

God created a perfect universe, but man broke it¹. We understand that we are all now broken as well², but there are those that seem to be much more broken than others. Not necessarily in the sense of being greater sinners, but in their ability to cope with the struggles of life and to make their way forward. And perhaps they are broken most especially in their ability to see the Presence of God. None of us function as designed; none of us behave as we should³.

God expects those who are stronger are to take care of those that are weaker⁴. He expects His people to help those that are broken in different ways - including widows and orphans⁵, of course, but also those that are handicapped, sick (including lepers), depressed, reclusive, broken-hearted⁶, and destitute. Most of us, even those who have great confidence in their righteousness, fail in that mission⁷.

The Scriptures are full of descriptions of broken people, as well as those who sometimes tried to help. David, for instance, took care of others when they became in real need, even at some cost to him. He took care of Abiathar when all of his priestly family were killed by Doeg the Edomite⁸. He took care of his rival's grandson Mehibosheth⁹, who was lame in both feet, after Saul and Jonathon were both killed in battle. And he took care of his concubines after they were abused by Absalom in his flight and resulting absence from Jerusalem¹⁰.

The ministry of Jesus was all about healing those who were broken, in both body and spirit. We read of those who brought people who were broken to Him, such as the four friends who broke through a roof to deliver the paralyzed man¹¹. On the other hand, the invalid by the pool of Bethesda had no one to help him (but Jesus Himself).

I feel most deeply for the man who brought a son, who continually threw himself into the fire¹², to Jesus. The man essentially said to Jesus, "My son is broken! Please fix him!" Jesus rebuked the brokenness as a demon, and it came out of the boy, who was healed at that moment.

We have the responsibility to be the extension of Christ¹³ and support those in need. But how do we help someone that is broken? Our chief weapon is to present the love of God in its manifold glory. As with the man described above, we must try to bring the broken to Jesus.

God looks for broken relationships to be healed, as this is truly more important than physical healing. What pleasure could be greater than the pleasure of being restored to someone you have loved and lost?¹⁴

God first created the perfect environment¹⁵; but we broke what He gave us. He did not fix it (at least not as yet), but instead shares its brokenness with us. Christ is the ultimate expression of Goodness against the backdrop of the pain and evil of such brokenness¹⁶. We must love that Goodness without expecting everything to be 'fixed' to suit us. So God sent His Beloved Son in His love for us (we are also beloved¹⁷), to reconcile us to Him.

In doing this He shows us the fix that is applied in part now, but which will be completed later in the re-perfection of the universe. If God did fix the world for us we would keep breaking it; how many times can we expect Him to come down and straighten things out?

Christ emptied Himself of divine power and came to the earth to show us the way back to the Father¹⁸. After ministering to us, He was broken for us (His body, but not His bones¹⁹) – but then fixed (though His resurrected body retained its scars²⁰). His spirit was not broken; rather, He gave it up for us²¹. Eventually, the universe itself will be fixed by being replaced with a new one²². In the meantime, we worship the broken body and shed blood as it illuminates God's Love for us.

We will ultimately be renewed as well. God, as the Master Potter²³, is at work molding us in a process which has no local completion but will be finally accomplished in the final resurrection?²⁴ We must accept the reconciliation, or we risk is a more complete brokenness²⁵.

God, we thank you for the beauty of this world, even though it has been broken by us; we thank you for the beauty of your Son, which was also broken by us (and for us); and we know that God will repair both the world and us in the same way as He has resurrected His Son.

1. Genesis 3:16-19
2. ... and must be, to approach God, Psalm 51:17

3. Romans 3:23, and indeed we cannot behave as we want (see Romans 7:7ff)
4. Galatians 6:2
5. James 1:27
6. Psalm 34:18 and Psalm 147:3
7. Mark 7:11 and Matthew 25:21ff
8. 1 Samuel 22
9. 2 Samuel 9
10. 2 Samuel 20:3
11. Mark 2:3-5, Luke 5:18ff
12. Matthew 17:14-21
13. 1 Corinthians 12:27
14. "But have you ever had a broken relationship come back to life? It almost seems too much to hope for. What pleasure is more sublime than the pleasure of being restored to someone you have loved and lost?" *The Message of the New Testament*, Mark Dever, p.285
16. Romans 8:22
15. Genesis 2:8
17. John 3:16
18. John 14:1-14
19. Psalm 34:22
20. John 20:26-28
21. John 10:18
22. 2 Peter 3:13, Revelation 21:1-2
23. Romans 9:19-21
24. "In the end are we all just broken pots cast on to the universal rubbish heap? Or can it be that the potter is at work molding us in a process which here finds no final achievement and so must continue in another life hereafter?" *The Way the World Is*, John Polkinghorne, p.92
25. Luke 20:18