gift of grace through faith in Christ. We must help teach them to be obedient to authority, and we must teach them the core truths of Christianity. The pattern of Scripture is for children of all ages to be taught the core truths of the Bible so that they will be firmly rooted in Christ and established in their faith. So, everything a grandparent does, including a trip to the beach, is aimed at the salvation and sanctification of children and grandchildren.

Society communicates a powerful message about being a grandparent. Sometimes, that message is so strong that even Sherry and I feel guilty for not playing more hide and seek. But then I remember my granddad—and not a single game of hide and seek, not one trip to the beach or to Disney World, but I remember him as a teacher.

Because a grandparent's main role is not to ignore his grandchildren, nor is it to spoil them, be their playmate, or constant companion. A grandparent's purpose is not to indulge themselves during the last third of their life. God designed grandparents as disciple-makers for the purpose of passing on a heritage of faith to future generations. Granddad accepted that task...and honestly it was a delight for both of us.



Dr. Worthington has been in the ministry for over forty-five years and serves as President of Pathway Ministries and Christian Bible College.



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An Angry World

We live in an angry world. Everywhere you turn, the wrath of man is poured out upon others through venomous speech and harsh tones. Things worsen when that anger becomes an action of physical abuse. Anger can manifest itself everywhere, including the home. In this modern world, meekness and gentleness are now considered a sign of weakness.

Dad, are you a harsh father or a gentle father? Ask your wife. Mom, are you a harsh mother

or a gentle mother? Ask your husband. Most of all, ask your Heavenly Father. You are never more like Christ than when you are gentle. As a dad, you have a wonderful opportunity to demonstrate something of what God the Father is like in His gentle dealings with His people.

Many men are harsh, but a few extraordinary and gentle men love their God and their families with supernatural sacrifice and resolve. Of course, those fathers don't brag about it. They are not seeking extra credit. Miracle workers don't brag about their ability or ingenuity. They can't explain it. Instead, they point to God who alone gives them the power to be masculine and gentle at the same time. Such men simply and joyfully say, *"But by the grace of God I am*

what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." (I Corinthians 15:10)

Hopefully, the soothing music and programming you find on GoMix Christian Radio will help you during those tense moments when gentleness takes a back seat.



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Quality Time

Have you been facing hard times lately? Sure, you've always had struggles and trials just like anyone else, but for some reason you feel as though you're being hit harder and more often than before. Like a child playing at the beach in rough waters, you can hardly catch your breath and get on your feet before another wave crashes down again and sends you twisting around uncontrollably. You know the Bible says God won't put more on you than you can handle, and His grace is always sufficient (**I Corinthians 10:13, II Corinthians 12:9**), but occasionally you have questions about your own abilities. Be assured, He is with you and He *wants* to help you.

All too often we get so busy and stressed trying to work out our own problems, we fail to spend *quality* time with the Problem Solver. When was the last time you spent *quality* time with your Heavenly Father? Not just reading a list of prayer requests and saying "Amen", but taking the time to listen for the wisdom and guidance He wants to give you? The Bible says He gives wisdom *liberally* to anyone who asks (**James 1:5**). When you go to the Lord in prayer, be specific about your needs

and prepared to spend a little extra time meditating and listening to the Holy Spirit.

Think about it. We usually take time to listen in other areas of our lives. If we want to know the best kind of paint to use for a special project, the best investment opportunities for retirement, or even the best deal on a cell phone plan, we research and ask the opinion of others more knowledgeable on the subject. Once we ask others for advice, we don't just say, "Ok, thanks!" and turn around and walk away. That wouldn't accomplish anything. No, instead we wait to hear what they have to say. Surely if we can take the time to wait for an answer at a hardware store or cell phone company, we can take the time to listen for an answer from the Lord and Creator of all things.

Your struggles and trials might not be taken away. You'll still face difficulties and uncertainties that can feel overwhelming at times, but He *will* give you the guidance to get through them if you just ask. Not only does He want to hear from you, He wants you to hear from Him!



The Besetting Sin

Mrs. Sherry Worthington

I don't know about you, but I have found my nemesis. I think we all have one. Mine seems to defeat me when I go to some very special places. I don't ever seem to know when to stop. I tell myself I might hurt the cook's feelings, and we sure don't want to be wasteful. Of course, I have to get my money's worth. I must find an excuse somewhere. Have you guessed what my nemesis is? You guessed it! The notorious buffet restaurant, or so I thought anyway.

I must be honest. It doesn't have to be a buffet bar for me to be gluttonous. I often overeat when I cook the meal myself. I guess I am treading on dangerous ground here. I am revealing a definite weakness in my life.

