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Brokenness – The Beginning Of Revival by Roy Hession - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2009/3/2 13:38

Brokenness – The Beginning Of Revival

by Roy Hession

We want to be very simple in this matter of Revival. Revival is just the life of the Lord Jesus poured into human hearts. Jesus is always victorious. In heaven they are praising Him all the time for His victory. Whatever may be our experience of failure and barrenness, He is never defeated. His power is boundless. And we, on our part, have only to get into a right relationship with Him, and we shall see His power being demonstrated in our hearts and lives and service, and His victorious life will fill us and overflow through us to others. And that is Revival in its essence.

Broken to His Will

If, however, we are to come into this right relationship with Him, the first thing we must learn is that our wills must be broken to His will. To be broken is the beginning of Revival. It is painful, it is humiliating, but it is the only way. It is being "Not I, but Christ" (Gal. 2:20), and a "C" is a bent "I." The Lord Jesus cannot live in us fully and reveal Himself through us until the proud self within us is broken. This simply means that the hard unyielding self, which justifies itself, wants its own way, stands up for its rights, and seeks its own glory, at last bows its head to God's will, admits its wrong, gives up its own way to Jesus, surrenders its rights and discards its own glory – that the Lord Jesus might have all and be all. In other words it is dying to self and self-attitudes.

And as we look honestly at our Christian lives, we can see how much of this self there is in each of us. It is so often self who tries to live the Christian life (the mere fact that we use the word "try" indicates that it is self who has the responsibility). It is self, too, who is often doing Christian work. It is always self who gets irritable and envious and resentful and critical and worried. It is self who is hard and unyielding in its attitudes to others. It is self who is shy and self-conscious and reserved. No wonder we need breaking. As long as self is in control, God can do little with us, for all the fruits of the Spirit (they are enumerated in Galatians 5), with which God longs to fill us, are the complete antithesis of the hard, unbroke n spirit within us and presupposes that it has been crucified.

Will We Say "Yes, Lord"?

Being broken is both God's work and ours. He brings His pressure to bear, but we have to make the choice. If we are really open to conviction as we seek fellowship with God (and willingness for the light is the prime condition of fellowship with God), God will show us the expressions of this proud, hard self that cause Him pain. Then it is, we can stiffen our necks and refuse to repent or we can bow the head and say, "Yes, Lord." Brokenness in daily experience is simply the response of humility to the conviction of God. And inasmuch as this conviction is continuous, we shall need to be broken continually. And this can be very costly, when we see all the yielding of rights and selfish interests that this will involve, and the confessions and restitutions that may be sometimes necessary.

Jesus Broken for Us

For this reason, we are not likely to be broken except at the Cross of Jesus. The willingness of Jesus to be broken for us is the all-compelling motive in our being broken too. We see Him, Who is in the form of God, counting not equality with God a prize to be grasped at and hung on to, but letting it go for us and taking upon Him the form of a Servant – God's Servant, man's Servant. We see Him willing to have no rights of His own, no home of His own, no possessions of His own, willing to let men revile Him and not revile again, willing to let men tread on Him and not retaliate or defend Himself. Above all, we see Him broken as He meekly goes to Calvary to become man's scapegoat by bearing their sins in His own body on the Tree.

In a pathetic passage in a prophetic Psalm, He says, "I am a worm and no man" (Psa. 22:6). Those who have been in tropical lands tell us that there is a big difference between a snake and a worm, when you attempt to strike at them. The snake rears itself up and hisses and tries to strike back – a true picture of self. But a worm offers no resistance, it allows you to do what you like with it, kick it or squash it under your heel – a picture of true brokenness. And Jesus was willi

ng to become just that for us – a worm and no man. And He did so, because that is what He saw us to be, worms having forfeited all rights by our sin, except to deserve hell. And He now calls us to take our rightful place as worms for Him and with Him. The whole Sermon on the Mount with its teaching of non-retaliation, love for enemies and selfless giving, assumes that that is our position. But only the vision of the Love that was willing to be broken for us can constrain us to be willing for that.

