

Blessedness of Brokenness

by Tom Palmer

Brokenness is a condition of the heart where one yields their will to God's will and comes to the end of self, leading to spiritual revival and renewal.

Duration: 57:28

Scripture: Genesis 32:24, Matthew 6:33, 1 Peter 3:12

Topics: "Brokenness"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by asking the audience to write down five statements that describe their personal relationship with God. The statements range from 'All of me, none of thee' to 'Some of me, some of thee.' The speaker then shares a story about his niece receiving financial assistance for college, highlighting the spirit of brokenness and cooperation with God. He emphasizes the importance of brokenness in responding to Scripture and warns against treating the Bible like a buffet line. The sermon concludes with the speaker expressing gratitude for the youth's response during the announcements and sharing a personal anecdote about cooperation using worms and chickens.

Transcript

Well, thank you very much, fellows. What a great song to help us right from the beginning to get focused. In a meeting with God, God is the main attraction.

And that's what we want this time to be and what a blessing that was. Folks, I have been in a lot of youth meetings through the years, but honest, I have never been in a youth meeting where during the announcements, half the crowd came forward. That was impressive.

So God must already be at work because people are moving during the announcements. But that's okay. Well, it's good to have all of you here.

And I am certainly delighted to have a part and looking forward to sharing together during these several days. Early this morning, a verse came to my mind. And this is not what I'm preaching on.

It just simply was a thought that crossed my mind. First Peter chapter three, you don't even need to turn there. Let me just read it.

The Bible says, for the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous and his ears are open unto their prayers. Do you know what thought crossed my mind this morning when I thought of that verse? Right now, the

eyes and ears of the world are on Athens. But at this very same time, the eyes and ears of God are right here on this campus.

Isn't that great? The whole world is concerned about what takes place in the Olympics. God's interested in what's going on right here in this auditorium. You know, when I thought about that, I thought to myself, I'd far rather be right here than in the grand parade tomorrow to begin the Olympics, because what God does here will have far greater, far more lasting impact than anything that will go on in a stadium or an arena where people are living for gold medals.

What a blessing. I hope you're glad to be here. Will you take your Bible with me now and let's open them, if you will, please, to the book of Genesis chapter 32, the book of Genesis chapter 32.

I want to preach a message to you this afternoon as we begin this conference that in a sense could be considered sort of non-typical teenage type preaching. But I want to take a subject from the word of God that I believe can be brought right down to the level where you and I can live it. Practical, livable truth.

You say, does brokenness have anything to do with teenagers? You better believe it. In the book of Genesis chapter 32, I want to begin reading starting at verse number 24. The Bible says, and Jacob was left alone.

Folks, you mark it down in Scripture, whenever you find an individual going one-on-one, person-to-person with God, they always come away different. Jacob was left alone. Every human support system had been eliminated one-on-one with God.

The Bible says, and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh. And the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint as he wrestled with him.

The messenger of God physically crippled Jacob. Folks, you can't wrestle with a broken leg. You can't wrestle with a dislocated hip.

This fighter was now helpless. But verse 26 says, and he said, let me go for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go except thou bless me.

Jacob went into this wrestling match with the same intention that every guy has when he goes into a wrestling match, win, pin the opponent. But now he's been crippled. And incredibly, his focus now is turned from himself to God.

His priority is, I need the blessing of God. Verse 27, and he said unto him, what is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel.

For as a prince hast thou power with God and with men and hast prevailed. And Jacob asked him and said, tell me, I pray thee thy name. And he said, wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And look at this phrase, folks, at the end of verse 29, and he blessed him there.

A little over a year ago, I sat in the office of an orthopedic surgeon. And the reason was because a condition that I had been born with that affected my legs and specifically dislocated hips from birth had gotten to the point where I no longer could function. The doctor sat there and he looked at me after checking x-rays and evaluating the situation and he said, let's fix them.

He said, we'll do one in the summer, we'll do one later in the year. And then he made this statement, when it's all done, you will be like new. Folks, I think I understand a little bit about the blessedness of brokenness.

