

MATTERS OF THE HEART

HEALING & WHOLENESS THROUGH CHRIST

Jennifer Maggio

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Single Moms, Believers in Christ Jesus, let's discuss matters of the heart. Many of you have endured brokenheartedness in past seasons. Right now, some of you are in a place where the ache in your chest just doesn't seem to fade. The struggle to get out of bed in the morning is real. Fighting back tears at the grocery store is a daily struggle. Some of you secretly gasp for air to breathe in a crowd, because the wounds of heartache are so raw and real. Many of us have experienced the overwhelming feeling of heartbreak that leaves our chest aching and cheeks stained with tears. But what do we do about it? How is our healing process different from the world's?

Heartbreak can be born from trauma, grief, betrayal, or adversity. It isn't just romantic, but it certainly can be. Our kids can break our hearts. Our friends can. Our parents can. We can endure much that leaves us grieving. Heartbreak can be incredibly isolating and often leaves us licking wounds alone and afraid that we'll never mend. At the height of heartbreak, we can feel hopeless. But hear me today, oh beloved one. The Great Physician heals all wounds. If you find yourself in the midst of pain today, as a Believer in Christ, know that your healing is indeed on its way. The question becomes, what can you do along the way to help facilitate your healing as the Lord binds up your brokenheartedness?



The world says, "Follow your heart." But God's Word says in Jeremiah 17:9 (NKJV): *"The heart is deceitful above all things And desperately wicked; Who can know it? Another translation says, 'The heart is incurably sick.'"* In biblical Hebrew, the heart is where we feel feelings and think thoughts. In fact, ancient Israelites didn't even have a word for "brain" that we know of. The heart is also where we make choices. The concept of the "heart" is best understood as the "inner person" – the seat of our mind (thoughts), emotions (feelings), and will (intentions). The Bible tells

us that our hearts (which are our inner selves – mind, will, & emotions) are fundamentally broken because of sin. The good news is that God can change our hearts as we put our faith in Him.

Proverbs 4:23 says, *“Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.”*

The world says to follow your heart, yet God says to guard and protect it. While it is super popular and culturally normal to say, “Trust your heart or follow your heart,” the very nature of our heart – our flesh and emotions — is deceitful. We can get very confused by trusting in our hearts. In Jeremiah 17, the Prophet Jeremiah is giving us reason to be cautious about the inclinations and direction of the heart. He noted how the evil heart of the people of Judah had led them astray. And YOUR HEART can lead you astray! So what do you do as you nurse real pain and desperately desire healing and wholeness? Well, here are a few things to consider:

LEARN TO SIT WITH THE PAIN.

Ugh, we’re starting out of the gate with no fun. Don’t rush through the recovery process too quickly (or attempt to), or you’ll likely find yourself back at square one. *It takes time to heal, and a half-healed wound will always reopen.* It is easy to find yourself rushing through the recovery process, focused on the next “task” to be completed, mainly because healing is uncomfortable. Discomfort often breeds revelation, so sit in the discomfort of the pain for a little while. Take the time necessary to evaluate the pain, understand what happened, and how the pain could be avoided in the future or what can be learned as a result of it. Pain can birth wisdom. It can birth purpose. This pain may be necessary for a life lesson for your next season, or this pain may be needed so that in the future, you can help someone going through a similar experience.

TAKE YOUR THOUGHTS CAPTIVE.

When experiencing [heartbreak](#), it’s easy for our thoughts to get away from us. We often go down a rabbit hole of untruths. I’m a bad mom. I’m never going to find the one. No one will ever want to be with me. I don’t deserve happiness. Romans 12: 2 says, ‘And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.’ We are to be renewing our minds constantly. There may be no bigger challenge for the Believer than taking our thoughts captive — every knee bows to the name of Jesus. Every lie of the enemy must bow. Every rampant unbiblical thought from culture must bow. We must get good and renew our minds according to the word of God. Philippians 4:8 says, *“And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.”* What are you spending time thinking about? Is it true? Is it praiseworthy? Is it honorable? Feelings lie and fleet. Truth remains.

RELINQUISH THE GUILT.

Let's face it. Sometimes, broken hearts are a direct result of a decision we made or a sin we pursued. Perhaps we did something unethical on the job and lost the dream job. Maybe we lost our marriage due to an affair. There are many instances where a broken heart is a direct result of our actions. (To be clear, there are many instances when this isn't the case, as well) However, if you are struggling with guilt, ensure you have repented for any action that requires it, and accept the love of the Father to move on. *Allowing guilt to permeate our futures only hinders the healing process.* Jesus spreads sin as far as the East is to the West in Ps. 103:12. There is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus.

EMBRACE ANGER FOR A SEASON.

