

HOW TO HEAL A BROKEN HEART
Don't Worry - Be Happy!
Part 2 of 8
Rick Warren

Matthew 5:4 "Happy are those who mourn, for they will be comforted."

HOW TO EXPERIENCE GOD'S COMFORT

1. Realize _____

"The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit."
Psalm 34:18

Things I Need to Remember

* God is _____

"You (God) keep a close watch on all my paths." Job 13:27

* God _____

"The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in Him . . .
(Nahum 1:7)

* God _____

"Let us approach (God) with confidence, so we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need." Hebrews 4:16

2. Realize _____

How?

I must stop focusing on _____ and start focusing on _____.

"... Do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing!" (says the Lord) Isaiah 43:18

"Dear friends, never venge yourselves. Leave that to God, for He has said He will repay those who deserve it." Rom 12:19 (LB)

Psalm 10 - Victim's Psalm

3. Rely on _____

Three "Comforters":

* God's _____

"I am completely discouraged ... Revive me by your Word. ...Your Word has been my comfort." Ps. 119:25, 52 (LB)

* God's _____

"... The God of all comfort comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort others with the comfort we ourselves have received from God." 2 Cor. 1:3-4

* God's _____

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy ... that by the power of the Holy Spirit, your whole life and outlook may be radiant with hope." Rom 15:13 (Ph)

Revelation 21:4

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We're in a series on the Eight Keys to Happiness that Jesus gave. We said last week that the word "blessed" means "happy". Today we're going to look at how to heal a broken heart. Jesus teaches how to be happy in spite of our circumstances.

How many of you can remember your first broken heart? Mine was in 4th grade and her name was Pam. I will never forgive her! She dumped me. Puppy love? It was real for the puppy! I was later to learn that puppy love leads to a dog's life!

Today we're going to have a major world premier. I'm going to read to you the first reading of my wife, Kay's, seventh grade diary. All of the names have been changed to protect the guilty. I did get her permission. This is evidence of the stability of our marriage. "August 14th. Dear Diary, I got my first kiss today. Gosh, I waited long enough!" Three days later, "August 17th. Bill T. has kissed me six times since Wednesday. Wow! I don't know if I like him, though. He's moving today. I kind of miss him." "Dear Diary, tonight was the Love In. I could have bawled because Bobby brought Patty S. I've always hated her." "Today is my birthday. Tom makes me sick." "April 16th. Diary, I'm in love again. This time with Terry Johnson. He sat behind me tonight. I'm not afraid to kiss him. I'll kiss him good!" "Dear Diary, Everybody jumps on me because of my grades. That spaz Miss Ragsdale!" "I saw Terry tonight, Whee! He likes Mary. I think I'll cry." "Darn Debbie. She has Carrie upset. She likes Terry. I think I'll kill her!" "I think David likes me again. I hope not. Sheila would kill me." "I can't wait until tomorrow. It will be a blast. You know who is coming over." "Dear Diary, Darn! Darn! Darn! He didn't come!"

Don't you wish all the heartbreaks were as easy as 7th grade? The fact is, as you grow older, life is tough and there are a lot worse heartbreaks than 7th grade.

The Bible never tries to explain suffering. But what it does teach us is how to handle it. Jesus said in Matthew 5:4 "*Happy are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.*" How can I be happy after a loss, after a broken heart? By receiving the comfort of God.

Today I want to tell you how you experience the comfort of God.

1. Realize that God is with me.

When we're hurting we forget where God is. We think He seems distant or that He doesn't care. But the fact is He's there. Psalm 34:18 "*The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.*" God is with you in your pain.

You need to remember three things when you're in pain:

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1) God is aware.

Job says, *"You keep a close watch on all my paths."* God is watching over you. Nothing escapes His eye. The Bible says your very tears, every tear you've cried is numbered. Some of you say, "Nobody knows what I'm going through." God knows. God cares.

2) God cares.

"The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in Him." We have a sympathetic heavenly Father who really cares. Your pain matters to God. It really does. You can talk to Him about your hurt.

3) God wants to help you out.

"Let us approach God with confidence, so we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need." God not only offers us awareness, He offers us assistance. God not only cares about your hurt, He wants to help you with your hurt. He doesn't just write you a note, "I'm thinking of you in this time." The word "comfort" comes from the word "confortus" -- Old English "with strength". God wants to strengthen you and give you comfort.

Some people grow through their pain and some people get stuck in their pain. Some people go on through their hurt and some get stuck in their hurt and never get past it. Why? Because they never take the second step. Step one, realize that God is with me. He cares, He's aware, He wants to help me. If I just said that -- that God is with you in your pain -- that would be enough. But how do you get on out of the pain and get on with life?

2. Release the hurt.

Let it go. How? I must stop focusing on what's lost and start focusing on what's left. Isaiah 43:18 *"Do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing"* (says the Lord). God says, your past is past; let it go! It can't hurt you any more. Some of you are letting people from your past continue to hurt you. That dumb! They can't hurt you unless you let them. That's a choice. Let it go! I realize God is with me and I release the past.

Here are the options what you can do with your hurt:

1) **Repress it.** Push it down, swallow it. If you swallow your feeling your stomach keeps score. If you pretend it doesn't exist and hold it in -- that's unhealthy. I meet walking wounded all of the time because they've never let go of their hurt. They keep repressing it.

2) **Rehearse it.** They go over and over it in their mind. They torture themselves by thinking about it over and over. God says, Don't dwell on the past. Don't let it consume your thoughts. There's a big difference between mourning and moaning. Mourning is legitimate grief. Jesus said, *"Blessed are those who mourn, I will comfort them."* God wants to comfort you in your grief,

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your heartache. There's a difference between mourning and moaning. Moaning is "Oh, poor me! Poor me!" And you want to keep a hold of it. You're having a pity party.

God says you don't repress it and you don't rehearse it.

3) Resent it. Don't resent it. When somebody has hurt us, when the pain is caused by somebody else, we fantasize about how we can get back at that person in the same way they got us or got somebody that we love. This week they executed Ted Bundy and if anyone deserved it he did. But outside there was a party, laughing and shouting, "Burn, Bundy, burn!" Those people, full of resentment will pay for it longer than he will. Resentment eats you up. It kills you inside. It's like cancer; it eats you alive and destroys us.

4) Release it. Release the hurt to God. What does that mean? Romans 12:19 (LB) "*Dear friends, never avenge yourselves. Leave that to God, for He has said HE will repay those who deserve it.*" Aren't you glad that verse is in the Bible? If you want to let go of your hurt, you must let God settle the score. If somebody's hurt you, let God handle it. Who do you think could do a better job at getting even? The hurts that hurt the most are those that are out of our control. Someone did something to us that we couldn't control and they hurt us and it's out of our control. But it's not out of God's control. Give it to God.

Never forget that God is aware of everything people do to you. Everything. The Bible says He's keeping a record. Read Psalm 10, the Victims Psalm "Lord there's those guys out there and they're hurting people and they're hurting the helpless and they're taking advantage of others. They say, 'What the hey, God's not watching, I can do whatever I want to and get away with it.' They're bowling people over and destroying lives and then saying God doesn't care, God doesn't see it." But in Psalm 10:14 it says, "*But You, O God, do see the hurt, the grief and the pain and you will call that person into judgement and avenge the helpless and the victims.*" Leave it in God's hands and let God be God and fight your battles. He can do a better job of it than you can.

What do you do with the anger inside? When we lose something or something is taken away from us we're angry at the person who took it away. What do I do with that anger? Turn it into constructive use. Use that energy to help other people. A good example of that is M.A.D.D. -- Mothers Against Drunk Driving. Angry, and they had every right to be angry, because children, husbands or whatever were killed by a drunk driver. But they channeled that anger in a right way to try to reduce the number of drunk drivers on the road. That's a legitimate use of anger. If you're mourning, in grief, hurting, realize that God is with you. He's close to the brokenhearted. If you're in mourning today, if you're hurting today, God has never been closer to you. Realize that He is aware, He cares and He wants to help you. Give Him the hurt. Release it to Him. Don't dwell on the past, don't resent it and don't rehearse it and don't repress it. Release it to God. Let Him have it.

3. Rely on God's Resources

Rely on God's resources to comfort you. "*Blessed are those who mourn for they will be comforted.*" How do I be happy in the midst of trial and tragedy? Receive God's comfort. God uses three things to comfort us. It's amazing what some people try to be comforted by. Some

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people take pills. Some people get drunk. Some people try affairs. Some people watch TV all the time. Some people read novels, fantasize in novels. Some people sleep all the time. All trying to get rid of all the pain in their life.

God says, Don't do those things. They are just quick fixes, they don't last. What are the comforters that God uses?

1) God's Word. Fill your mind with Scripture. David said in Ps. 119:25, 52 *"I am completely discouraged. ... Revive me by Your Word. Your Word has been my comfort."* Read through the book of Psalms and highlight all the verses that comfort you. Then you will have them in those times of trouble to read what God says to you. Psalms was written to comfort us. There are over 7000 promises in this Bible. Underline all the promises so you'll know where they are. And claim them. I know that in a crowd this size there's a lot of hidden hurt. Behind our pretty faces is a lot of pain. You come saying, "Does God have a Word for me?" The answer is "Yes, He does have a word for you. The word is, your pain matters to God." He sees it, He understands it, He feels it. He'll help you in that frustration, that pain, that hurt. Look to God's word and become a student of this book.