I want to take you on an adventure with me. I had an experience a few months back that got my attention. I was praying for something important to me and have been for quite some time. In my quest

to have an answer to this prayer request, I began to learn many things about myself.

There are many things I enjoy doing besides eating. I have a full plate in better ways than just my food. I enjoy the ministry God has given me, and I especially enjoy my family. Of course, my favorite ministry and hobby is my husband. My life gets very busy sometimes. It is hard to find a quiet moment.

I pray when I am alone in the car, when I brush my teeth, when I am lying in bed, and other times when I have a moment to spare. I read my Bible when I prepare my devotions for my students. As you can see, my personal time with God is a hit-and-miss type of situation. I am sure God enjoys every moment I spend with Him, but I know He wants more.

I was praying for this special request one day, and I stopped long enough to hear His still small voice.

I was asking Him why He had not answered my prayer request. In no uncertain terms, He said, *"I didn't know it was important to you."*

I asked Him, *"How could you not think it was important to me? I have been asking you for this for a long time."*

He gently said, *"I haven't noticed it making a difference in your life."*

I am not saying this is a requirement for God to hear our prayers, but there are a couple of areas in my life I have struggled with since I was young. I knew these areas had to come in subjection for me to grow in my Christian walk.

"...let us lay aside every weight, and sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."

Hebrews 12:1

The besetting sin is the one that keeps us from a victorious Christian

life. The weights are the sins that we carry around and pull out from time to time. It is like running a race where you have a bag full of weights on your shoulders. In my life, the bag was the besetting sin, and the weights were the individual battles I was fighting. I knew what the Lord was conveying to me. He said, *“Why aren’t you any closer to letting Me help you defeat these areas that are weighing you down? How many years have these same battles been continuing? You can have so much more out of your Christian walk.”*

Wow! What a blow! I told God I thought I was doing pretty good. He says, *“I want more for you.”* At that time, my quest began to defeat this area once and for all. Have you ever thought you knew what your nemesis or enemy was in your life, yet you found out later it was so much worse than you thought? My adventure took me to all kinds of places. Places I never realized existed.

I said, *“Ok, Lord, until we get this thing licked, I will give up_____.”* We all have something that gets ahead of God, so that blank could be anything. I just knew where I needed to start.

He said, *“OK! It is a start.”* Things were going well for a few days. I was sitting at my desk one day, and I started to _____. He whispered, *“What about that?”*

I said, *“This too, Lord.”*

He said, *“Yes, that too.”*

I reluctantly said, *“OK...this, too.”* Mind you, over a few days, He



continued to push one more weight aside.

I was praying more earnestly because every time I thought of the item I had chosen to give up, I prayed for my prayer request. I was constantly asking God to teach me and help me to have the discipline to do as He had shown me. He said, *“You need to read My Word more.”* I said, *“When? When is their time?”*

He said, *“You always have time for_____.”*

I said, *“But, Lord.”* Then I realized I did this every day, and it would be a good place to start.

As I began to read my Bible for answers to my questions, and not just to prepare for devotions for my students, my Heavenly Father began to answer my questions one by one. When I prepared devotions for my students, I learned a great deal, but I was searching for answers for teenagers.

As I was studying and praying, I realized my nemesis was not food or misuse of my tongue. They were

weights in the bag. I learned my nemesis was self. Self-discipline is the key to conquering my weights and my besetting sin. I guess it would be better put as God-discipline. God needs to be the discipline in my life. He needs to call the shots. I do not know where this adventure will take me, but I hope it never stops.

I have not conquered the buffet bar, nor have I conquered the other weights in my bag, but the bag is lighter than it was. I hope, by God’s grace, one day the bag and the weights will be gone. In the meantime, the weights are slowly getting lighter, and I have learned so much in the last few months. Each new challenge in my adventure has brought me closer to victory.

Let us set aside your weights and your besetting sin so your weights can be lighter. We all need to take the challenge of **Hebrews 12:1**.



Mrs. Worthington has five children and twelve grandchildren. She serves as Principal of Pathway Christian Academy in Goldsboro.



Blessed. Broken. Blessed.

Dr. Glenn Mills

Whether we like it or not, God has a strange way of doing things when He wants to do something great in our lives. On two occasions, Jesus fed a multitude with five loaves and two fishes and another time with seven loaves and some fish. God most always has a process for how He does things.

