

Psalm 51:7-19

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me hear joy and gladness, That the bones You have broken may rejoice. Hide Your face from my sins, And blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And uphold me by Your generous Spirit. Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners shall be converted to You. Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, The God of my salvation, And my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips, And my mouth shall show forth Your praise. For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart—These, O God, You will not despise. Do good in Your good pleasure to Zion; Build the walls of Jerusalem. Then You shall be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, With burnt offering and whole burnt offering; Then they shall offer bulls on Your altar.

Healthy Brokenness

In his message entitled “The inadequacy of instant Christianity” A.W. Tozer wrote: “By “instant Christianity” I mean the kind... which is born of the notion that we may discharge our total obligation to our own souls by one act of faith, or at most two, and be relieved thereafter of all anxiety about our spiritual condition and that there is no reason to seek to be saints in character.” In a society used to instant information, instant food and even instant banking, instant Christianity becomes the pursuit of many. Because salvation is a free gift from God by faith in Christ’s death for man’s sin, burial and resurrection, “instant Christianity” even sounds appropriate. After all, the thief on the cross beside Christ was granted salvation upon His own expression of faith.

A closer examination of Scripture would reveal that “instant Christianity” overlooks a vital element of true, saving faith – repentance. “Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.” (Acts 3:19). It was only after a period of mocking Jesus along with the other criminal, that the thief had a change of heart. Perhaps as he viewed Jesus agonizing death for sin, perhaps as he heard Jesus words of comfort and forgiveness to others, perhaps simply because he knew that Jesus was condemned unjustly, whatever God used to move him, the thief had a genuine change of heart. As his life was about to expire, his attention was drawn to Jesus, and with remorse for his own life and faith in Christ he cried: “Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”

David said: “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.” (Psalm 51:17). Vance Havner wrote: “God uses broken things. It takes broken soil to produce a crop, broken clouds to give rain, broken grain to give bread, broken bread to give strength. It is the broken alabaster box that gives forth perfume--it is Peter, weeping bitterly, who returns to greater power than ever.” The faith that takes salvation’s gift is rooted in the soil of a broken heart before God. Jesus reminded his disciples that it is the “poor in spirit” who find the kingdom of God. Of his ministry Jesus said: “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD has anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound” (Isaiah 61:1).

There is no substitute for a broken, repentant heart. Out of it the cry of faith is born, in it the seed of new life is sown, from it the fruit of the spirit is raised and a new man is created in the image of Christ. Friend, don’t seek instant Christianity, seek a broken heart, this is the workplace of God.

What is my response:
