

“Rend Your Heart”

Have you ever been too shocked to pour your heart out to our Lord Jesus or too stunned to activate your support system? Were you, like me, convinced you could handle the crisis through your grit, fortitude, and provincial wisdom, only to discover you could not?

Crisis can take many forms, but for some parents, their adult child disclosing they identify as transgender falls under the umbrella term of “crisis.” My comfort zone is not divulging my pain, but rather, on my own, forging a way past it. I do not recommend this selfish strategy as, without a doubt, it prolonged my grief. The longer I suffered in silence, the more unrelenting the pain. I was unusually hyper-focused on myself (*in my youth, “yes,” but not at age 56*) and needed to step back, reassess, and confess my sin. Let me paint a visual picture: all 5’11 inches of me lying stretched out on the carpet with my face buried in a pillow wet with tears. Even then, in the depths of despair, I knew where I cry is where I live; where I cry is where I love; where I cry is where I consistently find Jesus cradling me.

“Even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting, and weeping and mourning.” Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.” The Hebrew word for “rend” is Kaw-rah, which means “to tear” or “to rip.” Knowing Jesus.com describes Joel 2:12-13 as “...a beautiful demonstration that the goodness, grace, and mercy of our long-suffering God remains open to ALL who will simply trust in His Word, remember His goodness, genuinely return to Him with heart and soul - and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins and life everlasting.”

It’s never too late for sinners (like me) to turn away from sin (selfishness) and return to the Lord with all their heart and soul. We need to see our sin as God sees it, confess, and repent. God will provide the stamina, energy, strength, and patience to overcome any crisis. *“The righteous*

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person may have many troubles, but the Lord delivers him from them all” (NIV, 2011, Ps. 34:19). Rend your heart today; revive and rejoice!

By Remi Smith, founder and CEO of Compassionate Caring Ministries, whose mission is "To bring compassion, love, and support to parents whose adult child identifies as transgender."