THE DAILY BREAD

The Magnificat of the Beloved



The Wound and the Gift

Sin and Grace

A FORMATION BOOK BY

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The Everyday Apostle

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Sin, Grace, and the Human Condition

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INTRODUCTION

Why Everything Is Harder Than It Should Be

Every woman knows, in some wordless way, that something is wrong. The world is beautiful and good, and yet it is also broken, shot through with suffering, injustice, and death. And she knows the same brokenness within herself: she wants to do good and finds it hard; she resolves to change and falls back; she loves and is wounded; she sees clearly what she should be and cannot quite become it. There is a gap between what she longs for and what she can achieve, between the goodness she was made for and the struggle of her actual life, and no amount of effort quite closes it. The faith has a name for this, and an explanation, and most importantly, an answer. The name is original sin, the explanation is the Fall, and the answer is grace.

This book is about that wound and that gift, the hinge on which everything else turns. Without understanding sin and grace, nothing else in the faith makes complete sense, not the need for the Incarnation, not the purpose of the sacraments, not the spiritual battle, not the moral life. This book will show that the world is broken, and why; what happened in the Garden; what was lost and what was damaged in human nature, including the specific ways these wounds show up in a woman's interior life; what sanctifying grace is, the very life of God in the soul, and how it is received, lost, and restored; what actual grace is, the help God gives for every good act; and why, though we are genuinely wounded, we are not beyond repair. The aim is to give a woman the theology of sin and grace that makes sense of her struggle and reveals what God has done about it.

We know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. — Romans 8:22

The Scripture says the whole creation groans, as in the pains of childbirth, longing for the healing to come, so that the brokenness a woman senses is real and acknowledged, but it is the groaning of something being brought to new birth, not mere decay. This book will trace the wound and the gift: the broken world; the Fall; what was lost; what was damaged; sanctifying grace; actual grace; and the hope that we are not beyond repair. A woman knows that something is wrong with the world and with herself. This book will name it truly, as the wound of original sin, and reveal the gift that answers it, the grace by which God is making all things new.

CHAPTER ONE

Something Is Wrong

The Brokenness We All Sense

The honest starting point is the recognition that something is wrong, with the world and with ourselves, a brokenness every woman senses even if she cannot name it, and which the doctrine of original sin alone adequately explains. Understanding the reality of the brokenness we all sense, and that it points to a real cause, prepares a woman to understand the doctrine that makes sense of it.

I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. — Romans 7:15

The World Is Not as It Should Be

Every woman senses that the world, for all its goodness, is not as it should be, marked by suffering, injustice, and death that feel like intrusions into a goodness that was meant to be whole. There is a deep and universal sense that the world is broken, that for all its beauty and goodness it is also shot through with suffering, cruelty, injustice, disease, and death, which strike us not as the way things ought to be but as wrongs, intrusions into a goodness that feels like the world's true nature, so that a woman senses the world is not as it should be. This means the brokenness of the world is not merely accepted as normal but felt as a wrong, a falling-short of what the world was meant to be, so that a woman's sense that something is wrong points beyond itself to a goodness lost and a brokenness that needs explaining. The woman who recognizes that the world is not as it should be senses a real brokenness that calls for an explanation. The world is not as it should be, for every woman senses that its suffering, injustice, and death are wrongs intruding into a goodness that was meant to be whole, so that the brokenness is felt as a falling-short rather than the way things ought to be.

The Brokenness Within

The same brokenness a woman senses in the world she finds within herself, in the gap between the good she wants to do and the good she actually does, so that the wrong is not only outside her but inside. The brokenness is not only in the world but within a woman herself, for she knows the strange experience the Scripture names, of wanting to do good and doing the opposite, of resolving to change and falling back, of seeing clearly what she should be and failing to become it, so that there is a division within her, a gap between her longing and her achievement, the brokenness present in her own heart. This means a

woman finds the world's brokenness mirrored within herself, in her own divided will and her failure to be what she longs to be, so that the wrong she senses is not merely external but internal, a brokenness she carries in her own nature. The woman who recognizes the brokenness within sees the same wrong she senses in the world present in her own divided heart. The brokenness within is the same wrong a woman senses in the world, found in the gap between the good she wants to do and the good she does, so that the brokenness is not only outside her but carried in her own nature.

