
Christ Came Down | For the Broken

Rob Rogers December 11, 2022

Introduction

Around this time of year, we celebrate and commemorate the incarnation of Jesus — the reality that God set aside all of His rights and privileges, came down, entered into the human story for a very specific purpose... a specific mission.

Last week we set up the series by looking at Jesus' inaugural sermon Luke 4. Jesus enters the synagogue in Nazareth and reads the prophecy from the Isaiah scroll and says, "This prophecy is about me. I am the Messiah."

Today, we'll talk more about what Christ came to accomplish.

Isaiah 61:1-4

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to bring good news to the poor; He has sent Me to **bind up the brokenhearted**, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; ² to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to **comfort all who mourn**; ³ to grant to those who mourn in Zion— to give them a **beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit**; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified. ⁴ They shall build up the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

If you read Luke 4 in ESV, you won't find this phrase... but it is in the earliest manuscripts of the Isaiah passage, and found in the Septuagint, which is the Greek translation of the New Testament.

There is no mistaking that Christ came to heal the brokenhearted.

Jesus came to set the captives free

Last week we talked about Jesus coming to set the captives free. We talked very practically about what it would be like for *us* to set captives free on the other side of the world.

We're partnering with our friends at Conduit Church, who have pioneered this effort, to see Jesus-loving families that are enslaved in brick kilns in Asia, set free.

- Through misfortune, deception, or coercion, a family in South Asia will wind up with a medical bill they can't afford and be forced to take out a loan at an interest rate they can never earn enough to pay off. Their whole family is forced into slave labor with no way out for their children, or even grandchildren.
- What we have the opportunity to do, through attorneys we have relationship with, is to pay off the debt. It's all documented, signed, and notarized... legally binding and irrevocable. That documentation process is all filmed.

- Then we free the family from slavery, relocate them into a safe community, supported by a network of churches in the region, and set them up with a small business, that based on a skillset that is already present within that family, sewing, farming, raising cattle, etc. So, these families go from slaves to business owners in a weekend.

BUTA and RAFA (*To see the photo, watch the video online.*) This is Buta and Rafa and their children, Muskan, Niro, Sagar. Until this last November 13th, they had been enslaved for 11 years. Last week, I said they were paid \$4/100 bricks... I misspoke, it's \$4/1,000 bricks — and they have to pay rent for the space they're forced to live in at the kiln.

As of November 13th, this family has been set free, connected to a church family, and are running their own business... all for the cost of \$2,260. The average cost for a family, to move them from enslaved and persecuted family to a free business owner is \$2,500.

- There are currently 100 families of believers that have been vetted for freedom.
 - 100% of what is given goes toward setting these families free — there isn't a penny that is taken out for handling fees or administrative costs.

Not counting what you placed in the offering boxes this morning — so far, we've collectively contributed enough funding to set 56 *families* (which is hundreds of people) free!

- And every time a family is freed, we'll be able to show you a picture of the family, of their children, their story, the business they're running. Jesus came to set the captives free. He has freed us — and what Jesus did for us, we get to do for others.

We'll give you the final numbers next week, so if you'd like to give to the **FREEDOM FUND...**

- If you're writing a check, drop your offering in the offering boxes that are near the entrances all around the campus. Or you can give to this effort, online, by text. Be sure to put the words "Freedom Fund" with your gift. The goal is obedience to Jesus. Listen to the Lord, and simply ask, "*Lord, what would you have me bring, so that a persecuted and enslaved Jesus loving family on the other side of the world, without freedom, could gain it?*"
- For all of you that have already sacrificed and given... thank you.

Giving hope

We are not only freeing these families from slavery — **but we're giving them hope** — hope for a better life, a better future for their children, and grandchildren.

While no one in this room knows what it's like to live quite like this — we *do know* what it's like to lose hope... to have our hearts broken, shattered, disappointed... to have our spirit utterly crushed by circumstances we couldn't foresee or imagine. It's like a glass being shattered with hundreds of broken pieces.

This time of year can be especially difficult if you've been there, or maybe you're there now.

Proverbs 13:12

Hope deferred makes the heart sick...

The reality is we've all had moments where our hope has been taken from us... through disappointment, loss of a relationship, the death of a loved one, even the wounding from our own sinfulness that seems to never be fully healed.

What I want to do today is — as we're giving hope to others — I want to encourage you to hope again... to believe again... to invite God to heal your heart where it's been wounded... to heal your spirit if it's been crushed.

We're going to talk about the different types of brokenness. What I invite you to do, is to allow the Holy Spirit to reveal in you the areas of brokenness that He wants to heal today.