Now, I will tell you last August and last December, there in a hospital bed, unable to even lift my foot off the bed, or going to physical therapy and standing up with a walker and watching little old ladies with their walkers run circles around me, it caused me to doubt what the doctor had said. But I learned a great lesson. Sometimes, whether it was Jacob's case, whether it's my case, whether it's the spiritual, whether it's the physical realm, there's great blessedness in brokenness.

That's what I want to preach to you about this afternoon. Let's pray. Father, I need your help now as I speak.

And I ask for a very special measure of that. Dear God, I am not worthy or even close to deserving of the privilege to stand here and address this fine group on a subject like brokenness. Oh dear God, I wish I could stand here today and tell these folks that I've mastered this spiritual truth.

Dear God, I will thank you for what you've taught me about this great spiritual truth. And Lord, I pray that today you will use this time to stir us and challenge us, ultimately to change us. Lord, everything that you will do in the next two days here depends upon this very matter.

Have your way, I pray. We'll thank you for it. In Jesus' name I pray.

Amen. I see people all over the auditorium already with paper and pen in hand. And so with that in mind, I want to begin this afternoon by having you write something down.

There are five little statements that I want to give you today that in a sense describe your personal relationship to your God. I want to give you these five. I want you to write them down quickly.

We'll refer back to them again before we're finished. Statement number one just simply says this. All of me, none of thee.

All of me, none of thee. The second statement, dealing with my relationship to my God, goes something like this. More of me, less of thee.

More of me, less of thee. Then there's a third level that I want you to consider today. By the way, might I add, this one probably is very descriptive of many of us here today.

It goes something like this. Some of me, some of thee. In other words, we're talking about sort of a 50-50 deal.

Part me, part God kind of a situation. Let me give you the fourth thing. Number four, less of me, more of thee.

If there is an advantage, it's in God's favor. Less of me, more of thee. But then we come to this fifth, and might I add, this deepest level in this matter of your relationship to your God, and it would simply be described this way.

None of me, all of thee. None of me, all of thee. In other words, in my life, I am nothing because God is everything.

Now may I quickly say to you today, by way of introduction, those five statements describe every person in this room today. The simple truth is, every one of you here today is on one of those five levels in your relationship to your God. But may I quickly say, it's God's desire to ultimately take you to the very deepest level in your relationship to your God.

Simply, it is no longer I, but Christ. That lives in me. I am decreasing, as he is increasing.

You know, this subject of brokenness is a Bible subject. It's as biblical as John 3.16 is. The Bible addresses it on a number of occasions.

For example, in the book of Psalms, chapter 34, in verse 18, the Bible says this, the Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart. Before this day is over, you, as those who have come to attend this youth prayer advance, will be told that our primary purpose for these days is to draw near to God. We've not just come for a good time, we've come for a God time.

But do you realize the key? It begins with a broken heart. The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken spirit. A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

When God meets me on the level of brokenness, none of me, all of thee, God does not look lightly upon that. Psalm, chapter 51, verse 17, the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit. A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

You see, young people, God may be impressed, God may pay attention, God may notice if you get up and sing a beautiful song, or if you put a thousand dollar bill in an offering plate, or you preach a sermon, or you teach a class, but the greatest gift you can offer before your God today is that of a broken spirit. Isaiah, chapter 57, verse 15, the Bible says, Thus saith the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place. With him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

Ladies and gentlemen, you will never meet God in revival until you meet God in brokenness. One of the paths of personal revival is the path of humility and brokenness. But let me begin this afternoon by quickly clarifying what brokenness is not.

Because I don't want you to become confused on something that is a very key matter in this subject of brokenness. Typically, when folks think of brokenness, here's what they see. Tears.

Weeping. Sorrowing. Grieving.

And it's assumed that when someone is emotionally troubled or emotionally stirred, that that's brokenness. Now may I quickly say to you, tears often accompany brokenness. But tears in and of themselves do not indicate brokenness in and of itself.