A Brokenness That Needs Explaining

The brokenness a woman senses, within and without, cries out for an explanation, and only a true account of its cause can make sense of it and open the way to its healing. The universal sense that something is wrong, in the world and in the self, is not a feeling to be dismissed but a reality that cries out for explanation, for if the world and the human heart are broken, there must be a reason, a cause of the brokenness, and only a true account of that cause can make sense of the condition and point toward its healing. This means a woman's sense that something is wrong is the beginning of an important question, what has broken the world and the human heart, so that she is led to seek the explanation the faith provides, the doctrine of original sin that names the cause and opens the way to its answer. The woman who sees that the brokenness needs explaining is led to seek its true cause, the first step toward understanding and healing. A brokenness that needs explaining is what a woman senses within and without, crying out for a true account of its cause, so that she is led to the doctrine that names the cause and opens the way to healing.

CHAPTER TWO

What Happened in the Garden

The Fall and Original Sin

The faith explains the brokenness of the world and the human heart by the Fall, the original sin committed at the dawn of humanity, when the first human beings turned from God in disobedience and fractured the harmony in which they were made. Understanding what happened in the Garden, the Fall and the original sin that followed from it, reveals the cause of the brokenness and the root of the human condition.

She took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. — Genesis 3:6

Made for Harmony With God

Humanity was created in a state of original harmony, in friendship with God, at peace within, and in right relationship with creation, a wholeness that was the condition for which human beings were made. Before the Fall, the first human beings existed in a state of original holiness and harmony, in friendship with God, sharing His life, at peace within themselves with their desires and reason in right order, and in harmony with one another and with creation, a wholeness and integrity that was the original condition for which humanity was made, free from suffering, disorder, and death. This means humanity was created not for the brokenness it now knows but for harmony, for friendship with God and wholeness within and without, so that the brokenness is not the original or intended human condition but a later ruin of a goodness that came first. The woman who understands that humanity was made for harmony sees the brokenness as a loss of an original wholeness rather than the natural state. Made for harmony with God, humanity was created in original holiness, at peace within and in right relationship with God and creation, so that the brokenness is a later ruin of a wholeness that came first.

The Turning Away

The Fall was a turning away from God, an act of disobedience in which the first human beings, tempted to be like God on their own terms, chose their own will over His and broke the harmony in which they were made. The original sin was a free act of disobedience, a turning away from God, for the first human beings, tempted by the promise of being like God on their own terms, chose to disobey His command, to assert their own will against His, reaching for the forbidden fruit and eating, so that by this act of prideful disobedience they turned from God and broke the harmony of their original state. This means the Fall was not an accident or a mere mistake but a free turning away from God, a choice of self over God that fractured the harmony humanity was made for, so that the brokenness entered through a real act of disobedience at the dawn of the human story. The woman who understands the turning away sees the Fall as a free choice of self over God that broke the original harmony. The turning away was the Fall, a free act of disobedience in which the first human beings chose their own will over God's, so that their prideful turning from Him fractured the harmony in which they were made.

Sin Passed to All

The consequences of the first sin were not confined to the first human beings but passed to all their descendants, so that every human being is born into a fallen condition, inheriting the wound of original sin. The effects of the original sin did not stop with the first human beings but passed to the whole human race descended from them, so that

every person is born into a fallen condition, deprived of the original harmony and holiness, inheriting the state of original sin, not as personal guilt for the first sin but as a wounded nature and a loss of the original grace, a condition that belongs to all humanity. This means the brokenness is universal because the first sin passed to all, so that every human being, including every woman, is born into the fallen condition, inheriting the wound of original sin as the common human inheritance that explains the universal brokenness. The woman who understands that sin passed to all sees her own fallen condition as the inherited wound of original sin, shared by all humanity. Sin passed to all, for the consequences of the first sin were inherited by the whole human race, so that every person is born into the fallen condition of original sin, which explains the universal brokenness.

CHAPTER THREE

What Was Lost

The Gifts the Fall Took Away

The Fall took away precious gifts that humanity had possessed in its original state, chief among them sanctifying grace, the life of God in the soul, along with the harmony and integrity that grace sustained, so that humanity lost what it was never meant to be without. Understanding what was lost in the Fall, the gifts the original sin took away, reveals the depth of the wound and the greatness of what grace restores.

Sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men. — Romans 5:12

The Life of God in the Soul

The greatest thing lost in the Fall was sanctifying grace, the very life of God dwelling in the soul, which had united humanity to God and which the first sin forfeited. The chief gift lost in the Fall was sanctifying grace, the supernatural life of God dwelling in the soul, which had united the first human beings to God in friendship and made them sharers in His own divine life, so that when they sinned they lost this grace, forfeiting the life of God within them and the friendship with Him it sustained, the deepest and most devastating loss of the Fall. This means the central loss of the Fall was not merely external but the loss of God's own life in the soul, the sanctifying grace that had made humanity God's friends and sharers in His life, so that the deepest wound is the loss of this divine life, which grace alone can restore. The woman who understands the life of God in the soul as what was lost sees the depth of the Fall in the forfeiting of God's own life within. The life

of God in the soul, sanctifying grace, was the greatest thing lost in the Fall, the divine life that had united humanity to God, so that the first sin forfeited God's own life within and the friendship it sustained.

Harmony and Integrity

Along with sanctifying grace, the Fall took away the harmony and integrity of the original state, the peace within by which reason and desire were rightly ordered, and the freedom from suffering and death. With the loss of grace came the loss of the harmony and integrity humanity had enjoyed, for the first human beings had possessed an inner wholeness in which their reason, will, and passions were rightly ordered and at peace, and a harmony with God, one another, and creation, including freedom from suffering and death, and the Fall shattered this, bringing inner division, suffering, and death where there had been wholeness and peace. This means the Fall took away not only God's life in the soul but the whole harmony and integrity that life had sustained, so that humanity lost the inner peace and the freedom from suffering and death that had belonged to its original state, falling into division and mortality. The woman who understands the loss of harmony and integrity sees the Fall as the shattering of the inner and outer wholeness humanity once had. Harmony and integrity were lost in the Fall along with grace, the inner wholeness in which reason and desire were rightly ordered and the freedom from suffering and death, so that humanity fell into division and mortality.

Death Enters the World

Among the losses of the Fall was the entrance of death, for sin brought death into the world, so that humanity, made for life, became subject to the death that had not been part of its original state. The Scripture teaches that sin came into the world through the first sin, and death through sin, so that death, which had not belonged to humanity's original state, entered the world through the Fall, making humanity, which had been made for life and communion with God, subject to death, the final and most stark evidence of the wound that sin inflicted. This means death itself is a consequence of the Fall, an intrusion into a humanity made for life, so that the mortality every woman faces is part of the wound of original sin, a loss of the life for which she was made, which grace and the Resurrection answer. The woman who understands that death enters the world through sin sees her own mortality as part of the wound of the Fall, not the way things were meant to be. Death enters the world through sin, for the Fall brought death where there had been life, so that humanity, made for life and communion with God, became subject to the death that was no part of its original state.

CHAPTER FOUR

What Was Damaged

The Wounds in Mind, Will, and Heart

Besides what was lost, the Fall damaged human nature itself, wounding the intellect, the will, and the passions, so that even after Baptism a woman contends with a darkened mind, a weakened will, and disordered desires, wounds that show up in particular ways in a woman's interior life. Understanding what was damaged in the Fall, the wounds in mind, will, and heart, names the interior landscape a woman navigates and is the first step to navigating it well.

The desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh. — Galatians 5:17

The Darkened Mind and Weakened Will

The Fall darkened the human intellect, so that the mind no longer sees the truth as clearly as it should, and weakened the will, so that a woman knows the good yet struggles to do it. Among the wounds of the Fall is the darkening of the intellect, so that the mind, though still able to know truth, no longer sees it as clearly and easily as it should, is prone to error, confusion, and self-deception, and the weakening of the will, so that a woman, even knowing the good, finds it hard to choose and do it, her will no longer firmly inclined to the good but pulled toward ease and self, so that she knows the good yet struggles to do it. This means a woman contends with a mind that does not see truth clearly and a will that does not easily choose the good, wounds of the Fall that make the Christian life a struggle, so that her difficulty in knowing and doing the good is the mark of these wounds. The woman who understands the darkened mind and weakened will recognizes her struggles to see truth and do good as the wounds of the Fall. The darkened mind and weakened will are wounds of the Fall, the intellect no longer seeing truth clearly and the will no longer firmly inclined to the good, so that a woman knows the good yet struggles to do it.

