

# GROWTHguide

**Grow Through  
Heartbreak**  
August 6, 2017



## THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURES

Psalm 109:1-5 & 22-25

Psalm 34:15-20, Ecclesiastes 3:1, 2 & 4,  
Psalm 30:11

### DAY 1

Read [Ecclesiastes 3:1, 2 - 4](#)

All of us have experienced heartbreak. It can come in the form of job loss, health concerns, the death of a loved one, bad choices made, a relationship that ended, or someone that let you down. These things are part of life, as the writer of Ecclesiastes describes. ***"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven; a time to be born, and a time to die...a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance."*** We all experience these seasons, but anyone who has experienced profound heartbreak will agree, accepting the pain is not always easy. However, Christianity provides peace and hope when questions go unanswered. Henry Nouwen put it this way:

*"One of life's greatest questions centers not on what happens to us, but rather, how will we live in and through whatever happens...our choice, then, often revolves around not what has happened or will happen to us, but how we will relate to life's turns and circumstances. Put another way: 'Will I relate to my life resentfully or gratefully?'"*

- **What are some ways you have responded to heartbreak?**

- **Have you ever questioned why God allowed heartbreak in your life?**

If you or someone you know is in the midst of heartbreak, pray and praise God for his faithfulness, for the hope we have in him. Praise God for the trials that bring you closer to him.

## **DAY 2**

**Read [Psalm 30:11](#)**

We learned yesterday that our heartbreaks and losses may be unavoidable, but even in the dark moments Scripture reminds us of God's continual promises to abide with us. We take these assurances from God's promise, "**God suffers as Jesus suffers on our behalf, and God suffers with us when we suffer.**" Suffering with us, God pledges repeatedly: "**I will be with you.**" Jesus enters our heartbreaks and invites us to once again live life. Jesus' story becomes our story. As a result, our painful experiences have deeper significance than they otherwise would have.

- **Ask yourself how you might sharpen your awareness of God's abiding presence in your life, especially during times of heartbreak?**
- **How can you cultivate trust in God and reliance upon God's promises, particularly as you mourn?**
- **What helps us rely on other people, especially those with whom we share faith, in getting through our heartbreak?**

Pray that God will make you aware of his presence, and help you to understand you are never alone in your faith.

## **DAY 3**

Faith practices are specific activities bound to our faith that we may engage in routinely, and they provide us with

powerful tools as we work through our heartbreaks. The faith practices that Pastor Bob described on Sunday are Church Membership, Worship and Reading Scripture, and Serving Others.

### **Faith Practice #1 - Church Membership**

Church membership calls on us to be active in a shared life and mission. Some people feel that if they have a private spiritual life they don't need to engage with other Christians or worship as part of our church body. While each of us does have an important private relationship with God, we live the faith most fully when we embrace its principles and practices with others who are seeking to do the same. One's relationship with God cannot be entirely personal or private. Our mutual accountability and contributions bind us in distinctive ways to God, the Christian life, other people, and the world. In our times of heartbreak, we often feel isolated and disconnected. Membership in the church can provide the connection we need. Being part of a faith community adds to our sense of belonging.

- **Have you felt alone in your relationship with God?**
- **In what ways do you take part in church life?**
- **How can you expand your faith practices to include others?**
- **How does sharing your faith with others help to make your faith stronger?**

Pray for guidance in the ways of becoming a giving and present member of your Church family. Thank God for his presence in your life and for the gift of fellowship in scripture and worship.

## **DAY 4**

**Read [Hebrews 13:2](#)**

### **Faith Practice #2 - Worship and Reading Scripture**

Acts of worship and reading scripture enrich the way we live. When we embrace the Christian story, we encounter

God. We challenge ourselves to feel, think and act based on God's Word and what he asks from us. Often Scripture has words of comfort and guidance when we are dealing with heartbreak. Jesus' first followers engaged in worship and prayer, and read scripture together regularly, ***"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship. To the breaking of bread and the prayers."*** - ACTS 2:42

- **How do acts of worship and reading scripture affect you?**
- **Do you integrate worship and scripture into your daily life outside of Sundays?**

Pray and ask God to open your heart and mind to him, then take a moment and spend some time in God's Word today - whether revisiting one of your favorite parts of the Bible or letting God guide you to something new.

## DAY 5

### **Faith Practice #3 - Serving Others**

Moving beyond heartbreak comes when we reach beyond ourselves and serve others. Shifting your focus to others and their need offsets our tendency to focus too much on our own pain and needs. A focus on others also serves to alleviate their plight, so we are helping others and ourselves at the same time. The apostle Paul urges Christians in Galatia to ***"bear one another's burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ."*** ***Galatians 6:2.*** To walk with others in shared suffering reminds us that we are not the only ones who suffer.

- **Have you ever experienced a situation where your own pain was lessened by helping someone else? Is there someone you can reach out to now?**

Pray and ask God to help you shift your focus from yourself to someone else in need. Ask him to work through you and

to transform the person you are reaching out to, as well as yourself.

## DAY 6

Today is a day of reflection. Think about what you've read and learned this week. Remember that however genuinely hard things are, they don't have to be brutal and lonely if you will only invite God into them. Your heartbreaks are not permanent, not when they are in the hands of God.

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