

**So I'm thankful for the scars
'Cause without them I wouldn't know Your heart
And I know they'll always tell of who You are
So forever I am thankful for the scars**

Thankful for the scars... Scars come when the skin has been broken. Like on this man's arm...



There aren't scars without brokenness. Yet, anyone knows...if you've got scars...once you have them, they're almost impenetrable. It's true...once the skin scars, it's tougher than the skin around it by far.

We all have scars that come from brokenness. You've been scarred, I've been scarred...our hearts have been wounded...opened by pain...severed, lacerated by heartache...and that means we're all, to some degree, broken people. Think back over your life. Go back to your childhood. As hard as it might be to think about it...we've all been wounded. I'm certain you can remember times in your past where you were hurt, mistreated, misjudged, used. Those were times of pain, seasons of life that were difficult and perhaps even devastating. Times of struggle that led to brokenness and scars.

Tonight, we're going to see Brokenness by way of a fisherman from Bethsaida, just NE of Capernaum. He was a man who would be chosen by Jesus to lead the 12 Apostles. His name was Simon, whom Jesus later changed to Peter, Cephas, Rock... I'm going to let this picture represent Peter...



Peter was a rough, tough, brazen fisherman who had a lot of passion and a big mouth. He was bold...even arrogant...he was tempestuous and flighty...and he would end up broken.

John 13:36-38

³⁶ Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus answered him, "Where I am going you cannot follow me now, but you will follow afterward." ³⁷ Peter said to him, "Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you." ³⁸ Jesus answered, "Will you lay down your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow till you have denied me three times."

The Apostle Matthew also records Peter's boasting...but we see something else... See the screens:

Matthew 26:33-35

³³ Peter answered him, "Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away." ³⁴ Jesus said to him, "Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times." ³⁵ Peter said to him, "Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you!" And all the disciples said the same."

Peter bragged before the other Apostles that they might fall away...but he wouldn't. Did Peter deny Jesus? Yes...3 times... Peter was, up to this point...much like this pot...looked pretty good. All put together... The leader of the Apostles...in fact it was his home in Capernaum that was home-base for the Lord Jesus Christ in His ministry. It was Peter who had acknowledged the fact that Jesus was the Messiah.

Matthew 16:15-17

¹⁵ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷ And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven."

So, all is well...until the night of Jesus' arrest when Peter ends up outside of the High Priest, Caiaphas' house where Jesus has been taken for a mock trial...

Luke 22:54-62

⁵⁴ Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house, and Peter was following at a distance. ⁵⁵ And when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat down among them. ⁵⁶ Then a servant girl, seeing him as he sat in the light and looking closely at him, said, "This man also was with him." ⁵⁷ But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know him." ⁵⁸ And a little later someone else saw him and said, "You also are one of them."

But Peter said, "Man, I am not." ⁵⁹ And after an interval of about an hour still another insisted, saying, "Certainly this man also was with him, for he too is a Galilean." ⁶⁰ But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking about." And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. ⁶¹ And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times." ⁶² And he went out and wept bitterly.

Mark's Gospel...which is really the account of how Peter saw the life and events of Jesus records this...

Mark 14:72

⁷² And immediately the rooster crowed a second time. And Peter remembered how Jesus had said to him, "Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times." And he broke down and wept. [□]

It happened...AND HE BROKE DOWN...

Broken!!!! Peter is now a broken man, and the sordid events of Jesus' death would cascade from there. Jesus would be led from Caiaphas kangaroo court back forth from Pilate to Herod and back to Pilate. He would be hanging on a cross within hours. **And so, with the death of Jesus, hope died in Peter over being right with Him again.** Can you imagine the pain...the brokenness...

What was it like for those three days...Friday, Saturday, Sunday...the grief must have been overwhelming! Think of it... Jesus is dead and Peter's life as he knew it was over. What now?