"Lord, bend that proud and
stiff-necked I,
Help me to bow the head and die;
Beholding Him on Calvary,
Who bowed His head for me."

Constant Yielding

But dying to self is not a thing we do once for all. There may be an initial dying when God first shows these things, but ever after, it will be a constant dying, for only so can the Lord Jesus be revealed constantly through us. All day long the choice will be before us in a thousand ways. It will mean no plans, no time, no money, no pleasure of our own. It will mean a constant yielding to those around us, for our yieldedness to God is measured by our yieldedness to man. Every humiliation, everyone who tries and vexes us, is God's way of breaking us, so that there is a yet deeper channel in us for the Life of Christ.

You see, the only life that pleases God and that can be victorious is His life – never our life, no matter how hard we try. But inasmuch as our self-centered life is the exact opposite of His, we can never be filled with His life, unless we are prepared for God to bring our life constantly to death. And in that we must co-operate by our moral choice.

Cups Running Over

Brokenness, however, is but the beginning of Revival. Revival itself is being absolutely filled to overflowing with the Holy Spirit, and that is victorious living. If we were asked this moment if we were filled with the Holy Spirit, how many of us would dare to answer "yes"? Revival is when we can say "yes" at any moment of the day. It is not egoistic to say so, for filling to overflowing is utterly and completely God's work – it is all of grace. All we have to do is to present our empty, broken self and let Him fill and keep filled. Andrew Murray says, "Just as water ever seeks and fills the lowest place, so the moment God finds you abased and empty, His glory and power flow in."

The picture that has made things simple and clear to so many of us is that of the human heart as a cup, which we hold out to Jesus, longing that He might fill it with the Water of Life. Jesus is pictured as bearing the golden water pot with the Water of Life. As He passes by, He looks into our cup and if it is clean, He fills to overflowing with the Water of Life. And as Jesus is always passing by, the cup can be always running over. That is something of what David meant, when he said, "My cup runneth over."

This is Revival – you and I – full to overflowing with blessing ourselves and to others – with a constant peace in our hearts. People imagine that dying to self makes one miserable. But it is just the opposite. It is the refusal to die to self that makes one miserable. The more we know of death with Him, the more we shall know of His life in us, and so the more of real peace and joy. His life, too, will overflow through us to lost souls in a real concern for their salvation, and to our fellow Christians in a deep desire for their blessing.

Under the Blood

Only one thing prevents Jesus filling our cups as He passes by, and that is sin in one of its thousand forms. The Lord Jesus does not fill dirty cups. Anything that springs from self, however small it may be, is sin. Self-energy or self-complacency in service is sin. Self-pity in trials or difficulties, self-seeking in business or Christian work, self-indulgence in one's spare time, sensitiveness, touchiness, resentment and self-defense when we are hurt or injured by others, self-consciousness, reserve, worry, fear, all spring from self and all are sin and make our cups unclean.

But all of them were put into that other cup, which the Lord Jesus shrank from momentarily in Gethsemane, but which He drank to the dregs at Calvary – the cup of our sin. And if we will allow Him to show us what is in our cups and then give it to Him, He will cleanse them in the precious Blood that still flows for sin. That does not mean mere cleansing from the guilt of sin, nor even from the stain of sin – though thank God both of these are true – but from the sin itself, what

ever it may be. And as He cleanses our cups, so He fills them to overflowing with His Holy Spirit.

Ongoing Cleansing

And we are able daily to avail ourselves of that precious Blood. Suppose you have let the Lord Jesus cleanse your cup and have trusted Him to fill it to overflowing, then something comes along – a touch of envy or temper. What happens? Your cup becomes dirty and it ceases to overflow. And if we are constantly being defeated in this way, then our cup is never overflowing.

