

## DAY 3

# BROKEN

I am exhausted. Maybe as empty as I have ever been. Zombie-like. Numb. Physically, mentally, and emotionally baked. I completely hit the wall last Saturday night. I had only been away one night, but it was the weekend after we moved into a new house and the week after I got home from South Africa. Sometimes life crams more into 14 days than a person can absorb.

When it's more than I can take, I cry. That night I drug myself and my luggage into the house sometime after midnight, hugged the baby-sitter, and retucked all my sleeping children. There I was at home, surrounded by my blessings, safe in my bed, just returning from two rewarding days of speaking. And I cried myself to sleep.

In the next few days, exhaustion seemed to highlight every area of my brokenness. It magnified my frustration over every imperfection. I have learned not to make any major life decisions from my emptiness, but the places this poverty of spirit takes me can be depressing; paralyzing; and, if I stay there, overwhelming.

Have you ever known this kind of poverty of spirit?  yes  no

How does emptiness affect you emotionally?

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How does it impact your relationships?

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Maybe one of the most frustrating things about being a woman is living inside an invisible ebb and flow of energy and emotion. When I hit the wall, my energy is gone, my heart is flat, and all I can see are my flaws. All I can feel is my poor spirit. I begin to evaluate every area of my life like I'm a failure. I can hear my poor spirit making out a list: *I should bake more and dust more and give more and exercise more and play more and pray more*—just as I'm falling asleep in my weariness.

When all you can see are the flaws, what do you zero in on first?

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*“Blessed are the poor  
in spirit,  
because theirs  
is the kingdom  
of heaven’ ”*

**Matthew 5:3**

**When you are spiritually empty and tripping over your failures, how do you think God sees you?**

- He's mad at me and rolling His heavenly eyes.
- He's tired of me asking for forgiveness and strength.
- He puts up with me, but He's disappointed.
- His love and patience never change.

It's embarrassing to come to Jesus with a poor spirit. I think, *Look at all God has done for me. I should be stronger. I should be an overcomer. I should have renewed energy because of my joy over His love for me. I should be healed by now. More godly by now. Near perfect by now.*

What gives me hope is coming to know the heart of Jesus in this passage. When He began to talk to the people about becoming more like the kingdom, He could have said anything like, "Work hard, pray hard, give everything and it probably still won't be enough to please God." Instead, our tender Savior began here, with blessings. In Matthew 5:3, we can see for ourselves that there is blessing for the poor in spirit.

**According to the following verses, what does God do for the brokenhearted?**

**Psalm 34:18** \_\_\_\_\_

**Psalm 147:3** \_\_\_\_\_

**Isaiah 61:1** \_\_\_\_\_

Maybe, like me, you really need to deal with your desperate heart. Maybe you're not in this place just now, but you'll need to know what to do the next time your spirit is poor and your brokenness is as bright as a neon sign.

Here is the answer. Here is the way toward blessing: Lay your broken, poor spirit on the altar of God. Here's what I mean, step-by-step:

**1. Figure out where you are.**

Sometimes you have to get away from the daily spin to be able to see. You may need some quiet moments or places to begin where you are.

**As you begin to take inventory of your spirit, check the statements at the top of page 17 that describe where you are.**

- I feel myself smiling, but I'm empty underneath the smile.
- My heart is willing, but my body is tired.
- My heart is broken, and it keeps breaking in all the same places.
- I have made too many commitments, and I'm overwhelmed.
- I have separated myself from everyone, and I am lonely.
- My wounds are taking forever to heal.
- I'm just really, really lost.

**2. Take the truth of where you are and lift it to heaven.**

When I give an attitude, a sin, or my brokenness to God, I come to Him in prayer, usually timid at first and mostly embarrassed that I still have this stuff to deal with. Sometimes I lie on my floor and pray through my tears. Sometimes I write out my prayers in my journal. Sometimes I pray outloud in the car while I'm driving. However it happens, what is important is that my poor spirit is turned toward God. What is inward is being turned upward, handed over to my heavenly Father.

**Read the words of David from the Psalms passages listed in the margin and write the promises God makes to one who is wrestling through his or her own humanity.**

**David models for us over and over the power of truth before God. Write your own prayer of truth. You may need to step out of your comfort zone and say things to God that you've never voiced.**

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I pray that as you speak to God you will find a deeper intimacy with Him. I want you to know a freedom that only comes from openness. I want you to begin to desire this kind of exchange with God. When your spirit is poor, I want you to desire the presence of God instead of the shadows of loneliness or the distraction of sin.



**Psalm 32:3-8**

**Psalm 34:4-7**

**Psalm 34:17-20**

**Psalm 38:5-22**