A number of years ago, in fact it was during the first several years of our revival ministry back in the early 90s, I worked when we were home as a trauma chaplain in a hospital emergency room. I well remember one Friday night I was at home, I had my scanner on, and I happened to listen to an emergency ambulance call to a home near us. Man and lady had come home from an evening out.

They pulled their vehicle into their garage. They got out of the vehicle, stepped out of the garage onto a little patio attached to their home. As the man stepped onto that patio, he was gunned down at point blank

range right on the front steps of his own house.

Just so happened I was on call that night. When the ambulance arrived at the emergency room, I was standing at the door waiting for the ambulance, waiting for the family for the next five hours. I escorted his wife around that emergency department on my arm.

We met with doctors. We met with the coroner. We met with the state police.

We met with the funeral director. We met with family. Folks, I never in my life have seen anyone cry like that lady cried.

I took her back, pulled the curtain back, took her to the bedside, pulled the sheet back, and watched that lady throw herself on the dead body of her husband and sob until you thought she would die. At least ten times that night, I listened to her tell the whole story of what had taken place on the porch. Every time, tears drenching her face, dripping down onto her clothing.

You can imagine my shock within a week when it was announced in the news that for \$10,000 she had hired her lover to kill her husband. Was that lady experiencing brokenness? Absolutely not. Was she emotional? Was she tearful? Was she sorrowful? Yes.

What do we need to understand? Here's what we need to understand. Brokenness is not simply an emotional response, it's an attitude of the heart. Brokenness in these days does not mean coming and shedding a bucket of tears at an altar.

Brokenness is a condition of your heart before God. Now, let me give you some specific truths, some specific lessons about brokenness. Number one, brokenness means the shattering of my will upon the will of God.

Simply put, I come to the place where I yield my will to God's will and simply say, God, I no longer have a will of my own. Let me illustrate. Galatians chapter 2, verse number 20.

I don't know if you were like me as a teenager, but there were some of those verses that we all memorized, you know, for youth camp or we memorized for Bible quizzing. We memorized to get our star on the chart and they're great verses, but we don't have a clue what they're all about. Galatians 2.20 is one of them, isn't it? I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live.

Now, the typical teenager reads a verse like that and says, I don't get it. Paul said, I am crucified. It's my understanding that when a man was taken out of the city to be crucified, he wasn't coming back alive.

What in the world was Paul saying when he said, I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live? Key, yet not I, but Christ. Do you know what Paul was talking about? He wasn't necessarily talking about this body being nailed on a piece of lumber, suspended above the ground. He was talking about the big I. Yet not I. He was talking about self and all that self includes.

And the fact that self must be in practical reality, be put to death by being yielded totally to the will of God. I picked up a devotional last week at the Prayer Advance in Virginia. And the selling point was flipping through it when I came to a devotional on surrender to the will of God and read a phrase that said this.

There are no disappointments to those who are lost in the will of God. I said, I could take this book and get some good out of it. I bought it.

You see, that's what a spirit of brokenness involves. Crucifixion meant death. I know a little bit about dead people.

And that's because I worked for a funeral home for a few years when I got out of college. On a number of occasions, I traveled in a funeral coach. Now, there's no big deal about that except for the fact that most of you will only ever get one ride in a funeral coach.

But because of that experience, I learned something about dead people. Here it is. And even you junior hires are going to get this one.

They don't want anything. You get in the car. You load up the equipment from the funeral home.

You go to the hospital an hour away. You pick up Mr. So-and-so's body to bring it back to the funeral home. Do you know Mr. So-and-so will never want you to slow down because he thinks you're going too fast? Mr. So-and-so will never want you to turn the heat up because he's cold.

And by the way, he usually is. Mr. So-and-so will never want you to go through the drive-thru and get him something to eat because he hasn't eaten for 12 hours. And he usually hasn't.

By the way, you can flip the blanket back. You can't make Mr. So-and-so mad by calling him names. You can't make Mr. So-and-so angry by making fun of him.

Why? Because a dead man doesn't have a will. He doesn't want anything. Paul said, I am crucified with Christ.