If we are to know continuous Revival, we must learn the way to keep our cups clean. It is never God's will that a Revival should cease, and be known in history as the Revival of this or that year. When that happens it is due to only one thing – sin, just those little sins that the devil drops into our cup. But if we will go back to Calvary and learn afresh the power of the Blood of Jesus to cleanse moment by moment from the beginnings of sin, then we have learnt the secret of cups constantly cleansed and constantly overflowing. The moment you are conscious of that touch of envy, criticism, irritability, whatever it is – ask Jesus to cover it with His precious Blood and cleanse it away and you will find the reaction gone, your joy and peace restored and your cup running over. And the more you trust the Blood of Jesus in this way, the less will you even have these reactions.

But cleansing is only possible when we have first been broken before God on the point concerned. Suppose we are irritated by certain traits in someone. It is not enough just to take our reactions of irritation to Calvary. We must first be broken, that is, we must yield to God over the whole question and accept that person and their ways as His will for us. Then we are able to take our wrong reaction to Jesus, knowing that His Blood will cleanse away our sin; and when we have been cleansed from sin, let us not keep mourning over it, let us not be occupied with ourselves. But let us look up to our victorious Lord, and praise Him that He is still victorious.

Maintaining the Peace of God

There is one simple but all-inclusive guide the Word of God gives to regulate our walk with Jesus and to make us know when sin has come in. Colossians 3:15 says, "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts." Everything that disturbs the peace of God in our hearts is sin, no matter how small it is, and no matter how little like sin it may at first appear to be. This peace is to "rule" our hearts, or (a more literal translation) "be the referee" in our hearts. When the referee blows his whistle at a football match, the game has to stop, a foul has been committed. When we lose our peace, God's referee in our hearts has blown his whistle! Let us stop immediately, ask God to show us what is wrong, put by faith the sin He shows us under the Blood of Jesus, and then peace will be restored and we shall go on our way with our cups running over. If, however, God does not give us His peace, it will be because we are not really broken. Perhaps we have yet to say "sorry" to somebody else as well as to God. Or perhaps we still feel it is the other person's fault. But if we have lost our peace, it is obvious whose fault it is. We do not lose peace with God over another person's sin, but only over our own. God wants to show us our reactions, and only when we are willing to be cleansed there, will we have His peace.

Oh, what a simple but searching thing it is to be ruled by the peace of God, none other than the Holy Spirit Himself! Former selfish ways, which we never bothered about, are now shown to us and we cannot walk in them without the referee blowing his whistle. Grumbling, bossiness, carelessness, down to the smallest thing are all revealed as sins, when we are prepared to let our days be ruled by the peace of God. Many times a day and over the smallest things we shall have to avail ourselves of the cleansing Blood of Jesus, and we shall find ourselves walking the way of brokenness as never before. But Jesus will be manifested in all His loveliness and grace in that brokenness.

Take the First Step

Many of us, however, have neglected the referee's whistle so often and for so long that we have ceased to hear it. Days follow days and we feel we have little need of cleansing and no occasion of being broken. In that condition we are usually in a worse state than we ever imagine. It will need a great hunger for restored fellowship with God to possess our hearts before we will be willing to cry to God to show us where the Blood of Jesus must be applied. He will show us, to begin with, just one thing and it will be our obedience and brokenness on that one thing that will be the first step into Revival for us.

Re: Brokenness Â– The Beginning Of Revival by Roy Hession - posted by Nellie, on: 2009/3/2 15:09

This Article is very true, Greg.

Thanks for posting it.

God Bless

Nellie

Re: Brokenness Â– The Beginning Of Revival by Roy Hession - posted by clintstone (), on: 2009/3/3 18:45

So very excellent it is , Jesus said that " blessed are they that fall on this Rock and are broken to pieces, but woe to those whom this Rock falls on and grounds to powder" this article is excellent and i am so Glad that God takes time with me and breaks me , and opens me up to Himself and purges me , and refines me to be His habitation.