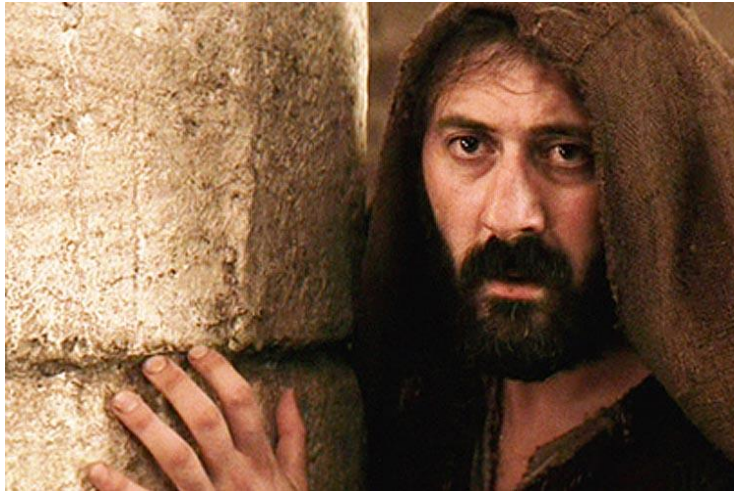
You know, Scripture is silent about what Peter did after he went out and wept bitterly...we know nothing of Peter's whereabouts or activities until we see his name again in Mark 16...

Mark 16:7

⁷ But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you."

There was Peter's name... Go tell the disciples and Peter... He gets another chance... Brokenness doesn't mean the end! Go to Galilee? Wait a minute...why Galilee? That's where it all began...that's where Jesus chose many of these men in and around the Sea of Galilee...they were fishermen...and it's where I believe Jesus wanted to come to...HOME...to show the people there, many of whom perhaps couldn't afford or get away to come to Jerusalem for the Passover that He was indeed alive!

And so, the Apostles go to Galilee and wait... What will they do? Now as you are turning, remember Jesus has already appeared to the 12 in Jerusalem. And I believe Jesus had a time where he and Peter could talk. Can you imagine the relief of Peter!!! Or was it fear...



What was that meeting like? Was he afraid to come out and see Jesus? We have no idea...but, I believe it was a tender meeting. Because Jesus is kind...and tender...

You'll remember Jesus appeared to the disciples on the day of his resurrection in the upper room. 10 of the 12 were there. Judas was dead and Thomas was missing. A week later, Thomas saw Jesus and believed...so, it's after this first week of Jesus' resurrection that 7 of the apostles head back to Galilee...a 90-mile trip north to where most of these men called home.

John 21:1-19

¹After this Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, and he revealed himself in this way. ²Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together. ³Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. ⁴Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. ⁵Jesus said to them, "Children, do you have any fish?" They answered him, "No." ⁶He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because of the quantity of fish. ⁷That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea. ⁸The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about a hundred yards^[a] off. ⁹When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread. ¹⁰Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." ¹¹So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn. ¹²Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." Now none of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. ¹³Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. ¹⁴This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead. ¹⁵When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." ¹⁶He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep." ¹⁷He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. ¹⁸Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry

you where you do not want to go.”¹⁹ (This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, “Follow me.”

“Follow me”...in the Greek means, “Keep on following me.” Yes, Peter was scarred, but now Peter was strong...and he was humble...and he wasn’t finished... Jesus restored Him publicly to the role of leadership... And so, now the light of Jesus could truly shine out of his brokenness.

It’s when we’re broken that people can see the light of Jesus.

You know, Peter would preach on the day of Pentecost and 3,000 would be saved...no more denying Jesus... He would lead the first church... He would eventually stand before people who would once again say, “Do you follow this Jesus?” And Peter would say...

Acts 4:11-13

¹¹ This Jesus^[a] is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone.^[b]¹² And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men^[c] by which we must be saved.”¹³ Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.

The light of Jesus...shining through brokenness.

Think about your life tonight. How are you? How do you feel? Do you feel broken? Defeated? Maybe you don’t. That’s good! But, I’m going to guess there will come a day...another occasion in your life where some circumstance breaks you. It could be the death of a loved one... It could be a broken relationship or a financial crisis. It could be a lost job, or a wayward child, a betrayal, or bad diagnosis from the doctor. Listen...that event doesn’t have to define you. Just like with Peter...he’s betrayal did NOT define him.

See this man in the suit...that’s Tony Bennett...



is the basketball coach for the 2019 NCAA Men’s Basketball Championship Team, the Virginia Cavaliers. They beat Texas Tech in overtime back in April 85-77 to win the National Championship. After the game, Coach Bennett received a text message from Dabo Swinney, the football coach of the reigning national champion Clemson Tigers that said:

“Let the light that shines in you be brighter than the light that shines on you.”

