

Grounded in Grace

Pictures of Hope and Redemption Pt 4 **Picture #3 Honoring Loss and the Courage to** **Grieve**

Blessed are those who mourn for they will be comforted.

Matthew 5:4



We continue in this series of using pictures from 9/11 as illustrations of how God uses difficulties and tragedies to redeem our stories.

The Blessing of Mourning Brokenness

Many of us may remember our feelings when the fire fighters raised the flag over the rubble of the world trade center. Though we may not have known the victims our hearts wept for the ones who never were to see 9/12.

There is a symbiotic relationship between mourning, blessing, and brokenness. When people mourn they have begun to understand the power of the brokenness of this world on a deeper level. And when people bless another by mourning with them, they have begun to understand the heart of God for this broken world on a deeper level. One of the most valuable gifts that we can ever give another is to bless them with our mourning, enter into their brokenness, and comfort them with our hearts. When we engage in this way with others, we are able to experience the heart of God. Below are five ways we can engage others with the comfort of grace.

Point to Ponder

“. . . It seems necessary to reestablish the basic principle that no one can help anyone without becoming involved, without entering with his whole person into the painful situation, without taking the risk of being hurt, wounded, or even destroyed in the process. The beginning and the end of all Christian leadership is to give your life for others. Thinking about martyrdom can be an escape unless we realize that real martyrdom means a witness that starts with the willingness to cry with those who cry, laugh with those who laugh, and to make one's own painful and joyous experiences available as sources of clarification and understanding.”

Henri Nouwen
(Wounded Healer p 72)

From the devotional series: Pictures of Hope and Redemption- Steve Benson © 2012

www.groundedinGrace.net

The Power of Mourning Brokenness

1) Embrace tears of mourning as the window into God's soul (John 11:33-35)

"Come and see, Lord," they replied. ³⁵ Jesus wept. ³⁶ Then the Jews said, "See how he loved him!"

When Jesus finally arrives at Mary and Martha's home, he embraces them with his tears. Notice that Jesus is deeply moved and his tears allowed people to see his love for them. In embracing other's tears, we allow others to see the Father's love for them. When embracing a troubled heart for others, we become the windows for others to see God's soul.

2) Let silence be part of the healing process (Mark 4:38-39)

³⁸ Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?"

Jesus waits until the disciples are willing to listen or until they have run out of all other options. He waits in silence (or sleeping) for the disciples to get to the place they need to be. Silence is a huge part of the healing process. Many times we need to sit in silence and allow our presence to be the instrument of healing. We need to wait until others are at the place they need to be, and silence is the instrument that will lead them there.

3) Be a man/woman of truth by leading them to the truth (John 4:15-18)

¹⁶ He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back." ¹⁷ "I have no husband," she replied. Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. ¹⁸ The fact is, you have had five husbands

Jesus builds a relationship with a woman who is in the need of healing. This conversation becomes a transforming moment in her life. Jesus confronts her with truth about her situation and her soul. Just like Jesus, we need to lead people to the truth by not only speaking truth but by being truth. Just like Jesus, our sharing of pondering questions and reflective statements will give them a mirror to see their souls.

4) Allow your personal pain to be a conduit for healing. (Isaiah 53:4-6)

"But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed."

Jesus' pain on the cross led to our healing and redemption. God will also use our pain to lead others toward hope and healing and, in the process, we will continue to be healed. When we are able to be vulnerable with our own pain, we are entering back into our stories and therefore able to give comfort, hope, and healing to others through our own experiences.

5) Be a wounded hope for others redemption (Revelation 21:4)

⁴ He will wipe every tear from their eyes. . . He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!"

Our wounds are precious to him. And because they are, he will redeem them. In fact, he is redeeming them now. When we are able to make other people's wounds precious to us, we become the power of God's redemptive hand. When we dare to get involved with wounded hearts, we become a part of God's powerful redemption.