

Un-breakable Hearts

Helping Hurt Feelings

October 16, 2022

Today we're talking about how to *heal* the damage we *deal*. And *that's* gonna mean working through *this* uncomfortable question: **Are you a heartbreaker or a heartbuilder?**



NIV

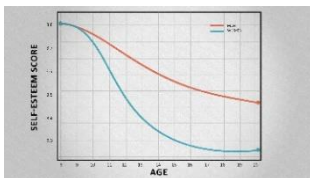
Well I hate to break it to you but *any* answer other than *builder* is *failure* – and *any* answer without a bit of *breaker* is *fibbing*. We're just natural born heartbreakers. Even *after* we become Christians. Because the transformation takes time and change is a perpetual *process* of taking *off* and putting *on*, *remember*:

You were taught, with regard to your *former* way of life, to put *off* your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made *new* in the attitude of your *minds*; and to put *on* the *new* self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. – Ephesians 4:22-24

And that starts with our state of mind because **the old you gets evicted when the new you gets convicted!** And though we *know* the new you means being more like Jesus, Paul parses out the finer points *for* us cuz *he* knows what truth-twisters we can be! And so we're told in *no* uncertain terms that if we *truly* trust in our *new* identity as a child of God *and* God's identity as our *Father* and *Friend* – then we'd make up our mind to *change* how we *talk* to and *treat* everyone *else*:

Do not let *any* unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but *only* what is helpful for *building others up* according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. – Ephesians 4:29 NIV

So how you doin' with that? How 'bout the *online* you? Are you *only* – *every* second of *every* conversation – saying things that build others *up*? *Me neither!* But it's even *worse* than we think. Because **we hurt the hearts of others daily, without any effort or awareness!**



Take a look at this. *This* charts multiple study results about our self-esteem as we enter *school* age and develop *deeper* and more substantial *social* lives. And I'm no behavioral economist **but it sure seems that the influence of other people aint really building much!** Only *problem* is, this guy says that a *massive* 75-year Harvard study revealed that the *single* greatest *contributor* to our overall health *and* happiness was... *other* people! *How?!* Well we'll come back to that, but in the *meantime*, I gotta tell you a story about some *mean* people... my kids.

When my daughter Parker was 7, fidget spinners became a *thing*. And she was so excited and fixated on them that she saved up a couple of

dollars to buy one online. She checked the mail every day for a week until it arrived. And that day, I've never seen a more *pure* joy as she ran up our driveway in eager anticipation. She could barely talk!

Joy everywhere! But then she ran to her 12-year-old brother, who casually said, **“Oh, those stupid things.”** and walked on. And in *that* moment, I watched my daughter's little heart *break*. The smile just fell right off her face. It was *stupid*. And her deep desire to *share* her joy with someone she *loved* and *admired* wasn't just gone but *shameful*. Her whole world was *worse*. And so was mine, because it broke *my* father heart. And it still does. But it gave me a moment of clarity.



Because her brother is *great* guy, with a *huge* heart who *loves* his little sister. But I *realized* that **these little moments of profound heartbreak happen unintentionally every day in the lives of every person that openly loves anything.** Because that *open* heart exposes the true you which makes you *vulnerable* to the core.

And though we're all *born* with unashamed, vulnerable joy, we slowly learn that **when we share our true heart, we risk death by a thousand cuts**; as *little*, unintentional hurts add up and slowly snuff out the spark in our soul. So we hide our hearts away and we begin to forget who we are.

But why?! Why do we break down when we're supposed to build up? I'll give you *two* reasons:

1. **We think we're the center of the universe.**
2. **We are the center of the universe.**

In the first case, **we ruin relationships and hurt hearts because we believe that everything ought to revolve around us, individually.** And we're born with drives and desires to tend to our personal needs because our earthly *lives* depend on them! And though we see the *benefit* of community, **we think our best bet comes when we keep ourselves number one.** Problem *is*, that's like having a solar system where every planet wants to be at the center; it's a hot mess and nobody wins!

For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members *do not* all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. – Romans 12:4-5 NIV

And that helps explain the **second** reason, because **we are the center of the universe... collectively.** After all, **this place was built for us, not just you.** So it's *true* that there's nothing more important than you, but *that's* true for everyone *else, too*. And we can feel it and see it and know it as we work to understand ourselves *and* others. We're *all* born with a predisposition for perfection. We *all* yearn for *more* because of our *shared* nature. So **we all instinctually chase being better** because deep down we know that *somehow*, we're *meant* to have more.



But here's the catch, **we're often ignorant to the impact of those instincts.** In fact, that's kinda the whole *purpose* of instincts; we *do* 'em without *having* to *think* about 'em! But *that's* a big problem because *without* deliberate thought, we follow the path of least resistance by

default. And that's bad news because being *better* can mean two *different* things; **being better than you were or being better than others are**. Which means there are two approaches; **build up a better you or break down the others better than you**. *Either way, you end up on top – but down here, breaking is always easier than building, so we prefer the ease of destruction over the effort of construction.*

Think about it, when *you* see someone with more joy than *you*, what do you do? Do you use *self-discipline* to carefully challenge and change *yourself* by your *submission, sacrifice, and sweat*? Or do you prefer the *self-centered* approach to carelessly *condescend* and *cut down others* by your *ignorance, apathy, and ego*? I know *my* unfortunate, *honest* answer. So what should we *do*?

