

The Victory Already Won

Matthew 12:20 *A bruised reed He will not break, and a smoldering wick He will not snuff out, till he leads justice to victory.*

In the Bible, a reed often symbolizes weakness. A bruised reed, one bent or broken, describes weakness at its weakest. We resemble bruised reeds when we hurt or face disappointment. Some have even renounced their faith when they felt that God treated them unfairly. Our text tells us that Jesus will not break us when we become bruised reeds. On the contrary, Jesus heals broken lives. When we accept Him as our savior, our purpose becomes to please Him, not to please ourselves. He wrought us, bought us, and sought us. He has the right to set the agenda for our lives. Our experiences in life are meant to mold our character. They should strengthen our faith. The Christian's ultimate life goal is to be made more like Jesus, not to be happy as the world defines happiness. When we accept this, we will find something better than happiness: we will find joy and peace. So remember that when God breaks our hearts and spirits, he can take the fragments and mold them into the perfect shape to make us usable for Himself.

A young man named Dave was the junior varsity baseball coach for our oldest son's high school team many years ago. Dave was an upright Christian with unassailable character. He influenced the character of many young boys and others. He married a young woman who was a former student of mine at the university. Dave was diagnosed with cancer, but carried on with his life until, still in his twenties, he was hospitalized to fight his final battle with pain. Shortly before his death, he drew his young wife's face close to his lips and said to her, "God is good. Remember that God is good."

Death is simply the end for unbelievers. It is ultimate victory for believers. Dave is free from pain and rests in perfect peace with His Savior for eternity. His earthly life continues to bless others because that life was dedicated to others and to God. We are not to question God when a life is taken early. A short life lived in God's honor is a treasure. A long life lived without God in it is a tragedy. Every believer should rejoice in the victory already won.