Before Jesus did the miracles of increase, He had all the people be seated. I believe He put them in a position to receive. How often is it we don't receive what God desires for us because we are too busy or trying to stand on our own? Like Mary, we must be eager to sit at the feet of Jesus and learn. I'm sure we would receive more if we would learn to wait on the Lord and His Holy Spirit. Waiting is not idleness, but more so worship, praise, study, meditation, and prayer while we seek God's direction.

Once God has our attention, He often blesses us by first breaking us. What I mean by this is God sees the things that often hinder our promotion or next level in the Spirit. It may be a bad attitude, a seed of bitterness, pride, hidden sin, some level of rebellion or even deep-rooted doubt. He knows before we can go further, we must first go deeper, and not only be honest with ourselves, but also honest with Him. The Bible says the person who covers their sin will not prosper. Well, hidden sin is not the only thing we hide that can affect us in a negative way.

Believe me when I say we are not alone. In Bible history, God blessed many by breaking them open first: Such as David's committal of murder, Gideon's insecurity, Joshua's uncertainty, Samson's arrogance, Elijah's fear, Jonah's anger, Peter's denial, Zacchaeus' greed, Saul/Paul's ignorance, and the list could go on. All through the Bible, God blessed people by breaking them first so He could then bless and use them even more.

Once we are broken of the things that hurt and hinder us, then we are ready to move on into the destiny God has planned for us. We must be willing to die to our selfish nature, take up our cross, and follow Jesus (**Matthew 16:24**). Dying to self allows God to break the chains of the things that would hold us back. His desire is to promote us and in no way hurt us. Thank God, He knows what we need and when we need it. Once we are blessed by being broken, then He can bless us with wholeness. Then in our weaknesses, He is made strong. The joy of our Lord becomes our strength. Peace calms our minds and waters our souls.

Not only are we then blessed by brokenness, but those around us get blessed from the overflow. All through the Bible, once God broke someone, they became a better person which impacted those around them for the good. The Bible is full of victory stories of those broken, then made whole, who then did great things with and for God. Once whole again, our gifts, talents, and service touch the lives of those we meet and know. Lives are transformed by the transformation we allow God to first perform in us.

Is there something that may need to be broken in you, my Friend? If so, I pray you will allow God to bless you by breaking you so you can be made whole and be a blessing to others. Allow the Holy Spirit to examine your heart. There are many blessings prepared for those willing to be broken for the Master's purpose.



Dr. Glenn Mills is a long time supporter of GoMix Christian Radio and a full-time Evangelist with Glenn Mills Ministries. More information is available at www.glennmillsministries.com

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Imagine Heaven

I like to ponder what my arrival in heaven will be like. Those first moments must be totally awesome. In the song, "I Saw the Lord" sung by Dallas Holm, arrival in heaven is imagined. As the lyricist faces the Father among millions of others, he sees the Lord. Amazingly, standing among all of the saved, the Lord also saw him. I picture myself standing in heaven among all believers throughout time, and in spite of my short stature, I manage to catch a glimpse of Him. I could not under such circumstances expect that I would be able to recognize that He would focus on me alone. As pictured in the song, though, He does single me out to make me aware that He focuses on me totally.

When we are all in heaven, will we have to wait our turn to spend any quality time with our Lord and Saviour? We have all of eternity, so surely I will have a few minutes of one-on-one time with Him occasionally. But He is not finite as a human is. He can be everywhere and fully engaged with each of us at the same time. Although in our finite minds, we cannot comprehend His attentive presence in each of our lives, we believe by faith that it is indeed possible.

We can taste that aspect of heaven even before we arrive there. Think back over the times in your life when you totally knew that God was there with you, that He saw you, and that He felt your need. Think of those times that you spiritually moved to climb up into His lap and let Him embrace you with His reassuring arms. Perhaps you experienced that when you had just said goodbye to a loved one that you would never see again this side of heaven. Maybe you have been deeply hurt by an unsuspecting friend. Does Jesus care? Does He see?

Ponder the times that you did something that delighted Him, and you felt His smiling face beholding your heart. You sense that He is proud of you. You sense His pat on your back. You sense that He saw your attempt at manifesting His attributes in some way, and you know that He saw you among the millions and He is pleased and proud.

Rejoice in those times of close communion with Him! When He seems distant, think about the times that you have known that He saw you. Throughout eternity in heaven, may we never grow accustomed to His intimacy with us, but always be as grateful as our first realization of His presence. When I find myself with the multitudes worshipping Jesus in heaven, may I always look for Him to see me as I search for Him. Ponder that.



Mrs. Connie Peters has two children and resides in Princeton, NC. She serves as an instructor at Pathway Christian Academy in Goldsboro.



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