Well, you're *doing* it right now. Because **knowledge cures what ignorance causes**. Y'know, *later* that day, I talked to my 12-year-old and shared the way *I* saw it – because *I* knew if *he* knew, he'd see that's *not* who he's trying to *be*. In fact, *he* was now broken up about how hurtful he'd been! So I had to explain it was okay because it was *unintentional* and that this was *all* gonna work out as a *good* experience *if* it made us more *careful* and *intentional* with our words in the *future*. And as Christians, we need to understand **it's the same principle behind God telling us where we went wrong**. Because the ignorance in *our* instinct has led to us sinning since the garden in the beginning.



And **God knows to stop that sin, step one is keeping us alert to the hurt.**

[God] made *His* light shine in *our* hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory [and therefore *our failure*] displayed in the face of Christ. [How?] – 2 Corinthians 4:6 NIV

Well, **Jesus gives us the bigger story behind our fidget-spinner feelings**; because He *embodied* pure *joy, and goodness, and truth, and love*. And we instinctually *broke* Him *and* His heart to make ourselves feel *better*. And we still do. But because of who He is, He was able to see the *good* His brokenness would *bring* once we were *aware* of our action. And *until* then, *He* asked:

Father, *forgive them*, for they *do not know* what they are doing. – Luke 23:34 NIV

Our Parent's plan for us heartbreakers is to show us *our* own heart by opening up *His* and being vulnerable enough to be broken. Because **self-awareness causes us to be more intentional and it provides the opportunity to show the true you**.



And so we see if we *don't* want to be careless heartbreakers, **we have to become intentional with our words** and *carefully* craft our speech to *build* others only. So, we stop our *ignorance* by being alert to the hurt, but then **we have to start our intention with step two, building back up**.

Guess what happened about 3 seconds after my heart broke for my daughter? I ran to her, looked her in the eye and said that I *loved* it! *How does it work? Does it really glow in the dark? Could I see her do it?* And she lit right back up as we went to test the glow someplace dark. And

I had my second moment of clarity. The good news: **hearts un-break even easier than they're broken.**

Unlike everything else down here, **they're not meant to degrade, decay, and die** because they're built for *up there* where everything *improves, increases, and comes to life!* That's their *natural* state. And *that* changes everything. Because **it only takes a nudge in the right direction to heal a heart that was born to be better.** Which means:

The tongue has the power of life *and* death. – Proverbs 18:21 NIV
Which brings us back to that Harvard study. Cuz they used a *key* word that clarifies how other people can be *both* our biggest problem *and* best solution. As Dr Waldinger says:

“The clearest message that we get from this 75-year study is this: Good relationships keep us happier and healthier.”

Good relationships are the key! **Bad** relationships are the *problem*. And that's why **God's whole plan centers on giving us a good model of a good relationship through the good news of Jesus.** And that's *all* built on good words. The *intentional* ones *“helpful for building others up”*, *not* the careless destructive ones. Because in case you haven't heard:

The *words* of the *reckless* pierce like swords, but the tongue of the *wise* brings *healing*.
[And where do we get these heart-building, life-giving words of wisdom?]- Proverbs 12:18 NIV



How about the one place where our perfect *example* intentionally speaks *His* healing words? Cuz the moment we open *God's* Word:

The Lord *is* close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. – Psalms 34:18 NIV

Jesus is the good relationship that un-breaks every heart with the wise words that make *sense* of our situation, puts *purpose* to our pain, and builds *back* whatever's broken. And we know that

Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord *will* be saved. [But,] How, then, can they *call* on the One they have not believed in? And how can they *believe* in the One of whom they have not *heard*? And how can they *hear* without someone *preaching* to them? And how can anyone *preach* unless they are *sent*? – Romans 10:13-15 NIV

Good question. Good thing the Good Book has a good answer for us:



⁹As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you ... ¹²My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. – John 15:9, 12 NIV

So, pop quiz, if *Jesus* loved as the Father, and we're supposed to love as *He* loved, what should our love look like? *The Father's!*

And *that* means **we should be running to the wounded just like they're our own fidget-spinning kids** and we should *un-break* hearts with *intentional* words that *sympathize, validate, encourage, support, inspire, cheer, excite, and love*. **We must build hearts better by fanning their flames** instead of snuffing them out! And listen to Jesus as a co-worker:

Do not let your *heart* be troubled ... I *am* going away *and* coming back to you. – John 14:27-28
NKJ

And you can be the one to bring Him! *Do you get that?! We collectively are the body of Christ and when you individually draw near to a broken heart to love like a parent, You can un-break and rebuild just like Jesus! That's our job! We gotta go and grow His Kingdom by sharing the good news through good relationships! And that takes some good words. So watch your mouth!*

Father God, thank You for loving me in spite of my sin; forgive me and cleanse me by the sacrifice of Your Son, my Savior; and free me and lead me by Your Spirit and Word, as I seek to trust and follow Jesus Christ, as the Lord of my life. Amen.