2) God's People. We need each other. We were not made to be isolated from each other. There is no such thing as a Lone Ranger Christian. We need each other to make it. If you don't have any family we are your family. This church is a family. That's what God meant the church to be. You need to be in a family. You need to be in a small group so you can have those people to encourage you in tough times and be there. Can you imagine being part of a family, where, every Sunday, you ate together for a meal and immediately left? And you never even stop to find out the names of your brothers and sisters.

2 Cor 1:3-4 *"The God of all comfort comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort others with the comfort we ourselves have received from God."* If you're hurting today, you are not alone in your hurt. You think your problem is unique. that is not true. No matter what problem you have it is not unique. Hundreds, thousands, maybe millions of people over the history of humanity have had the very same problem you have right now. The chance is that in a crowd this side there are many other people here in this room who have already gone through what you're going through right now. You just need to open up and share where you're hurting so they can be with you and help you out. That's the value of a small group. You have heart to heart and face to face conversations. When somebody says, "I'm having a tough time with my teenagers, " others say, "We have too. We've been there." For your own sake, you need to find a church family. Don't just be a spectator; be a participator. Meet some people so that when you go through the crises of life there are people there to help you.

If you're not in pain, what does this verse say? Can you remember that pain you went through months ago, or years ago? If you can, you have an obligation to help other people through the same hurt you've gone through. God allows us to go through problems, comforts us, so we can turn around and comfort other people with the same comfort we've received. You don't know all the lessons you learned from it? People in pain don't need advice. They just need someone to say, "I understand. I know what it's like to have a child die. I know what it's like to go through a divorce. I know what it's like to loose your job overnight. I know what it's like to miss a goal, a

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dream." God never wastes a hurt. If you have had a problem in your life that you have gone through, you have an obligation to other people to help them through it too. That's your ministry. God wants to use the hurts you've had in your life to encourage others. Whether you've learned anything or not, just the very fact that you can say, "I understand. I know where you're coming from. I remember the loneliness. I remember the pain. I remember the rejection. I remember what it felt like to be brought up in the home of alcoholic parents. I know what it's like to be brought up where my mom walked out the door and never came back. I know what it's like." Setting in this very room, there are other people going through that very experience right now. They need your comfort. They need your help.

3) God's Spirit is our comfort. This is the greatest comfort of all. God himself wants to be your friend. Two thousand years ago, Jesus walked around in a body here on earth and said to His disciples, "I'm going to go back to heaven but when I go, I'm going to come back to earth in another form, in the form of a Spirit, so I can be with you and in you." That's the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ coming in another form. He called the Holy Spirit the Comforter. One of the jobs of the Holy Spirit is to comfort us. When I invited Jesus Christ into my life I said, I commit myself to You. I want to get to know You better. I'm not talking about religion. You may be Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, whatever. I'm talking about relationship. Jesus put His spirit in my life. I don't always feel it all the time, but it strengthens me to make it through the tough times in life. It helps me out. The Holy Spirit comes into your life, not to make you some kind of religious fanatic, not to scare you, not to turn you into some kind of an oddball, but to comfort you and help you become what God wants you to become. You don't have to be afraid of that. I didn't feel any different when I made the commitment. But I have noticed the results over the years in my life. When I didn't think I could make it anymore. You can have that same power in your life. He wants to live in you. He wants to be your friend. He wants to have a relationship to you so that when the tough tragedies of life come you have some inner strength.

Romans 15:13 (Phillips translation) *"May the God of hope fill you with all joy ... that by the power of the Holy Spirit, your whole life and outlook may be radiant with hope."* When God puts His spirit in your life, your whole life and outlook may be radiant with hope. And that's what you need, something to hope in.

As a pastor, I've walked with a lot of people through a lot of grief. Psychologists see emotional pain, doctors see the physical pain, bankers and financial counselors see the financial pain, pastors see it all. I deal with people every day in pain. Financial pain, relational pain, physical pain, emotional pain, marriage pain, parenting pain. I see it all. The test of a man's faith is at the funeral. How does he handle it? It breaks my heart to see at a funeral, where nobody there was a believer, and they had no hope and nothing to comfort them. There is nothing more pathetic than being at a funeral and seeing people try to cheer themselves up with nothing. No hope.