Five types of brokenness

1. **Physical** – This might be anything from something as simple as not eating healthily and not getting enough sleep at night... to chronic fatigue... illness, chronic pain... maybe a life-altering medical diagnosis.
 - Over time all of these things can wear you down... can drain you of your hope... rob you of your motivation for life... and under the weight of physical brokenness, it can utterly crush your spirit.
 - It can cause you to lose motivation to try again, to even struggle to get up in the morning... to try to live life, to love, to bless others... to use the time you've been given.

Proverbs 18:14

A man's spirit will endure sickness, but a **crushed spirit who can bear?**

- *Have you ever noticed how there are some people that no matter what physical challenges they face in life, they seem to just be able to push through? It never seems to slow them down, or stop them from living... it doesn't seem to rob them of their joy... their engagement in relationships and life.*

Why is that? How is that possible? Even though their body is suffering... their spirit isn't crushed... there is something beyond them, driving them, motivating them, strengthening them.

This is why Paul writes...

2 Corinthians 4:16

So we do not lose **heart**. Though our **outer self** is wasting away, our **inner self** is being renewed day by day.

This is why in all of Paul's prayers for the church, not one single time does he pray for easier circumstances! Not once! **What does He pray?**

- **Ephesians 3:16**
...that according to the riches of His glory He may grant you to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in your inner being.

Paul prays for strengthening of your spirit. Healing of your heart... so that *whether you ever experience physical healing or not*, you're able to endure, persevere, overcome the obstacles, no matter how big they seem. **No one can endure a crushed spirit, a broken heart... but a healed heart perseveres.**

- 2. Mental/Emotional** – There can be, and often is, overlap in all of these categories... for example... depression, grief, or anxiety... would be a form of emotional brokenness, but it could be brought on by a number of factors... it could be physiological... but also could be a result of circumstance... or the season you're in... it might be lifelong struggle, or temporary.

Proverbs 12:25

Anxiety in a man's heart weighs him down, but a good word makes him glad.

This is talking about the link between anxiety, and depression... hyper engagement – worry, fear, panic... and detachment, isolation... being weighed down... depressed.

Psalm 42:5

Why are you cast down, O my soul? And *why* are you disquieted within me?

- Why are you cast down? Crushed, overwhelmed, despondent? This is talking about depression.
- And the word *disquieted* means to be in great commotion... it's speaking of anxiety.

Then there are times in life where we have no explanation for being downcast and disquieted...

- Sometimes you're doing everything right... you're practicing your spiritual disciplines, you're in the Word, and you're with God, you're working through it... *and for whatever reason this stuff just doesn't seem to let go.*

Both the good and bad news today is you're in good company... Jeremiah, Moses, King David, Jonah, Elijah, the Apostle Paul.

Often these challenges are incredibly complex. Our church counseling team has put together some resources designed to help you or someone you know navigate some of the most complex issues in our day. GraceChapel.net/resource-center/

There's Scripture addressing these issues, books we HIGHLY recommend, as well resources for biblical counseling. While we believe God can, and at times does heal, these conditions... we also want to acknowledge that it doesn't always just disappear in an instant... so we want to help where we can. Please leverage the resources, and let us know how we can help.

- 3. Relational** - For some of us, our brokenness, has come through other people...

- Betrayal
- Infidelity
- Some form of rejection... the loss of romance, or the loss of friendships...
- The pain of divorce... maybe your own, or your parents or children...
- There's abuse... physical, sexual abuse... which comes with its own incredibly complex and wildly disorienting forms of trauma...
- Emotional... or verbal abuse, maybe words spoken over you by someone you've looked up to – parent, mentor, teacher, maybe even a pastor – that you've just taken on as a part of who you are... you've accepted it as part of your identity.

Psalm 41: 9

Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me.

In Genesis 37 Joseph's brothers betray him, sell him into slavery, stage his death, and lie to their father.

Psalm 22:14

I am poured out like water, And all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It has melted within Me.

4. **Moral** – For others of us, the brokenness we’re walking through isn’t necessarily something that’s happened to us, but something that we’ve done.
- Harsh words spoken to our spouse, our children, a parent, a friend, loved one, that we WISH we could take back...
 - Or something we’ve done or participated in that we’re ashamed of... Our conscience is heavy.

PERSONAL: Having been an addict... I became someone I didn’t even recognize. *That’s the thing about sin, “It takes you farther than you ever wanted to go and keeps you longer than you ever wanted to stay.”* You wake up one day realizing you have no idea how to get out.

Romans 7:15, 24

For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

- Even Paul knows!!!

God says...

Leviticus 26:17

if you disobey me... *[living in habitual sin]* “you shall flee when none pursues you.”

Look how nuanced this is. It doesn’t say you flee when *someone* pursues; you flee when *no one* pursues. Even when no one is doing anything against you... because you have a guilt-ridden conscience... the guilt just saturates and generalizes everything else... and is projected on everyone else. Someone criticizes you with the gentlest, kindhearted critique, and you feel assaulted, attacked. You are morally broken. You make a little mistake, and you can’t own it because you feel like a little mistake makes you a total failure! *You flee when no one pursues...*

Psalm 51:17

The sacrifices of God are a **broken spirit**; a **broken** and **contrite heart**, O God, You will not despise.

