

WE'RE ALL BROKEN AND IT'S OK – GOD LOVES US ANYWAY

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By Laurel Aiyana

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Recently, I took a trip to Maine to visit my mother. I've always been very close to her, but our relationship has been strained since I joined a fundamentalist church and started working on inner healing. This has involved pastoral counseling, which included healing for sins, including general ones - both my sins, sins of ancestors, sins committed against me, and my sinful reactions to the people inflicting them. Healing of memories has been a part of the process as well. It's been a wonderful process, and a grueling process, as I unlock the layers of self.

This trip to Maine, my mother made an off-the-cuff comment that I felt that I was an abused child. By her tone of voice, I could tell she took this personally, and it bothered her greatly. I'm assuming my attempts at getting help for myself, were to her, a way of transferring blame onto her for my issues in my life. That has never been my intent. At some point we all have to stop blaming our parents, circumstances, and start taking responsibility for our own problems and healing. I could see, however, that I had shared too much with her about my process, which I thought would be exciting to her, and she misinterpreted it, partly, I believe, because of the differences in our spiritual views.

After pondering this incident, and many others that had occurred in my life, what I discovered was, that we're all broken, as a result of the sin committed first by Adam and Eve. We all make mistakes and this affects not only ourselves, but our families. Personally, I have adversely affected my children's lives in ways that may require them to seek psychotherapy or spiritual counseling, and so did my mother, father, and their parents. We can't help it - we're members of a fallen race.

Fortunately, we can find redemption, with the Lord's help, with forgiveness for ourselves, and by forgiving those who have sinned against us. It's easier to forgive when we look at it from the words of Jesus, himself, in John 8:7, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first," in speaking of the woman caught in adultery. We are all sinners, who am I to judge another when I too am a sinner. Judgment is mentioned again as Luke quotes Jesus again in Luke 6:41, "And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye?" These perspectives help us learn to forgive. Hurting people hurt others, and if we possess our own degree of brokenness, we have hurt others as well. It makes loving your enemies, and forgiving your parents

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when you choose the perspective of Jesus.

I present myself to God, my Father, regularly, for forgiveness, and He gives it to me, because He loves me unconditionally, even in the broken state, before I've changed every wrong behavior or attitude. He

loves me right where I'm at. He may not love all the behaviors, but He loves me just as much broken, as when we are whole. If only all of us could embrace this unconditional love for ourselves and others, but it is harder for us to do without a little help from above. Unfortunately, we humans don't always get A's in the course of life on unconditional love. Our past wounds often cause us to take things personally, and we react, not respond appropriately. I have been guilty of such behaviors in the past, and boy, that has landed me in so much trouble! I feel my mother is guilty of that with me, or is that a judgment - if so, I'm sorry mother! I've been guilty of not accepting her just as she is. I know in my heart that my mother has always loved me, and still does. I don't hate her for being human and making mistakes in raising me. We're all guilty in making mistakes in our relationships with others. I do get upset that she doesn't understand that my desire for inner healing isn't a personal attack against her. I've made mistakes in sharing too much of my healing process without realizing it would be a trigger for her into feeling I was attacking her parenting skills. My mother is a hurting person, I am a hurting person. My mother needs my prayers not lack of forgiveness from me. We also need to forgive and accept ourselves - broken earthen vessels.

Occasionally, I still manage to beat myself up because I know my mistakes, reactions and wrong choices have adversely affected not only my life, but the life of my children. What I am forgetting is that God is bigger than my mistakes, and He can help both my, and my children recover from these mistakes, as I can recover from my parents mistakes. Choosing a path to inner healing isn't transferring blame to parents or others, it's the opposite. It teaches us not to transfer blame, and stay stuck in the past, but to accept responsibility for our own healing process. It frees us from the past to live in the now, and yearn for a more positive future.

Mom, I love you, and I don't blame you for being a member of the human race, and not being perfect. I couldn't measure up to a standard of perfection myself. As far as I know, Jesus Christ is the only one that can lay claim to a perfectly sinless life. But, through Him, we gain salvation for our sins, so we can go to the Father, in Jesus' name, perfected by His dying for our sins. That is why God offers the gift of his forgiveness, and his unconditional love. We just need to learn to demonstrate His unconditional love wherever we can.

My Mom once said as she was being wheeled in for brain surgery, that if she died, she would know she had lived a life where she was loved. I know this is true for me too, and I know I was loved by my mother, and still am. I think so many people need to be showered with love to know God is real, and to feel His unconditional love. If we can all just spread some love whenever possible, whoa, how wonderful. We need to love our enemies, because they are just broken vessels in need of more love too. By demonstrating forgiveness and acceptance to others, and forgiving and accepting ourselves, we can achieve the healing we need, and discover who we really are. I am just a person in search of self, with no masks or false selves. We are all want unconditional love - we are starved for it! I have four pets because they're better at providing unconditional love than I am. That's why pet therapy is so effective, and people with pets tend to live longer. Animals have perfected something we humans

haven't, and we call ourselves a higher species? We can learn from them, and small children. Even when we mistreat them, they give us back their unconditional love, capable of no less. We learn to be unforgiving and conditional in sharing our love. Pets and children are such wonderful blessings from

the Lord. They can model unconditional love to us! Wow! God is good!

At age 41, I am attempting to reinvent myself and follow my passion for writing. For years, I've done the responsible thing, and have worked the job I thought provided best for my family, but now, I want more. I want to follow my dream and become a Christian writer.

From Orphans to Royalty

By Joyce C. Lock

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The first time I read Ezekiel 16, I cried all the way through it. It's a story of God's heart, as a betrayed husband; with every jealousy, hurt, rage, or emotion felt by humans.

Yet, whenever we're hurting, few consider if we're doing the same things to God. Whether spiritually, literally, or both ... perhaps, each of us has once been such a person who betrayed God.

Just as dust returns to dust, blood returns to blood (vs. 22, 36), 'til the pride of man be broken (vs.15) and we're ready to accept God's way (vs. 55); whatever that may be. And, just when you see your blood for what it is and you're ready to accept the punishment you know you deserve, God reaches down and loves you in ways you never dream; restoring you to a better position than you ever had before (vs. 60–63).

Once an atonement is received (unlawful/a shame to ever speak of again), you'll never forget the awesome love of God, throughout all eternity. "He loves me! He really, really loves ME!"

A love like that, we never ever want to betray, again. It breaks our heart to break His. We finally begin serving God for who He is and we learn to love like He does, letting Him live through us.

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Without God, spiritually, we're like orphans left on a doorstep.

With Him, we're royalty from the inside out.

The devil lies. There is nothing between.

~*~

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Joyce C. Lock is a published author, poet, and columnist. In addition, she founded and maintains the e-mail ministries "Heavenly Inspirations" <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HeavenlyInspirations/> and "Share a Smile" <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/smilesaring/>. Joyce's writings encourage us in our relationship with God and each other.



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