What does that mean in practical reality? I have taken my will, which was very much alive, and I have yielded it to God's will. My dad got us several horses when I was away in Bible college. Dad had grown up with horses, and Dad had always wanted to someday have some for the family.

And one of the two horses that Dad picked up was a registered quarter horse that we called Cody. Now, I do need to tell you this. Cody was a registered quarter horse, but somewhere along the line, they lost the registration papers.

And if you know anything about this registration business, the value goes way down monetarily. So Dad picked him up for a good price. One day, my dad and I had gone down to the farm.

It was owned by a man in our church where the horses were boarded. We took Cody to the arena, and we were going to work with him. All except for the fact that he wouldn't cooperate.

He wanted to go when he was to stop. He wanted to go right when he was to go left. And it was just getting very, very frustrating.

By the way, lack of cooperation is always frustrating, whether you're dealing with a horse or with God. We're out there in the arena doing everything we can to get this horse to function. Nothing happens.

In walks the man who owned the farm. Now, let me quickly tell you about this individual. He was a former Green Beret in Vietnam.

He became a captain in a maximum security state prison in the state of Pennsylvania. On one occasion, he was training a horse. The horse acted up.

He took his fist, punched it in the jaw, and knocked it cold. Now, do you understand the type of a man I'm talking about? He walked in the arena. He watched us.

A moment, he came over. He said, let me have a turn. He climbed into the saddle on that horse's back.

And folks, honest, I have never in my days seen anything like it. He beat the living horse flesh out of that animal. He would take Cody and grab those reins and nearly jerk his head around backwards.

He would take his feet and bury them into the sides of that horse. He actually rode him head on into the wall. And for about three or four minutes, he just worked Cody over.

You know, ten minutes before, I'd have killed him. Now, I thought he was going to kill him. But you know what amazing thing happened? He got done with his little training session.

He got off Cody's back. He dropped the reins. They just hung in front of Cody's face.

He turned and he looked at us. He said, he's all yours. And he walked out of the arena.

Young people, this is probably stretching it just a little bit. But I think I could have walked over and said, Cody, roll over on your back. And with the saddle on, I think he might have rolled over and put all four feet right up in the air.

Now, if any of you know anything about working with horses, there's a term that fits. It's called breaking a horse. A horse has been broken when his will is yielded to the will of another.

Young people, would you like to know today why some of you are having a hard time with God? You don't like conviction. You don't like control in your life. Would you like to know why it seems like you're just not getting where you're supposed to go? Gang, as kindly as I know how to tell you, it's because you've never let God break you.

Your will is strong. And you know where you want to go when you know what you want to do. You desperately need to allow that will to be shattered, to run that white flag of surrender up, so to speak, and say, God, truly, have thine own way.

You know, there are very few times when Christians are bigger liars than during an invitation song in a church service. What do I mean? I mean when we stand to our feet, heads bowed, eyes closed, after the prayer, at the end of the sermon, and then we open our books and we sing, all to Jesus I surrender. All to him I freely give.

You know, if God pulled an Ananias and Sapphira from Acts 5 in those situations, we'd carry out half the congregation. Why? Because many of us have never come to that point where my will is yielded to the will of God. Let me give you a second lesson.

Number two, brokenness means that I come to the end of myself. Brokenness means that I come to the end of myself. Typically, self promotes itself, protects itself, profits itself, pleases itself, praises itself.

That's why a conversation centers around what I want to talk about. That's why money is spent on what I want to spend it on. That's why time is used based on where I want to go.

In other words, it's that idea that self is so in love with itself that it lives for itself until there is brokenness. Roy Hessian, in his classic book on personal revival, *The Calvary Road*, put it this way. This simply means that the hard, unyielding self which justifies itself, wants its own way, stands up for its own rights, and seeks its own glory, at last bows its head to God's will, admits its wrong, gives up its own way to Jesus, surrenders its rights, and discards its own glory that the Lord Jesus might have all and be all.

In other words, it is dying to self and self attitudes. Can I tell you today the four favorite words of Christian teenagers? By the way, some of you adults may sense some conviction on this too. Here they are, four favorite words of teenagers.