The Disordered Passions

The Fall also disordered the passions, the desires and emotions, so that they no longer follow reason easily but pull a woman toward things that harm her, warring against the spirit within her. The third wound of the Fall is the disordering of the passions, the desires, emotions, and appetites, which in the original state were rightly ordered and followed reason, but after the Fall became disordered, pulling a woman toward pleasures

and goods out of their right order, warring against the spirit, so that her desires no longer naturally align with the good but must be struggled with and reordered. This means a woman contends with disordered passions, desires and emotions that pull against the good and must be governed rather than simply followed, a wound of the Fall that makes the inner life a battleground, so that her struggle with her own desires is the mark of this wound. The woman who understands the disordered passions recognizes her inner struggle with desire as the wound of the Fall, to be governed rather than simply followed. The disordered passions are a wound of the Fall, the desires and emotions no longer following reason but pulling a woman toward what harms her, so that they war against the spirit and must be reordered rather than simply followed.

How the Wounds Show Up in Women

The wounds of the Fall manifest in particular ways in a woman's interior life, often as a tendency toward disordered attachment in relationships, a pull toward approval and people-pleasing over faithfulness, and a darkening of self-knowledge that makes her own needs hard to see. The general wounds of the Fall take particular shapes in a woman's interior life, often appearing as a tendency toward disordered attachment, clinging to relationships in ways that are not healthy, a strong pull toward the approval of others and people-pleasing that can override faithfulness to God, and a darkening of self-knowledge that makes it hard for her to see clearly where she is wounded and where healing is needed, so that the effects of the Fall show up in these specific feminine patterns. This means a woman can name the wounds of the Fall as they actually appear in her life, in disordered attachment, in the pull toward approval, in a difficulty seeing herself clearly, and naming them theologically, without shame, is the first step toward navigating them well by grace. The woman who recognizes how the wounds show up in women can name her particular struggles as effects of the Fall, the beginning of addressing them by grace. How the wounds show up in women includes a tendency toward disordered attachment, a pull toward approval over faithfulness, and a darkening of self-knowledge, so that naming these particular effects of the Fall theologically is the first step toward navigating them well.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Life of God in You

What Sanctifying Grace Is

Against the wound of sin stands the gift of grace, and the greatest grace is sanctifying grace, the very life of God restored to the soul, which reunites a woman to God and begins to heal what the Fall destroyed. Understanding what sanctifying grace is, how it is received, lost, and restored, reveals the gift that answers the wound and the foundation of the whole Christian life.

He has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature. — 2 Peter 1:4

Sharing the Divine Life

Sanctifying grace is the very life of God shared with the soul, making a woman a partaker of the divine nature, so that it is not merely God's help but God's own life dwelling in her. Sanctifying grace is not a created thing or a mere assistance but the supernatural life of God Himself shared with the soul, making a woman a partaker of the divine nature, a sharer in God's own life, so that grace reunites her to God, restores the divine life lost in the Fall, and makes her His child and friend, dwelling in her as the very life of God. This means sanctifying grace is the greatest of gifts, nothing less than God's own life restored to the soul, so that a woman in grace shares in the divine nature, reunited to God and indwelt by His life, the wound of the lost grace answered by its restoration. The woman who understands sanctifying grace as sharing the divine life receives it as God's own life restored to her soul, not a mere help but His indwelling life. Sharing the divine life is what sanctifying grace is, the very life of God restored to the soul, making a woman a partaker of the divine nature, so that it is God's own life dwelling in her and not merely His help.

Received and Lost

Sanctifying grace is first received at Baptism, which restores the life of God to the soul, and it can be lost through mortal sin, which drives the divine life out, so that a woman can be in a state of grace or a state of sin. The life of God is first given to a woman at Baptism, which restores sanctifying grace to the soul, washing away original sin and making her a child of God in whom God dwells, and this grace can be lost through mortal sin, a grave and deliberate turning from God that drives out the divine life and leaves the soul in a state of sin, so that grace is received at Baptism and can be forfeited by serious sin. This means a woman's possession of the life of God is not automatic or permanent but is received at Baptism and can be lost through mortal sin, so that she can be in a state of grace, possessing the divine life, or in a state of sin, having lost it, a distinction of great importance. The woman who understands grace received and lost knows that the divine life is given at Baptism and can be forfeited by mortal sin, so that her state matters.

Received and lost, sanctifying grace is first given at Baptism and can be forfeited through mortal sin, so that a woman can be in a state of grace, possessing the divine life, or in a state of sin, having lost it.