Dabo Swinney, Clemson Tigers, Football Coach.

You see, one year earlier, Virginia wasn't celebrating...they were broken...they were the first #1 seed in the history of the NCAA tournament to lose to a #16 seed, UMBC...



UMBC celebrated...UVA and their team was devastated...along Klye Guy, pictured with his jersey to his face. Kyle had that picture as his twitter profile for the next year...to remind him of the pain...and to push him to do better. Coach Bennett said this the next day, after the game:

“Sometimes when your worst-case scenario comes to life, it brings not only shame and sadness, but also a strangely massive sense of relief. You wake up the next morning to find that the sun hasn't exploded.” Tony Bennett, Virginia Cavaliers, Basketball Coach

When interviewed a few days later, about the embarrassing loss, Coach Bennett said:

“I think there was a bigger plan going on here. I hope that it's a message for some people out there that there can be hope and joy and resiliency. I'm thankful for what happened... Running away from our failures just means continuing to run towards some theoretical place without failures, only increasing our disappointment the next time, when we find out we're still not perfect. I'm choosing to embrace this pain and learn from it. I believe if you learn to use it right, adversity will buy you a ticket to a place you couldn't have gone any other way.” Tony Bennett, Virginia Cavaliers Basketball Coach

BTW as a side-note...



Kyle Guy is a Christian. He returned for another year at UVA. And he and the team made it to the National semifinal game against Auburn. In that game Kyle Guy would hit a three pointer with 6.5

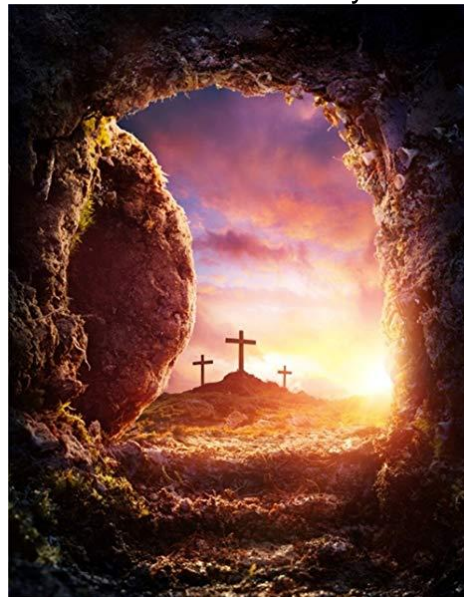
seconds to go and then hit three free throws with .6 seconds to win the game and send them to the finals. This is amazing... 38 second video...

Now look at Kyle Guy:



The Virginia Cavaliers' coaches and players of 2018-19 will always be connected with a devastating loss...failure...a broken, busted season...much like Peter in that courtyard denying Jesus...but they will also always be connected and linked to a National Championship that happened the very next year...just as Peter will be connected with being the leader of the first Church...a bold witness for Jesus! **Two polar opposite experiences help explain and magnify each other. Experiences of catastrophe that would no longer be marks of shame, but instead the broken pieces that let the light shine through.**

The same is true of the devastation of the cross of Calvary and the empty Garden Tomb:



Everything looked destroyed, dead and broken on Friday...but through the perspective of an empty tomb...Friday led to Sunday! The death of Jesus must always be linked with His resurrection, for with that cross, He carried our failures, our shortcomings, our insecurities, our regrets, our jealousy, our stubbornness, our brokenness, our sin. Yes, He was nailed to a cross, His body broken for me and for you...but, it was because of His brokenness...which led to a resurrection so that we might be saved. See the words to that song again: Scars:

**Waking up to a new sunrise
Looking back from the other side
I can see now with open eyes
Darkest water and deepest pain
I wouldn't trade it for anything
'Cause my brokenness brought me to You
And these wounds are a story You'll use**

**So I'm thankful for the scars
'Cause without them I wouldn't know Your heart
And I know they'll always tell of who You are
So forever I am thankful for the scars**

**Now I'm standing in confidence
With the strength of Your faithfulness
And I'm not who I was before
No, I don't have to fear anymore**

**I can see, I can see
How You delivered me
In Your hands, In Your feet
I found my victory**

**So I'm thankful for Your scars
'Cause without them I wouldn't know Your heart
And with my life I'll tell of who You are
So forever I am thankful for the scars**