I, me, my, mine. Now, I've heard it said that typically we talk about what's important in our lives. We talk about that which we love.

If it was possible that for the next 24 hours, anytime you use the word I, me, my, or mine, suddenly an alarm went off. It would change the way a lot of us live. Because we are so programmed to making sure that life revolves around me.

Young people, brokenness means it's not all about me anymore, because it's all about my God. See? Let me give you a third lesson about brokenness. Number three, brokenness means that God takes the fight out of me.

God takes the fight out of me. In other words, I come to that place in my life where my response to anything and everything God wants to do is summed up in two words. Yes, Lord.

Let me illustrate. I want to tell you two little stories that have happened that involved my family this summer. A week ago, while we were at home, I was building a little tool shed out behind my house under the deck to kind of keep the garden and lawn tools.

While I was working, one of our chickens... You say, you have chickens? I thought you live in a fifth-wheel travel trailer. Well, it's kind of a funny story. It goes back to April.

We were in Terre Haute, Indiana. We were getting ready to go home that weekend after the meetings. This farm store is selling chicks for \$1.23 each, and I bought six of them, brought them home in a cardboard box, walked in the trailer to my wife and said, I got to buy on some chicken.

Gave her this box with these six little peeps in it. Well, now these six little peeps are the little red hen and Henny Penny, you know, all that crowd from the stories. Well, one of them has become somewhat affectionate.

You say, how in the world do you get affectionate with a chicken? It just depends. If they're in the flower garden, you use your foot. You know, I mean, it just depends.

But anyhow, I'm out working, and this one chicken, every time I would walk back around us, she'd come trooping across the yard and stand there right in front of me. And I would talk to her, you know, you can't say much, but you try. Well, then she started hopping up on the picnic table, and I'd be running the power saw and measuring board, and she would just sit there about this far away.

Well, finally I thought, bless her heart. She's just trying to be friendly. I'll be kind.

So I took the shovel and walked back out to the garden. She followed me. Stick the shovel in the ground, turn up the soil, found half of a worm.

Didn't find the other half, but be that as it may. So I didn't want to give her half. I dug again.

This time I found a whole worm. Here's the little red hen. Take this worm, pick it up.

And by the way, worms don't have a whole lot of personality, not near as much as a chicken. They just kind of hang there. So I took this worm and I just dropped it in front of Henny Penny.

She just devoured the thing. As a matter of fact, we have now learned that if you have chickens and you can dig worms, you don't even need to watch television anymore. Do you realize how entertaining it is to dig up about an 8-inch nightcrawler and throw it in between your flock of chickens and watch two of them each pick up an 8-inch nightcrawler until it's 20 inches long? I mean, fully on television.

Just watch your chickens eat worms. Now, I tell you that story. Why? I want you to think of a word.

Here it is. Cooperation. When I think of a worm, I think of total cooperation.

If I want to cut him in half, if I want to pick him up, if I want to stretch him out between the beaks of two chickens, total cooperation. That's story number one. Remember the key word, cooperation.

Second story. It happened earlier in the summer, out in Illinois, at the Christian camp we were working in. My son and daughter and I, one afternoon, are on the camp grounds cruiser.

We had been down on our ball field setting up an activity. We're headed back up the paved road to go back to the main grounds of the camp. We come across this rather large snake on the road.

Now, this was a bad snake summer at camp. We probably had 25, I probably saw 25 snakes at camp. But this one was like none I'd ever seen.

Do you remember that elementary school thing in science class about the snake? Red on black, venom lack. Red on yellow, kill a fella. You remember that? This was one of those kinds.

By the way, I'd never seen one of these up north. You had to look real careful. Because he had all those colors all mixed in.

And he was probably three feet long. Well, I stopped the grounds cruiser. Andrew, he's 16.

He is the young man of the family. He jumps out of the back of the grounds cruiser, grabs a stick and tried to pin the snake's head down. Now, if you are a snake head pinner, I've got advice for you.

If you are going to use a 12 inch stick, make sure you at least get closer than 12 inches to his head when you pin him down. Andrew let the margin get just a little bit too close. And he takes this little short stick and he pins the snake down about 12 inches back from its head.

