

A SPACE FOR GRACE

"Sow for yourselves righteousness, reap the fruit of unfailing love, and break up your unplowed ground..." Hosea 10:12 (NIV)

Life is good. Life is hard. Life is full of amazing moments. Life is dotted with things that bump into my happy. Up and down and up and down... do you ever feel this way? I can wake up cheerful and determined to keep a good attitude today and then someone makes a hurtful comment. Someone makes a mess without bothering to stop and clean it up. An unexpected bill makes my pulse race. I get an ugly email that starts off, "Shame on you." Lovely. These things crash down on me like a wave I didn't see coming. I go under. My heart gets snagged. My emotions well up. My attitude heads south. I suspect you understand. Yesterday, after the "shame on you" email, I lifted up a little prayer to Jesus. It was honest. It was simple: *"What is the deal Jesus? Why do I always seem to have little pieces of brokenness in my life every day? It's so frustrating. I need your perspective on the brokenness or I need a break from it."* There was no answer. No instant verse. Nothing. Until this morning. With a tired heart I sat at my kitchen table and opened up my tattered and worn Bible. I read, "Sow for yourselves righteousness, reap the fruit of unfailing love, and break up your unplowed ground; for it is time to seek the Lord..." Hosea 10:12 (NIV). **Sow for yourselves righteousness...** In other words, I must sow righteousness into my life - right choices that honor God. I have to remember I always have a choice in every situation. I can choose to honor Jesus in the midst of it all. Even when I am dishonored, I can choose to honor Him. **Reap the fruit of unfailing love...** There will be fruit in the midst of every choice that honors God. It will be the fruit of being able to remember God's unfailing love. Romans chapter 8 teaches me nothing shall separate me from the love of God. Yet, that is Satan's great tactic to get me entangled in little things, making me forget or doubt God's unfailing love. I must resist the distracting entanglements by honoring God in this choice I am faced with right now. **Break up your unplowed ground...** The blessing in these broken circumstances can be found in the way it tills the ground of my heart.

Breaking up the unplowed soil of my heart will make it ready for new life, new growth, new maturity. **For it is time to seek the Lord...** It's time for me to seek God like never before. And part of seeking Him is allowing for grace space in my life. When the circumstances of life leak me dry, I can see this emptiness as an opportunity. Instead of reacting out of emptiness, I can choose to see that this emptiness is the perfect spot for grace to grow deeper and more widespread in my life. As I give grace to those who don't deserve it, the mercy jars of heaven will lavish it back on me. And, oh how I desperately need a lavish dose of heaven's grace. "... for it is time to seek the Lord, until he comes and showers righteousness on you," Hosea 10:12. **The showers...** Then the growth comes. As I make right choices that honor Him, I start to look at life and people, and annoying circumstances differently. I change. I become more complete. I sense a new closeness with God. I don't go under quite as easily when the waves of life rush at me and over me. And I even dare to whisper thank you when the need for grace spaces comes again and again.

Lysa TerKeurst



ENCOURAGE...

LOVE...

HOPE...

FAITH...

JUNE 2013

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JUNE 2013