Restored in Confession

When sanctifying grace is lost through mortal sin, it is restored through the sacrament of Confession, which forgives the sin and returns the life of God to the soul, so that a woman is never beyond the recovery of grace. The loss of sanctifying grace through mortal sin is not final, for Christ gave the sacrament of Confession precisely to restore it, so that when a woman has lost the divine life through serious sin, she can recover it in Reconciliation, which forgives the sin, restores sanctifying grace, and returns the life of God to her soul, so that grace lost can always be regained. This means a woman is never beyond the recovery of grace, for Confession restores the divine life lost through mortal sin, so that the state of sin is never a permanent condition but one from which she can always return to the state of grace through the sacrament Christ gave for exactly this. The woman who understands grace restored in Confession knows she can always recover the divine life through Reconciliation, never beyond the reach of grace. Restored in Confession, sanctifying grace lost through mortal sin is returned to the soul, so that a woman can always recover the divine life through Reconciliation and is never beyond the reach of grace.

CHAPTER SIX

Help for Every Good Act

What Actual Grace Is

Besides the sanctifying grace that is God's life in the soul, there is actual grace, the specific help God gives for each particular good act, without which a woman cannot sustain virtue or do any supernatural good, so that even in grace she depends continually on God's help. Understanding what actual grace is and why it is needed reveals a woman's constant dependence on God and the help He gives for every good she does.

It is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. — Philippians 2:13

God's Help for Each Good Act

Actual grace is the specific assistance God gives for each particular good act, the help by which He moves and enables a woman to do a given good thing, distinct from the abiding life of sanctifying grace. Besides sanctifying grace, the abiding life of God in the soul, there is actual grace, the specific, momentary help God gives for each particular good act, the divine assistance that moves a woman's will and enables her to do a given good deed, to resist a temptation, to make a good choice, so that actual grace is God's active help in the moment, distinct from the abiding grace that is His life within her. This means a woman receives from God not only the abiding gift of His life but His active help for each good act, actual grace that enables her to do the particular good before her, so that God assists her moment by moment in the doing of good. The woman who understands God's help for each good act relies on actual grace for the particular good she must do, assisted by God in the moment. God's help for each good act is actual grace, the specific assistance God gives to move and enable a woman to do a particular good thing, distinct from the abiding life of sanctifying grace.

Why We Cannot Do It Alone

A woman cannot sustain virtue or do any supernatural good by her own power alone, for the wounds of the Fall make her insufficient, so that she needs actual grace for every good act and cannot rely on willpower. The wounds of the Fall mean that a woman cannot, by her own unaided power, consistently do the good or sustain virtue, for her weakened will and disordered desires undermine her best efforts, so that good intentions and willpower are not enough, and she needs the help of actual grace for each good act, unable to do supernatural good or persevere in virtue without God's assistance. This means a woman must give up the illusion of self-sufficiency, recognizing that she cannot sustain the good life by her own strength but depends on God's actual grace for every good act, so that her reliance is not on willpower but on the help God gives. The woman who understands why we cannot do it alone relies on God's grace rather than her own strength, knowing she cannot sustain the good without His help. Why we cannot do it alone is that the wounds of the Fall make a woman insufficient to sustain virtue or do supernatural good by her own power, so that she needs actual grace for every good act rather than relying on willpower.

God at Work in You

Actual grace means that God Himself is at work in a woman, moving her to will and to do the good, so that her good acts are a cooperation with God working within her rather than her achievements alone. The Scripture reveals that it is God who works in a woman, both to will and to do what is good, so that her good acts are not simply her own achievements but the fruit of God's actual grace at work within her, moving her will and

enabling her action, a cooperation between her and the God who works in her, so that the good she does is God working in and through her. This means a woman's good works are a cooperation with God, who is at work in her by His actual grace, so that she neither takes sole credit nor acts alone, but works with the God who moves her to will and to do the good, her action and His grace together. The woman who understands God at work in her does good as a cooperation with the God who moves her, neither alone nor by her own power. God at work in you is the meaning of actual grace, for it is God who moves a woman to will and to do the good, so that her good acts are a cooperation with the God working within her rather than her achievements alone.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Not Beyond Repair

Wounded, but Redeemable

The final word about the human condition is not the wound but the gift, for though a woman is genuinely wounded by the Fall, she is not beyond repair, for God has done something about it, and grace is sufficient to heal and save her. Understanding that a woman is wounded but not beyond repair, that grace is sufficient for her weakness, reveals the hope that answers the whole doctrine of sin and grace.