And instantly that thing spun and just right at his hand. He jumped up, grabbed another stick, tried to pin it. The thing struck, just kept striking at him.

Ah, it's about that time that his big sister, 19 years old, the blonde in the family, decides she will come to the rescue of her little brother who is being attacked by this vicious reptile. She jumps out of the grounds

cruiser, flips the lid up on the tool set, and grabs a pair of bolt cutters. Wow! Listen, you don't mess with the Palmers, I'm just telling you right now.

You don't mess with our family. She grabs the bolt cutters and decides to grab this snake. Oh, bless her heart, she'll figure it out by the tail.

So she's going like this, trying. That snake spun and he struck at her one time. From then on, she's on the hood of the grounds cruiser screaming.

Eventually, we dispatched the snake, he met his maker, and the Lord called him home. But, I got a word for you. I got a word for you, here it is.

Confrontation. When I think of that snake, the C word that comes to my mind is confrontation. Now, we've got a picture.

We've got a little worm on his way to the chicken pen. What's the word? Cooperation. We've got a three inch or three foot snake trying to get away from the bolt cutters.

And what's the word? Confrontation. Now, with that picture in mind and in the backdrop of what we're talking about, young people, I want you to consider with me that the Lord Jesus Christ, Psalm 22, verse 6, the Psalm of the suffering Savior made this statement, I am a worm and no man. Do you see the picture? The worm, cooperation.

The snake, confrontation. Brokenness means God takes the fight out of me. I become cooperative.

Take your Bibles quickly, turn with me to the book of Luke. I was studying this one day. This was an amazing picture that I had not seen before.

Luke chapter 23, Jesus is on the cross. We are truly in the final moments of his life on earth. Look at these three verses with me.

Luke chapter 23, verse number 35. The people stood beholding and the rulers also with them derided him saying, He saved others, let him save, look at the next word, himself. Drop two verses.

Verse number 37, the soldiers now get in on it saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save, look at the next word, thyself. Go two more verses to verse 39. Now the thieves that are being crucified get in on it.

And one of the male factors which were held on him saying, If thou be Christ, save, look at the word, thyself. Young people, do you realize that not only on the cross did Jesus win the victory over sin, it was possible because he'd already won the victory over self. I am a worm and no man.

You think the two chickens were hard on the night crawler when they stretched him. That's nothing. That is nothing compared to the suffering savior who is a worm, was abused and misused and tortured and died.

You want to know why? It hadn't been all that long before in the garden, with the blood like drops of sweat oozing through the pores of his skin, that he had prayed if it be possible, let this cup pass from me nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt. Young people, brokenness in your life means absolute cooperation with the will of God. You know what? Some of you right now were enrolled in a course in the school of life that you didn't think you were going to take this semester.

Disappointment, failure, rejection, fear. Maybe someone here has gone through a tragedy that has broken your heart. Maybe someone here has watched your dreams collapse in front of you.

You know what, young people? If we're not careful, that copperhead complex takes over, doesn't it? Like that snake with his head pinned down, there's that immediate desire to recall, God, I didn't deserve this. God, it should be better. God, why me? You know why that is, young people? Because our heart has never been genuinely broken before God.

Oh, you may have cried, but you may have cried because you're mad. You may have cried, but you cried because you thought it wasn't fair. But it's that sweet spirit of brokenness in my life and in yours that cooperates with anything God brings into my life.

Isn't it very interesting that when Jesus was laying out the prerequisites for discipleship in Luke chapter 9, verse 23, He said this, If any man will come after me, let him deny what? Himself. Take up the cross and follow me. Isn't it interesting now we're back to that crucified with Christ because I've said no to myself.

I no longer have my spiritual boxing gloves on. Total cooperation. Let me quickly give you the fourth thing.

And number four, brokenness means responding in humility and conviction to God's work in my life. Back in the book of Psalms, chapter 66 and verse number 2, we have sort of a follow-up to who God is and where God is and what God is. Verse 2, For all those things of mine handmade and all those things have been, saith the Lord.