Ecclesiastes 3:1 says there is a time for everything under the sun. It sounds crazy to "embrace" anger, but acknowledging that anger can sometimes be a necessary step in healing a broken heart. Maybe your broken heart is because cancer stole a loved one's life. Your broken heart could be due to a betrayal or dishonesty. It's okay to be angry. Jesus flipped the tables in the temple. He had righteous anger. If you have a child that has been abused, anger would be a natural response to pain. But don't camp out there too long. Anger, when held onto for too long, can turn into bitterness. *Bitterness will always lead to more wounds and heartbreak.* Acknowledge your anger, embrace it for a brief season, and then work through it.

DON'T ISOLATE.

Dealing with a broken heart often leaves us with the desire to stay locked away in the solace of our homes. *We want to stay in the comfort of our beds, but staying cooped up inside day in and day out is a recipe for disaster.* Force yourself to get out of the house, even when it feels impossible. Maybe getting out of the house looks like taking a brief walk outdoors or something as simple as sitting outside in the sun. Instead of ordering your groceries for pick up, go to the grocery store yourself and peruse the aisles. Or maybe take a trip to the park with your kiddos and watch the joy on their faces as they play on the playground. Go out and grab your favorite ice cream and enjoy it outdoors.

SPEND TIME WITH LOVED ONES.



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Isolation is a common side effect of dealing with a broken heart. If you are going to move from heartbroken to healed, it will require some effort on your part. Instead of giving in to the temptation to isolate and ignore the texts from your loved ones, force yourself to respond. Go even further and schedule a time to hang out with those closest to you. Have your friends come over for a movie night or go out to grab lunch or coffee. Maybe you visit a family member you haven't seen or reconnect with an old friend. When appropriate, you can even share your current struggles with them and allow them to help you through it. *Whatever it looks like for you, commit to spending more time with loved ones when you are struggling with a broken heart.* Good company can be healing.

CREATE A GRATITUDE LIST.

Sure, you may not feel grateful in the midst of a heartbreak, but Ps. 107:1-2 says, “*Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever. Let the redeemed of the LORD*



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MINISTRIES

say so, Whom He has redeemed from the hand of the enemy.” You have much to be thankful for. Posturing your heart towards gratitude and thanksgiving in the midst of pain shifts things spiritually. This will shift your perspective from an attitude of lack to an attitude of abundance. You serve a God of overflow. God is in the miracle-making business, and he will rescue you again just as He has in the past, but in the wait, you praise. You posture your heart towards thanksgiving for all He's done.

FORGIVE.

The pain that we have endured has been immense and sometimes long-standing. The disappointments are countless. Consequently, we want someone to pay. We want justification for our pain. Vengeance rages. Bitterness grows. We want someone to pay for how they have hurt us, our families, and our children. But forgiveness is an act of discipline, not emotion. Jesus taught us how to pray in the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6. He says in vs. 12: “And forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us.” *Forgiveness is the key that is going to unlock your freedom. It will unlock your freedom to parent better, manage your money more effectively, hear from the Holy Spirit more clearly, and laugh without fear of your future.* Forgiveness is a Kingdom principle. And because we have been taught to follow our heart and not the Word of God, you do not

understand that failure to adhere to this instruction from the Lord gives legal access to the enemy to torment you. And how that torment looks is often things like fear, depression, anxiety, panic, anger, and others.

The Lord says He spreads our sin as far as the East is to the West, but we often can't forgive ourselves. You need to forgive yourself for your failures. Many of us have messed up – too many times to count. It's time to ask the Lord for forgiveness (which we know is repentance), forgive ourselves, and move on. God is moving you into your next season. Forgive yourself, but don't stop there.

Forgive your children when they have disappointed you. Forgive your ex for the abuse. Forgive your parents when they've hurt you. Forgive every harbored resentment for comments made and criticism administered. It is time to let the childhood abuse go. It's time to forgive the father who walked out. Some of you do not know why your life is so very hard right now --- it is because you have not unlocked the freedom of forgiveness. Today is that day.

CHECK OUT DEUTERONOMY 30 VS. 6:

“The LORD, your God, will change your heart and the hearts of all your descendants so that you will love him with all your heart and soul, and so you may live!”

It is time for you to surrender your life to the Lord and allow Him to change your heart so you may live.

MEET THE AUTHOR

JENNIFER MAGGIO

Jennifer Maggio is an award-winning author and speaker, whose personal journey through homelessness, abuse, and single parenting is leaving audiences around the globe riveted. At 19, Maggio was raising two children, while living in government housing on food stamps and welfare. She shares with great openness her pain, mistakes, and journey to find hope in Christ. She ultimately became an 11-time Circle of Excellence winner in Corporate America. She left her corporate successes behind to launch a global initiative to see single moms living a life of total freedom from financial failures, parenting woes, and emotional issues. Her passion is contagious and her story has been used to inspire thousands around the globe. For more info, visit her website at jennifermaggio.com.

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