The Bible says when Jesus Christ comes into our life, we have a hope. Revelation 21:4 says that someday in heaven for believers there will be a place of no pain, no more sorrow, no more suffering, no more grief, no anger, no more resentment, no more victims. I'm looking forward to that. I'm not trying to scare you into heaven. I invite you to invite Jesus Christ into your life, not because you're going to die tonight, because you're probably not going to. But because you've got to live tomorrow. Between today and the time you do die whenever that may be, you will

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have to face some major tragedies in life. If you don't believe so, you're just kidding yourself. You will face major tragedies in your life. The question is what are you going to have to hold onto when that comes? What is going to motivate you to get up, get out of bed and go on when your whole world ends because of the death of a loved one, a major crisis or tragedy? What is going to give you hope? I see people facing tragedies and falling apart and I think, "How senseless! When God says, I'm aware, I care, I want to help you out, to be your friend. I will strengthen you and help you." God will help you if you let Him.

Some of you are a short way away from collapse. You came in here today and you're hurting and it's just about all you can do to hold the tears back. I want to say to you, God cares and your pain matters to God. He is aware of the frustration in your life. He is aware of the hurt, the frustration, the guilt, the anger, the resentment, the fear, the depression. He says, I want to help you out. *"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."* Comfort is available. Not in pills, drinking, affairs, movies, books, whatever, but in God, in Himself. If you will turn to Him you will make it through the pain.

I want to invite you to make three commitments.

1. I first invite you to open up your life to Jesus Christ's Spirit. Just say, "Jesus Christ, put Your Spirit in my life. I don't understand it all. I don't know what it all means. But I realize I'm not making it on my own power. I need God in my life. Jesus Christ, put Your spirit in my life and give me the strength I need to be the person You want me to be and to help me through this pain. Or the pain that may come this next week, or next month, or next year." Open up your life to Jesus Christ and say Yes.

When you go down in a submarine they pressurize the cabin. The pressure on the outside of the cabin would implode the submarine if they didn't equalize with pressure on the inside. When you're going through the pain, the only way to equalize the pressure put on you from the outside, is to be filled with God's Spirit on the inside. That equalizes the pressure so you don't cave in, in a crisis.

2. Find a church family. You're welcome here but I'm not trying to make a pitch for this church. You need to find a church where you can say, "That's my family. That's where I feel comfortable. I'm not going to just be a spectator. I'll be a participator. I'm going to join and get to know some people." If you don't get to know your church family, who's going to be there in your crisis? Who's going to hang around you if you don't get with some people and let them know you -- you help them and they help you?

3. I challenge you to give your life away. Realize that if God has helped you in a crisis He wants you to share that with other people. If you've had kids that have gone off the deep end, open up and let people know about it, because everybody else has kids and some of them may go off the deep end and they need somebody who knows their pain. If you've gone through a divorce or had a problem with alcohol or you've gone through a failure at work or you've been through a major problem in life and lost a loved one, let that become a ministry in your life encouraging others.

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I can sense the pain in some of your lives. I want you to know that God cares. The Bible says that He has seen everything that's ever taken place in your life. He has hurt when you've hurt. Some of the things that have happened in life, we're never going to get the explanation for. Life is not fair. God's will is not always done. That's why we're to pray for it to be done. We have a choice and when people make bad choices sometimes innocent people get hurt. The Bible does tell us how to handle the hurt. Would you, right now, open your life to Jesus Christ? Maybe you've never done it before. You may be a religious person. You may never have been to church in your life. Say Yes to Jesus Christ. You can say it in your mind, you don't have to say it aloud. God hears. He knows your thoughts, the very thoughts going across your mind right now. He loves you. Say, "Yes, Jesus Christ. I need Your help, Your hope, Your healing in my life. Would You put Your power in me. Would You come into my life? I don't understand it all but I want You to be Number one and call the shots, to be the Lord of my life, to be the manager. God, I've held on to that hurt for so long, would You help me to let go of it so I can get on with the future? I want to stop repressing, rehearsing and resenting and I just want to release it today. I want to stop focusing on what I've lost and start focusing on what's left. Jesus Christ, I give my life to You."

Would you take a second step? Would you say in your heart, "Jesus Christ, today I'm going to find a family, a spiritual family, I can be a part of and join that church, that family. Saddleback or somewhere else, I'll get to know some people, some groups, there are people there who care about me and will support me and be there. And I can help others." Would you make that commitment?

And would you make the final commitment? "God, I want You to use the hurt that I've gone through to help other people. The difficulties, the sins, the dumb things I've done I know You can use. Those things I wish had never happened. God, somehow use me to be an encouragement to others. Let that be my ministry." Would you pray that?

Heavenly Father, I'm so thankful for Your word that it comforts us in our sorrows and life is not always fun and great, but You are always great. We don't know what the next week holds but we know, with You in our lives, we have the strength to be radiant with hope. I know today many are opening their lives to You for the very first time and they're sensing Your presence in their lives. Help them not to fear that but to realize how much You love them. Surround them with Your arms of love and let this be a turning point in their life today. In Jesus' name. Amen.