But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit and that trembleth at my word. Young people, when God wants to change your life, there are two things He uses. His word, His spirit.

But it is a spirit of brokenness that allows Him to do it. Why would we address brokenness in the very first session of a youth prayer advance, a teen revival conference, so to speak? I'll tell you why. Because you'll never go clear your conscience if you've never experienced brokenness.

You won't obey God if you've not been broken. You will not confess sin if you've not been broken. You'll not dedicate your life to God's service if you've not experienced brokenness.

See, everything that God is going to say and everything that God is going to do in this conference is dependent upon that attitude of brokenness. I preached in a Christian school several years back now in New Jersey. I don't in any way mean to be unkind, but honestly, young people, it was the toughest group of Christian school kids I'd ever preached to.

I had preached to them on two preceding occasions, once at their school retreat and once during a week of revival meetings in the church when we had chapel every day. And I'm telling you something, they shut me down like a light switch. We're there in their church again in meetings.

I'm preaching to them every day, Monday, Tuesday, zero. Wednesday rolled around, I preached a message entitled, What Makes a Real Christian School? And I preached to them on the day Jesus came to visit your school. And I began to enumerate for them some of the things that Jesus would probably pick up that would raise doubts as to whether it was a Christian school.

For example, like we leave the Christian school and listen to the devil's music in the car on the way home. Or we don't think it's cool to be a good Christian and a good athlete. Or the older I get, the less spiritual

appetite I have.

You know, some of those kind of things. And I was being point blank, I was being real specific. I addressed, for example, the fact that, you know, we're all worried about the fact that kids can't pray in our public school.

I said, you know what, kids can't pray in this Christian school because it's not the neat thing, it's not the in thing to do. I mean, I laid it out. Got to the invitation, and much to my utter shock and amazement, those kids started to respond.

In fact, almost instantly, over half of that high school student body came forward and just filled the front of the meeting room. Kids were on their knees, kids were weeping, kids were praying. And I'm just standing there in absolute shock because I had delivered every bit of the goods I knew how to give them.

I remember chapel ended that day and there were a group of guys all huddled together and I went over to them and, I mean, here are guys right up through the seniors standing there. I remember one of those boys looked at me, he said, you know what, you got to me today and nobody gets to me. Another boy said this, he said, I experienced something incredible today.

He said, while you were preaching, pressure started to build inside of me. He said, I thought I was going to burst. You know what happened? Five minutes before the invitation, that boy jumped up and ran out of chapel with blood gushing out of his nose all over him.

He went and got the problem taken care of, came back in just in time for the invitation. Down the aisle he comes, a senior in high school, blood all over his shirt. He said, I just never experienced anything like that.

I stood there with those guys. I said, fellows, let's pray, let's ask God to keep this going. We prayed, they shared, and it was beautiful.

I was just amazed that this was the same place. Got all done. They left the room.

I turned and looked and standing over in the corner are four teenage girls. By the way, all four of them were preacher's daughters from four different churches in the area. Before this is all done, you'll see a little parallel with Luke 18.

But be that as it may, I walked over to them and I said, Hey, ladies, were you waiting to talk to me? Yes, we were. You know, if I'd have been smart, I'd have just said, Well, I'll talk to you about ten years from now or something. But I was trying to be cordial and proper.

And I'm not kidding you, gang. For the next 30 minutes those gals chewed me up and spit me out. I mean, they let me have it.

There is not one of those things you said that's true in our school. He told me things like that. They said, You have no right to tell people they have to come down here to respond to your invitation.

I mean, they went on and on. And it didn't matter what I said. They always had a comeback.

They always had a comment. They always had a criticism. And finally, after however long, I said, Girls, I see this is going nowhere.

I've tried to help you, tried to explain. By the way, this is very interesting. The next day, Thursday, I had a sharing and testimony time in chapel.

One of those girls stood up in front of the entire high school and said, I am very thankful that not one of those things the preacher listed yesterday is true in our high school. Oh, my word. Remember what I said about Luke 18? I'll give you a clue that the Pharisee and the publican, I thank thee that I am not.

