

Psalm 51 – Moving Forward. Broken & Crushed: Created & Being Renewed

“Broken and crushed.”

How do you move forward when you are broken and crushed?

If a relationship is ended – whether by a friend, or by someone in whom you had an interest, or by a family member –, if it was someone you cared about, you may be feeling *broken and crushed*. And that’s just an awful feeling. | If instead of a relationship, you’ve poured your time into a sport which you love, hour after hour of training and sweat, but then you don’t make the cut for the team, you may feel *heart-broken*. A dream of yours has been *crushed*. | Kids, think of building an intricate sandcastle on the beach, or a ginormous snowman, or a masterpiece Lego creation. And then when you’re just ready to take a picture of it, to be able to remember and hang on to what you did, someone walks up, knocks down, stomps over what you’ve done, and walks away. You are left standing amidst the *broken, crushed* remains. That’s just a terrible thing for someone to do to you. Right?



“Broken and crushed” isn’t normally a description that comes with a good outcome. And moving forward may be tough – it may be hard finding joy, having peace, at least for a time.

But today, today we’re going to talk about just the opposite. “Broken and crushed” is the beginning point, and an ongoing description, of the most excellent outcome: a relationship with God that is set right, where there is peace with God, and an eternity of joy to look forward to with Him.

“A broken and crushed heart” is the description of the believer’s heart here in Psalm 51, vs.17.

How did this happen? How did this come about for you and me? That’s the first question we want to answer and treasure, here on Pentecost. And then, we want to see: And what does this mean? What does this mean for your life – in your life moving forward?

Ok. [See examples mosaics.] What do you see?

Is “broken and crushed” the description you had in mind when you saw these slides? Broken pieces of glass is what makes these up. But did you think *that*? Or now – with looking at what’s been done here – did you think of some description more along the lines of “wow” or “what a work of art” or “beautiful” or “amazing”? In these mosaics...



You see an example where: you can’t get to the work of art until the former item – the starting item – is in pieces, broken.

Have you made the connection of how this relates to our hearts?

God alone sees to the heart of each individual human. And He gives us His verdict of the starting point for each one of us. There was something that need to be broken apart. We each started with a heart of selfishness. A heart set, tuned to self-reliance. A heart that did not know God, and would not come to God. A heart dead in sin. Lost. And if unchanged, a heart that would end up eternally apart from God – condemned to the hell our sin deserves.

Our God had to break apart your heart of pride – and mine.

Bringing this change of heart is something done by God’s law, which smashes like a hammer (Jer 23:29). God’s truth smashes excuses for sin or attempts to minimize sin. And by this God draws us on to see... We’d never have a relationship with Him, if left to ourselves. We’d have to be holy. We aren’t. We have twisted and broken and missed the mark and rebelled against God’s good will. God drives home the truth of His law to our hearts, and

thereby smashes the pride that would have kept us clinging to our denials or our own efforts to fix things. That would never get us to Him – to life with Him.

And then in place of that... God, the Holy Spirit, has to create in you – in me – a heart of repentance for our sin and trust in Him, our Lord, for cleansing & right-ness with Him & peace and life with Him.

- That's all – only – through Jesus.
- Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord – Jesus – will be saved.
- Jesus lived the holy life that we haven't. He lived it for us. Jesus took the punishment for our sin, so that we don't have to face the hell it deserves.

And for you – and I – for whoever has come to know this and trust in Jesus for forgiveness and as our way to heaven, how did this trust come about in us?

“The Spirit gives life,” Jesus said on another occasion. “The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.” John 6:63

This is why in the Nicene Creed we, with Christians the world-round, confess: “We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life.”

In Psalm 51 David prayed: “Create in me a pure heart, O God... and do not take your Holy Spirit from me.”

There are other words in the Old Testament used for when people make something, do something. But the Hebrew word “create” here is never used in the Bible of people making something. It is used elsewhere in the Bible. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” Who else could do that? Only God has the power.

And between Genesis 1:1 and Psalm 51, and in chapters after also, whenever this word is used, it's always of God making/doing something, which no one else could. And so, the origin is only God.

- 2 Corinthians makes the connection between creation and the creating work of the Holy Spirit taught in Psalm 51: “God who said let light shine out of darkness made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge ... of Christ” – our Promised Savior.

“Create in me a clean heart, O God. And do not take your Holy Spirit from me.”

Here is a huge point of doctrine that we want to guard and treasure. Today, Pentecost, we're especially focused on this work of the Holy Spirit. How is the Holy Christian Church built? It grows in number - 1 individual at a time – as the Holy Spirit brings hearts to repentance and to trust in Jesus.

This is the result we celebrate from that first Pentecost. The speaking in other languages, which the Holy Spirit gave the disciples the ability to do, was only a tool for the purpose/goal of getting to the outcome of: Human hearts brought to repentance for sin and trust in Jesus to save. This is what the Holy Spirit is doing on a daily basis still.

That's the answer to how we, who believe in Jesus, came to trust in Him.

Now what about the Holy Spirit's work in your life – for your life moving forward?

Acts ch.2 has more than the event where thousands of individuals were brought to faith in Jesus. Significantly we hear by the end of the chapter the description of how they were – day after day – devoting time and attention to hearing God's Word, gathering to be fed spiritually with the gospel.

Let's take home the importance of this.

Psalm 51 describes renewing of spirit, and restoring, sustaining of a willing spirit. That's all talking about our faith: the strengthening and sustaining of faith. And how does that happen? Through the Holy Spirit. And how does the Holy Spirit accomplish this? Through the Word, through the good news of Jesus' love for us.

"A broken and crushed heart, O God, you will not despise." That's the ongoing description of the heart of a Christian. Why that description? It's a description of a heart of repentance. It points you and I, in humility, to turn to God's Word every day, because this is the place – these are the words – the Holy Spirit uses to show us our sin, lead us to confess and keep us renewed in our Christian faith.

Think of the spiritual forces that constantly work against our faith. And realize a need for a force to counter and keep us in our faith. What will that force be, where will it come from? From the Holy Spirit speaking truth into our hearts, which He does through the Word.

Picture your heart. It's resting on Jesus. But we must realize the forces daily at play pulling at our heart of faith. Picture it like a magnet hovering around metal. What is the danger, the potential, when the magnet comes near? You know it'll take a countering force that is stronger to keep the object from shifting, from being pulled off center, where it is resting.

So like the believers in Acts ch.2, devote time – day by day – to hearing God's Word. And make the prayer of Psalm 51 your own:

Create in me a pure heart, O God.
Renew an unwavering spirit within me.
¹¹ Do not cast me from your presence.
Do not take your Holy Spirit from me.
¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation.
Sustain me with a willing spirit.