

Brokenness and Surrender (Freedom from Pride and Striving)

For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased with burnt offering.
The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise. Psalm 51:16-17

What does brokenness mean to you? Most people struggle with the word “brokenness,” yet we have many descriptive ways to communicate it: hot mess, train wreck, disaster, etc. Brokenness is not God trying to break you. It also is not a portrayal of a broken life. God desires to build you up and give you the inheritance of living by the Spirit.

Brokenness is discovering our need for a power greater than ourselves to experience lasting healing, freedom, and victory. God uses every circumstance to reveal our insufficiency, which leads to giving up all confidence in ourselves so that we live from Christ’s sufficiency.

Pride is Confidence in Self-Sufficiency

Uzziah’s [who became the king of Jerusalem at age sixteen] fame spread afar, for he was marvelously helped [by the Lord] until he *was* strong. (16) But when he became strong, his heart was so proud that he acted corruptly, and he was unfaithful to the LORD his God, for he entered the temple of the LORD to burn incense on the altar of incense (20) made leprous on his forehead (21) until the day of his death. 2 Chronicles 26:15-21

1. What was the downfall of Uzziah? Does God want us to be strong? Why or why not?
2. Paul and Peter experienced brokenness leading to their surrender? (Philippians 3:4-11 and John 13:38; 18:25, 27)
3. Check one statement on each line below to locate areas for growth.

Evidence of Brokenness (Humility)

- I am willing to be rejected or hurt again.
- I am transparent and willing to share weaknesses/failures.
- I am real—willing to share current struggles.
- I recognize that my adequacy and sufficiency are in Christ.
- I trust God with the outcome of my circumstances.
- I am obeying God.
- I recognize the power of weakness.
- I am willing to let others receive the credit.
- I am willing to be out of control.
- I am willing to be misunderstood.
- I am willing to live FROM God’s resources.
- I am overwhelmed by my own spiritual needs.
- I think the best of others.
- I am willing to yield the right to be right.
- I am humbled by how very much I have to learn.
- I am not preoccupied with what others think of me.
- I rely on Christ in me to lead and empower me.
- I am dependent on God’s guidance.
- I am willing to risk being hurt in relationships.
- I admit my faults and take responsibility.
- I am willing to overlook an offense.

Evidence of Pride (Self-Reliance)

- Retaliate or avoid those who hurt you
- Hide, deny, or excuse weaknesses/failure
- Concerned with my reputation
- Trust in your abilities, gifts, and talents
- Self-promoting or self-protective
- Obey as it suits you
- Trust your determination and willpower
- Demand recognition and appreciation
- Must be in control
- Must explain until others see your side
- Serving and working FOR God
- Focus on the failures/weaknesses of others
- Critical and contemptuous of others
- Argumentative and arrogant
- Not teachable; defensive
- Promoting or protecting your reputation
- Strive in your strength to achieve success
- Self-reliant; confident in your knowledge
- Unforgiving, vengeful, avoid relationships
- Hard to say I’m wrong; forgive me
- Demand others repent; ask forgiveness

Have This Attitude (Freedom from Pride)

Read and discuss Philippians 2:5-9 and these verses.

1. God performed through [Jesus] in your midst. Acts 2:22
2. The Spirit descended and remained upon Him. John 1:33
3. Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, led around by the Spirit in the wilderness. Luke 4:1
4. One day the power of the Lord was *present* for Him to perform healing. Luke 5:17
5. I say to you; the Son can do nothing of Himself. John 5:19
6. I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. John 14:10
7. And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. 2 Corinthians 12:9

Jesus Laid Aside All His Rights. Have you?

- My right to my time or timing
- My right to entertainment options
- My right to friendships and the places I go
- My right to be comfortable
- My right to be right
- My right to possessions or finances
- My right to a good reputation
- My right to be loved/accepted/respected
- My right to be successful/always look good
- My right to have pleasant circumstances
- My right to beauty or strength
- My right to be heard/understood
- My right to take up an offense/defend self
- My right to expect others to meet my needs
- My right to my methods or preferences
- My right to know what God is doing
- _____

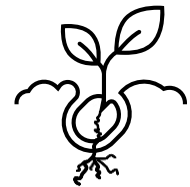
Humble Yourself (Freedom from Striving)

But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE."
Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. James 4:6-7

We struggle with the word surrender because we like to be in control. Conflict and frustration are always related to trying to control outcomes, events, people, and ourselves. This does not mean we surrender to defeat or passivity. We must surrender our flesh patterns to live by the Spirit.

Surrender is the choice to give up all hope and confidence in the flesh, my abilities, my talents, my resources, my rights, and everything and everybody else to meet my needs. Surrender is trusting God for our peace, joy, godly attitudes, and actions in every circumstance and relationship, regardless of how trying, overwhelming, unfair, or seemingly impossible. **Surrendering is trusting God to do what He has promised in and through us.** Since we cannot attain victory by force of will, intellect, and relentless striving, the Lord must teach us that surrendering our self-effort is the sincerest act of faith.

- Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. Matthew 16:24-25
- Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies it bears much fruit. He who loves his life loses it. John 12:24



Prayer

Father God,

I struggle in life and relationships because I tend to rely on my resources, rights, and reasoning. I agree with Your word and see that apart from Jesus, my intellect and willpower can produce and maintain nothing of eternal value. I surrender all my self-sufficiency, rights, and expectations and yield my life to Your hands. I permit You to work in, and through my life however You choose. I yield myself totally to the indwelling Christ for obedience. Amen.