I said, Ladies, forget it. You might as well go on to lunch. And those girls turned and walked out of the room.

This thought crossed my mind, young people. When God's truth is presented, one of two things happens. You either get mad or you get right.

It's that plain and simple. It's that plain and simple. We're talking about going to God and saying, God, be thorough with me.

God, you have permission to change any part of my life. You do anything you want. Now, young people, remember Jacob? Do you remember when we started out with him? What happened to Jacob the day God blessed him? His will was shattered upon the will of God.

Sure it was. He came to the end of himself. He let God take the fight out of him.

And he responded in humility to the conviction and the convicting work of God in his life. You know what? Jacob got up from that meeting with God. He went away blessed.

A new name, a new man, new power. Are you aware of the fact that today we sit in this room enjoying the blessing of Jacob? Two greatest gifts mankind has ever known, the Son of God and the Word of God, all came through Jacob's line. Isn't that a blessing? The blessedness of brokenness.

Now, let me summarize the whole thing by very quickly giving you four areas. And all I'm going to do is mention them. Four areas of your life that will be affected by this matter of a spirit of brokenness.

Number one, your response to surrender. I love to meet with a senior class in a Christian school and say, write out on a piece of paper your five goals, five top goals for the next ten years of your life. So they do.

I say, now, you know what most of us do to be spiritual? We take this little sheet and lay it on God's desk and say, God, if you don't mind, just sign your approval. I'd like your blessing on the next ten years. And then I always say, you know what, gang? That sounds good, but that isn't how it works.

I say, turn the sheet over, leave it blank, and at the bottom of the sheet, sign your name. And then you lay it on God's desk and say, God, you fill in one, two, three, four, five. I've already accepted it.

I've already approved. See, that's surrender, young people. That's the key.

You and I think of surrender as a white flag coming out of a foxhole. That's defeat. But in your life, young people, surrender means losing your life so that you can find your life in your Lord.

Not I, but Christ. Brokenness affects your response to sin. Oh, I don't doubt for a minute, because I know the kind of preaching that's going to come forth in the next two days.

There are going to be some times in the next two days, you are going to feel like God just took a 10 million candle power spotlight and shined it right on you. You're going to feel like when Nathan stood before King David and said, you are the man. Deep inside, you will know God has got it.

You've kept it from mom and dad. You kept it from the police. You kept it from your friends.

But God knew. What are you going to do, get mad or get right? Thirdly, it will affect your response towards suffering. Some of us in the last year have suffered.

Some of us in the next year will suffer. I flew into Charlotte today, and as I flew into Charlotte, I was thinking of a young teenage Christian college student, a good friend of our family who a year and a half ago was on that plane on her way back to Bible college when it touched down in Charlotte and flipped end over end and exploded. And I thought, isn't that incredible? A missionary's daughter, Christian college student.

We might say so unfairly her life was taken. But you know what was interesting? Less than a week ago, we were visiting relatives, and my niece, who's going to Northland Baptist Bible College this fall, walked into the room with a card and opened it in front of us. She broke down and she started to cry.

She said, this letter says, my first semester has been paid. And then the question started, who? She said, I don't know if I'm allowed to tell. Who? You gotta tell us.

You know where it came from? The memorial funds from that young lady who lost her life at that airport a year and a half ago, and her family is now helping. You know what that is? That's a spirit of brokenness when the tough time comes. Just cooperation with God.

Letting God have His way. Fourth area, brokenness will affect your response to Scripture. You know, we live in a day where the Bible is treated like a buffet line at Ryan's.

You pick and choose. You take what you want, you leave what you want. Instead of coming to this book and saying, God, this is your word.

You said it, I believe it, I'll obey it. That settles it. Obedience depends upon a spirit of brokenness.

Young people, God gets close to those who are of a broken heart. God revives those who are of a broken heart. God pays attention to those who are of a broken heart.

Let's bow our heads, please, and be quiet before the Lord.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/14/SID14152.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/tom-palmer/blessedness-of-brokenness/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net