

Brokenness

John Collinson

(This was Written by an English vicar and former missionary to Africa, a real brother in the Lord who ministered at the International Revival Conference in Switzerland in 1970. His reply to our request to reprint it reveals the spirit of Mr. Collinson: "Please do feel free to use the leaflet on 'Brokenness' wherever and however you think it may be used to help. I need to learn every word of it afresh. While I wrote it out of a living experience, I find it can quickly become a lovely vision rather than a daily walk. I need so much to be 'broken' daily. ")

Sometimes it is asked what we mean by brokenness. Brokenness is not easy to define but can be clearly seen in the reactions of Jesus, especially as He approached the cross and His crucifixion. I think it can be applied personally in this way:

WHEN to do the will of God means that even my Christian brethren will not understand, and I remember that "Neither did His brethren believe in Him" (John 7:5), and I bow my head to obey and accept the misunderstanding, THIS IS BROKENNESS.

WHEN I am misrepresented or deliberately misinterpreted, and I remember that Jesus was falsely accused but He "held His peace," and I bow my head to accept the accusation without trying to justify myself, THIS IS BROKENNESS.

WHEN another is preferred before me and I am deliberately passed over, and I remember that they cried, "Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas" (Luke 23:18), and I bow my head and accept rejection, THIS IS BROKENNESS.

WHEN my plans are brushed aside and I see the work of years brought to ruins by the ambitions of others and I remember that Jesus allowed them to lead Him away to crucify Him (Matt. 2,7:31) and He accepted that place of failure, and I bow my head and accept the injustice without bitterness, THIS IS BROKENNESS.

WHEN in order to be right with my God it is necessary to take the humbling path of confession and restitution, and I remember that Jesus "made Himself of no reputation" and "humbled Himself. . . unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:8), and I bow my head and am ready to accept the shame of exposure, THIS IS BROKENNESS

WHEN others take unfair advantage of my being a Christian and treat my belongings as public property, and I remember "they stripped Him.. .and parted His garments, casting lots" (Matt. 27:28,35), and I bow my head and accept "joyfully the spoiling of my 'goods'" for His sake, THIS IS BROKENNESS.

WHEN one acts towards me in an unforgivable way, and I remember that when He was crucified Jesus prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34), and I bow my head and accept any behavior towards me as permitted by my loving Father, THIS IS BROKENNESS.

WHEN people expect the impossible of me and more than time or human' strength can give, and I remember that Jesus said, "This is My body which is given for you. . ." (Luke 22: 19), and I repent of my self-indulgence and lack of self-giving for others, THIS IS BROKENNESS.

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