

# Brokenness: A Key Component

## ◆ Psalm 51:16-17 NIV

16 You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.

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

## ◆ Isaiah 66:1-4 NIV

1 This is what the Lord says: "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. Where is the house you will build for me? Where will my resting place be?

2 Has not my hand made all these things, and so they came into being?" declares the Lord. "This is the one I esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word.

3 But whoever sacrifices a bull is like one who kills a man, and whoever offers a lamb, like one who breaks a dog's neck; whoever makes a grain offering is like one who presents pig's blood, and whoever burns memorial incense, like one who worships an idol. They have chosen their own ways, and their souls delight in their abominations;

4 so I also will choose harsh treatment for them and will bring upon them what they dread. For when I called, no one answered, when I spoke, no one listened. They did evil in my sight and chose what displeases me."

## ◆ 1 Peter 5:5 NIV

Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

## ◆ Nancy Leigh DeMoss states:

Brokenness does not mean, as some think, having a sad, gloomy, downcast countenance--never smiling or laughing. It does not mean always being morbidly introspective. Nor can it be equated with deeply emotional experiences. It is possible to shed buckets full of tears, without ever experiencing a moment of brokenness. Further, brokenness is not the same as being deeply hurt by tragic circumstances. A person may have experienced many deep hurts and tragedies, but never have been broken.

Brokenness is not a feeling; rather, it is a choice, an act of the will. It is not primarily a one-time experience or crisis (though there may be crisis points in the process of brokenness); rather, it is an ongoing, continual lifestyle.

Brokenness is a lifestyle of agreeing with God about the true condition of my heart and life, as He sees it. It is a lifestyle of unconditional, absolute surrender of my will to the will of God--a heart attitude that says, "Yes, Lord!" to whatever God says. Brokenness means the shattering of my self-will, so that the life and Spirit of the Lord Jesus may be released through me. Brokenness is my response of humility and obedience to the conviction of the Word and the Spirit of God. And as the conviction is continuous, so must the brokenness be continuous.

True brokenness has both a vertical and a horizontal dimension: it is demonstrated in a willingness to live with the "roof off " in my relationship with God, and the "walls down" in my relationships with others. (www.LifeAction.org article excerpt "Revival in the Heart: Choosing Brokenness")

## Proud People ...

- ◆ focus on the failures of others.
- ◆ have a critical, fault-finding spirit; look at everyone else's faults with a microscope, but their own with a telescope.
- ◆ are self-righteous; look down on others.
- ◆ have an independent, self-sufficient spirit.
- ◆ have to prove that they are right.
- ◆ claim rights; have a demanding spirit.
- ◆ are self-protective of their time, their rights, and their reputation.
- ◆ desire to be served.
- ◆ desire to be a success.
- ◆ desire self-advancement.
- ◆ have a drive to be recognized and appreciated.
- ◆ have a subconscious feeling, "This ministry/ church is privileged to have me and my gifts;" think of what they can do for God.
- ◆ feel confident in how much they know.
- ◆ are self-conscious.
- ◆ keep others at arms' length.
- ◆ are quick to blame others.

## Broken People ...

- ◆ are overwhelmed with a sense of their own spiritual need.
- ◆ are compassionate; can forgive much because they know how much they have been forgiven.
- ◆ esteem all others better than themselves.
- ◆ have dependent spirit recognize their need for others.
- ◆ are willing to yield the right to be right.
- ◆ yield their rights; have a meek spirit.
- ◆ are self-denying.
- ◆ are motivated to serve others.
- ◆ are motivated to be faithful and to make others a success.
- ◆ desire to promote others.
- ◆ have a sense of their own unworthiness; are thrilled that God would use them at all.
- ◆ have a heart attitude that says, "I don't deserve to have any part in this ministry"; know that they have nothing to offer God except the life of Jesus flowing through their broken lives.
- ◆ are humbled by how very much they have to learn.
- ◆ are not concerned with self at all.
- ◆ are willing to risk getting close to others and to take risks of loving intimately.
- ◆ accept personal responsibility and can see where they are wrong in a situation.

(Adapted from a message by Nancy Leigh DeMoss)  
© Life Action Ministries, P.O. Box 31, Buchanan, MI 49107-0031

## Proud People ... (cont.)

- ◆ are unapproachable or defensive when criticized.
- ◆ are concerned with being respectable, with what others think; work to protect their own image and reputation.
- ◆ find it difficult to share their spiritual need with others.
- ◆ want to be sure that no one finds out when they have sinned; their instinct is to cover up.
- ◆ have a hard time saying, "I was wrong; will you please forgive me?"
- ◆ tend to deal in generalities when confessing sin.
- ◆ are concerned about the consequences of their sin.
- ◆ are remorseful over their sin, sorry that they got found out or caught.
- ◆ wait for the other to come and ask forgiveness when there is a misunderstanding or conflict in a relationship.
- ◆ compare themselves with others and feel worthy of honor.
- ◆ are blind to their true heart condition.
- ◆ don't think they have anything to repent of.
- ◆ don't think they need revival, but are sure that everyone else does.

## Broken People ... (cont.)

- ◆ receive a criticism with a humble, open spirit.
- ◆ are concerned with being real; what matters to them is not what others think but what God knows; are willing to die to their own reputation.
- ◆ are willing to be open and transparent with others as God directs.
- ◆ once broken, don't care who knows or who finds out; are willing to be exposed because they have nothing to lose.
- ◆ are quick to admit failure and to seek forgiveness when necessary.
- ◆ are able to acknowledge specifics when confessing their sin.
- ◆ are grieved over the cause, the root of their sin.
- ◆ are truly, genuinely repentant over their sin, evidenced in the fact that they forsake that sin.
- ◆ take the initiative to be reconciled when there is misunderstanding or conflict in relationships; they race to the cross; they see if they can get there first, no matter how wrong the other may have been.
- ◆ compare themselves to the holiness of God and feel a desperate need for His mercy.
- ◆ walk in the light.
- ◆ realize they have need of a continual heart attitude of repentance.
- ◆ continually sense their need for a fresh encounter with God and for a fresh filling of His Holy Spirit.

(Adapted from a message by Nancy Leigh DeMoss)  
© Life Action Ministries, P.O. Box 31, Buchanan, MI 49107-0031