There is a brokenheartedness over your own moral brokenness and sin. *If you’ll allow it, that can lead to your healing today... it’s called repentance.* Changing your mind, your belief... the direction you’re heading... and **Christ wants to heal your heart today.**

5. Existential –

PERSONAL: I remember wrestling with this at a young age, “What’s the point of life?” And in the absence of a good answer, I filled in the blanks and thought, “If we’re all here by accident... and it all comes to nothing in the end, Why try? Why work? Why persevere? Why study?”

Ecclesiastes 1:2-4

Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity. ³ What does man gain by all the toil at which he toils under the sun? ⁴ A generation goes, and a generation comes, but the earth remains forever.

The scriptures don’t just deal with one aspect of the human heart... its’ not just physical, or physiological, it’s not just emotional or relational, and it’s not just moral or philosophical. The Bible deals with the WHOLE PERSON.

Proverbs 4:23

Above all else, guard your heart, for **everything you do flows from it.**

Some of you in the room have a broken heart and you've lost all hope that it can be healed. Some of you are working toward healing.

Christ came to heal the brokenhearted

To fully appreciate Tracy's story, watch the video online.

What's so beautiful about Tracy's story... is that even in the midst of the death of her own son... she knows that death doesn't have the final word... that there is an ultimate healing of her own heart coming one day.

Whether healing comes on THIS day, or THAT day, healing is coming EITHER WAY!!

Why? Christ came to heal the brokenhearted... and He will not leave you, He'll never forsake you... His mission is to bind up the wounds of your broken, fragmented heart... to gather you under the shelter of His wings... and to breathe life into your soul.

The beauty of the gospel is that *Christ came down... and He entered into every aspect of the brokenness of the human experience.*

Isaiah 53:3-5

He was **despised** and **rejected** by men, a man of **sorrows** and acquainted with **grief**; and as one from whom men hide their faces, He was **despised**, and we **esteemed Him not**. ⁴ Surely He has borne **our griefs** and carried **our sorrows**; yet we esteemed him **stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted**. ⁵ But He was **pierced** for our transgressions; He was **crushed** for our iniquities; upon Him was the **chastisement** that brought us **peace**, and with **His wounds we are healed**.

This was written 800 years before Jesus Christ entered into the human story. *You want to know how Jesus brings healing to the human heart?*

- He took on our brokenness so that we could be made whole. He was rejected so we could be accepted. He was ripped to shreds on that cross, so that the fragmented pieces of our hearts could be mended back together.

Objection: You don't understand *my* story... You don't understand the pain, the sorrow, the hurt, the disappointment, the self-loathing... the hatred.. the anger... you don't understand.

- **Maybe not. But He does.**

Hebrews 4:15-16

For we do not have a High Priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

If you're afraid to hope again... that maybe... maybe God can heal you , if you're afraid of believing and being disappointed again...

Whether healing comes on this day, or on that day, one way or another, you will be healed one day.

And your healing is for a purpose...

Isaiah 61:2-3

...to **comfort** all who **mourn**; ³ to grant to those who mourn in Zion— to give them a **beautiful headdress** instead of **ashes**, the oil of **gladness** instead of **mourning**, the garment of **praise** instead of a **faint spirit**...

For what purpose?

Isaiah 61:4

They shall **build up the ancient ruins**; they shall **raise up the former devastations**; they shall **repair the ruined cities**, the **devastations of many generations**.

Your healing is for you... but **its' not just for you**. Your family needs you healed. Those closest to you need you healed... we need you healed... our friends in Asia need you healed. As the Lord brings healing to the ruins of your soul... He sends you out on His mission to bring healing to others... to build up the ancient ruins... to repair broken hearts, to give beauty for ashes... gladness for mourning... praise instead of depression.

Don't waste the healing He came to give you.

Discussion Questions

1. Re: Setting the Captives Free — have you taken the time to pray, “*Lord, what would you have me bring, so that a persecuted and enslaved Jesus loving family on the other side of the world, without freedom, could gain it?*”
2. Have you personally experienced Proverbs 13:12 or Proverbs 18:14?
3. Discuss: In all of Paul’s prayers for the churches, not one single time does he pray for easier circumstances. Look at what he prayed in Ephesians 3:16.
4. Take a minute and click on this link to see the resources available to you, and to those you love. GraceChapel.net/resource-center/
5. What *relational* brokenness is part of your life? How are you responding to it?
6. How does the fact that Christ came down and entered into every aspect of the brokenness of our human experience — affect the way that you respond to your own brokenness?
7. What is the purpose of your healing?

NOTES