My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. — 2 Corinthians 12:9

Genuinely Wounded, Not Destroyed

The Fall genuinely wounded human nature but did not destroy it or make it evil, so that a woman is damaged but not beyond repair, still good in her nature and capable of being healed by grace. It is important to hold the truth in balance, for the Fall genuinely wounded human nature, darkening the mind, weakening the will, disordering the passions, but it did not utterly destroy human nature or make it evil, so that a woman remains good in her created nature, capable of good, and able to be healed, genuinely wounded but not corrupted beyond repair. This means a woman should neither minimize the wound, pretending she is not fallen, nor despair of it, imagining she is beyond help, for she is genuinely wounded but not destroyed, damaged yet redeemable, her nature still good and capable of being healed by grace. The woman who understands she is genuinely wounded but not destroyed holds the balance between denying the Fall and despairing of it, damaged yet redeemable. Genuinely wounded, not destroyed, is the balanced truth, for

the Fall damaged human nature but did not make it evil, so that a woman is wounded but not beyond repair, still good in her nature and capable of healing by grace.

God Has Done Something About It

The decisive truth is that God has not left humanity in its wounded state but has done something about it, sending His Son to redeem and restore what the Fall destroyed, so that the wound is answered by the gift. The human condition would be hopeless if the wound of the Fall were the last word, but it is not, for God has done something about it, sending His Son to redeem humanity, to restore the grace that was lost, to heal the wounds of sin, and to open the way back to the harmony and life humanity forfeited, so that the wound is answered by the gift of redemption and grace. This means a woman's wounded condition is not the end of the story, for God has acted to heal and restore it, so that she lives not merely under the wound of the Fall but under the gift of redemption, the grace by which God is repairing what sin destroyed. The woman who knows God has done something about it lives in the hope of redemption, her wound answered by the gift God has given. God has done something about it, not leaving humanity in its wounded state but sending His Son to redeem and restore what the Fall destroyed, so that the wound is answered by the gift of redemption and grace.

Grace Sufficient for You

Whatever a woman's weakness and wounds, God's grace is sufficient for her, for His power is made perfect in weakness, so that she can face her fallen condition with hope, confident that grace can heal and sustain her. The Scripture gives the final assurance, that God's grace is sufficient and His power is made perfect in weakness, so that a woman, however wounded by the Fall, however weak and struggling, can trust that grace is enough for her, able to heal her wounds, to supply her weakness, to sustain her in the good she cannot do alone, so that her very weakness becomes the place where God's grace is shown. This means a woman need not be overwhelmed by her wounds or her weakness, for God's grace is sufficient for her, enough to heal and sustain her, so that she faces her fallen condition not with despair but with hope, trusting the grace that is made perfect in her weakness. The woman who trusts that grace is sufficient for her faces her wounds with hope, confident that God's grace is enough to heal and sustain her. Grace sufficient for you is God's final assurance, that His grace is enough and His power made perfect in weakness, so that a woman, however wounded, can face her fallen condition with hope, trusting the grace that heals and sustains her.

CONCLUSION

The Gift Is Greater

The woman who knew that something was wrong, within her and in the world, now understands the wound and the gift. We have seen that the brokenness we all sense is real and points to a cause; that the Fall was a free turning from God that fractured the harmony humanity was made for; what was lost, the life of God in the soul and the harmony and integrity it sustained, with death entering the world; what was damaged, the mind, will, and passions, in ways that show up particularly in a woman's interior life; what sanctifying grace is, the life of God received at Baptism, lost by mortal sin, restored in Confession; what actual grace is, God's help for every good act; and that a woman is genuinely wounded but not beyond repair, for grace is sufficient for her.

Through all of it runs a single truth: the gift is greater than the wound. The wound of sin is real and deep, but the gift of grace is greater, for where sin abounded, grace abounds all the more, and God has done something about the brokenness, sending His Son to redeem and restore what was lost. A woman is not left under the wound but lifted by the gift.

So live from the gift. Face the brokenness honestly, within you and in the world, and name its cause truly as the wound of the Fall. Understand what was lost and what was damaged, so that you can navigate your wounded nature with clear sight and without shame. Treasure sanctifying grace, the life of God in your soul, received at Baptism and restored in Confession, and guard it as your foundation. Rely on actual grace for every good act, knowing you cannot do it alone, for it is God who works in you. And live in hope, for though you are genuinely wounded, you are not beyond repair, and God's grace is sufficient for you, made perfect in your weakness. The world is broken, and you are wounded, but you are not beyond repair, for the gift is greater than the wound, and God is making all things new.

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