

HEALING HEARTS

The article for the April newsletter was focused on healing. I initially intended for May's article to focus on the need to remain on our journey until the end, no matter what. I had planned to write about the apostle Paul and his journey. He spoke of running the race. For whatever reason, that article never materialized. My attempts to resurrect that topic for this month's article were of no avail. The clear message to me is that for every thing there is a season. I missed the season for that article. So I did what I suggest to others. I took several deep breathes, reflected, and listened.

I got into the car to make a quick trip to the store. I popped in a CD. It was Michael W. Smith's Healing Rain. The second track on the CD is the song Healing Rain. As I listened to it the Holy Spirit came over me so strongly that I began to weep. I have always believed that this is truly an anointed song. It has spoken to me for a number of years. Michael repeats over and over again "healing rain is coming down, healing rain is coming down, don't be afraid, don't be afraid of healing rain".

On a cognitive level, why would someone be afraid of healing? Healing is good. Right? I recently talked with an elderly person who had a broken elbow. She had been experiencing significant pain for several months. She went to the hospital to have an operation. After she got there she could not follow through with it. She told me it was too scary. Her fear of going through the healing process kept her from healing. This is an example of physical healing. Even with all the medical breakthroughs of pain relief and minimally invasive procedures, her fear paralyzed her. I believe that the fear of emotional healing is even greater. Emotional healing is a matter of the heart. Broken hearts are difficult to mend. The brokenness goes deep. Many times the hurt is repeated and has left scars. The brokenness is also associated with tremendous fear and trauma. As Jesus ascended to Heaven and he promised to send a "counselor" to help us in our time of need, John 16:7-8. That is the good news.

What do we do with a broken heart? We have to stay on our healing journey. Even if we are not completely healed, the apostle Paul says to finish the race. 2 Timothy 4:7. We keep our eyes focused on Jesus. The journey is very difficult much of the time. Just like the journey of Jesus. We become weary and want out. We don't want to do this anymore. Our lives are full of desperation. It was no different for the dead daughter of Jairus. "Immediately the girl stood up and walked around. At this they were completely astonished." Mark 5:42. It was no different for the woman who had an issue of blood. "Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering." Matthew 9:18. All hope was gone. Death seemed better than life. Our brokenness comes in many forms. There is disappointment that can crush all hope. There is betrayal which leaves behind bitterness and resentment. Our plans fail and take away everything that we anticipated. Sin mars a broken world. There is child abuse and neglect, rape, addictions, and assault. Bad things happen to good people.

God has made promises to the brokenhearted. God is near those who have broken hearts. Psalm 34:18. The Holy Spirit (the Comforter) is always with us. Jesus is always with us. God sent two friends to sit with Job. Sometimes our friends, in their humanness, fail us. Our pain is too great for them. Not for God. He sees our hurt. He cares and meets us where we are. Psalm

51:17. God heals problems. Psalm 147:3. Jesus publically proclaimed in his ministry the following from Isaiah 61:1-2 (NIV) "The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn,".

God is with us on our healing journey. He is very aware of our every hurt. He cares about our every disappointment. He cares about our every struggle. Psalm 33:18 "But the eyes of the LORD are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love,". He is a father who understands. He is a father who loves. God provides for us a safe place. A place where the fear of healing will not drive us away. We can receive the "healing rain". Psalm 57:1 (NIV) "Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me, for in you my soul takes refuge. I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings until the disaster has passed." Psalm 23 - He restores my soul. God mends broken hearts. God mends broken dreams.

God provides us with counsel for the journey. John 14:1-3 (NIV) "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am." "Healing rain" comes in different forms. God has a plan for your journey. Seek counsel of others of like spirit and like mindedness. Find the safe place God has for you while here on Earth. God loves you. He will put people in your life to provide a safe environment so you can heal. God cares for us as a father cares for his children.

I purposely included a lot of scriptures for your reference. Choose these or others that speak to your heart. Use them to stand on when the journey gets overwhelming. I encourage you to read the entire fifth chapter of Mark. It is very encouraging and will strengthen your faith. I believe that a significant part of our healing comes from telling our story. Every where Jesus went he told a story. His stories were usually parables. He also spoke the word of God. Each scar you have has a story. That story can help others heal. Be brave and tell your story.

In Christ's love,

Ken Thom LPE