

Olympics

We love to win and be winners and know winners

Sally Robbins (example)

2 Corinthians 4:7-10

But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.

“Path of Pain”

Let me read you this psalm

I am feeble and utterly crushed; I groan in anguish of heart. All my longings lie open before you, O Lord; my sighing is not hidden from you. My heart pounds, my strength fails me; even the light has gone from my eyes. My friends and companions avoid me because of my wounds; my neighbors stay far away. Those who seek my life set their traps, those who would harm me talk of my ruin; all day long they plot deception. I am like a deaf man, who cannot hear, like a mute, who cannot open his mouth; I have become like a man who does not hear, whose mouth can offer no reply. I wait for you, O LORD; you will answer, O Lord my God. For I said, "Do not let them gloat or exalt themselves over me when my foot slips." For I am about to fall, and my pain is ever with me. I confess my iniquity; I am troubled by my sin. Many are those who are my vigorous enemies; those who hate me without reason are numerous. Those who repay my good with evil slander me when I pursue what is good. O LORD, do not forsake me; be not far from me, O my God. Come quickly to help me, O Lord my Savior.

Psalms 38:8-22

Perhaps no where in the Bible, except maybe Job, do we hear a more honest heart speaking about the inner pain and anguish which tears at the inner soul.

C'mon Ron. Can't you preach something uplifting.

One of the greatest steps we can take, understand who we are.

- We are broken people

is no longer able to fulfill the purpose for which it was produced.

- We act out of brokenness
If you break your leg, you limp
If you are a jar of clay, you will be fragile
- We are called as God's people to embrace our brokenness

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart,
O God, you will not despise.

Psalms 51:17

(we said last week that this brokenness has to do with...)
Relationships (God, others, ourselves)

Genesis 3:1-13

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'" "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?" He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid." And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?" The man said, "The woman you put here with me she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it." Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

Our brokenness extends to all of our relationships therefore our pain is as pervasive...

God.

, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."

What was man and woman's response to God? Fear... hiding...

In relationships we pull back, we hide ourselves out of fear

I can't trust you...

Others.

"The woman you put here with me she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."

Blame. "She did this". I can't trust others.

Myself.

"they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings"

Shame. Something must be wrong w me.

God created us for relationship

We desire intimacy

But that quality of relationship is NOT achieved

4 Levels of Relationship

Isolation. Cut off. Homeless example.

Connection. Contact. Many churchgoers are in this category.

Community. Cooperation.

Intimacy. The highest level of relationship. No sexual (not limited to marriage). We will explore this further. For now: Knowing and being known.

Another way

Acceptance -- Belonging -- Value...

The major questions we must answer

1. My Pain: what does it "feel" like
2. My Pain: how do I sedate it (acceptably and unacceptably)
3. My Pain: what do I do with it from here?
(what does it mean to embrace my pain)