



Broken Gods: Hope, Healing, and the Seven Longings of the Human Heart

Gregory K. Popcak

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"You are gods."

Blasphemy? No, those mysterious words, spoken by Jesus in the Gospel of John and alluded to in Psalm 82, point to a holy longing deep in our hearts that tells each of us that we were created for *more*.

“Imagine that you were to wake up tomorrow to discover that, by some miracle, you had become a god overnight,” writes Dr. Gregory Popcak. “Not THE God—omnipresent, all-knowing, all-powerful—but *a god* in the classic sense. That is to say, you woke to find that you were perfect, immortal, utterly confident in *who* you are, *where* you were going in life, and *how* you were going to get there. It might seem ridiculous to consider at first, but allow yourself to imagine this truly miraculous transformation. What would it be like to live without fear? How would it feel to be completely at peace with yourself and the people in your life? Imagine what it would be like to be able to resolve—once and for all—the tension that currently exists between all your competing feelings, impulses, desires, and demands. What would change in your life as a result of your having become that sort of divinely actualized person?”

Bold questions are in need of bold answers. And in *Broken Gods*, a work that is both practical and inspirational, Dr. Greg explores what our deepest desires--*and even our darkest desires*-- tell us about our ultimate destiny and reveals a commonsense approach to fulfilling our true purpose in life.

Broken Gods: Hope, Healing, and the Seven Longings of the Human Heart Details

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From Reader Review Broken Gods: Hope, Healing, and the Seven Longings of the Human Heart for online ebook

Josh says

Great read, everyone should read this book.

Ry says

Dr. Papcek introduces the incredible news of God's plan to divinize us. The book, though, focuses more on how He wants to do that in us, in a very practical way. He walks through the "Divine Longings", uses traditional Catholic Christian understanding of the virtues, all supported by years of clinical psychological expertise.

This book makes the great Christian mysteries, particularly of divinization and holiness, very, very accessible to someone who isn't swimming in religious environment 100% of their week.

"The spiritual journey is not a guilt trip. It is not a trail of tears we walk for a cruel, heavenly master who demands either perfection or death. It is a honeymoon, where our heavenly Lover runs to meet us, to save us from ourselves, and to make us whole with his love so that we can live together in joy and passion for all eternity."(188)

Donna says

I read this book in a church book study. The book itself was ok but I enjoyed the discussions that came from it much better.

Julius McCarter says

Gregory Popcak's Broken Gods: Hope, Healing, and the Seven Longings of the Human Heart attempts to recover a classic theological anthropology that's epitomized in the maxim from St Athanasius: "The Son of God became human so that we might become God". From St Athanasius and St Irenaeus, through to St Thomas Aquinas, and even Protestant leaders and writers like Martin Luther, John Calvin, and C.S. Lewis, this theological anthropology affirms that we humans are meant to live now and eternally in communion with the Holy Trinity -- "to become gods".

Of course that theological anthropology -- and the theology of salvation which flows out of it -- seems foreign to our twenty-first century ears. Talk about "deification" or "divinization" seems so out of place after the influence of contemporary "secular" anthropologies.

So Popcak's goal -- as a theologian and a trained psychologist -- is that deification can be seen through the

lens of both psychological health and integrated faith, and that deification can name so much of what it means for Christians to think about "being human".

Popcak explores what deification is, how and why we fall short of it, and how the virtues associated with that deification can heal us.

And it's that emphasis on virtues that has me most excited about *Broken Gods*. For each of the seven deadly sins, Popcak proposes a "divine longing" that the vice tries but can't satisfy; for instance, pride is a misguided attempt to satisfy the divine longing for abundance, and humility is the way to approach it. The divine longing for justice is fulfilled through patience, not wrath. The divine longing for trust is fulfilled through generosity, not greed. And so forth. Of course, this isn't a new approach. Historically, this is the spiritual theology articulated by Aquinas.

So Popcak really seeks to bring Aquinas into conversation with our world. That's why each chapter closes with an exercise -- offering questions that bring this theological anthropology into conversation with neuroscience.

Broken Gods is such a distinctive read with an impressive and important message. I heartily recommend it to anyone who wants to think and practice the depth of the Christian spiritual tradition.

I received a free copy of this book as part of the Blogging for Books program in exchange for my honest review here.

Jeanie says

When I selected this book to review, I was aware that it was written by Catholic Counselor; however, when I started reading I had forgotten that it was written with a Catholic viewpoint. Until I came across some teaching that to say left me a little uncomfortable. I will briefly list what I was uncomfortable with and why. Gregory K. Popcak indicates that our longings are God given which I agree with however, our longings (our desires) are designed to be satisfied in the character of God. What I am uncomfortable with is that God loves us so that God wants to make you a god. (kindle location 985). Anytime that was referenced I had a cringe moment, however, I am glad that I read on and I go in further detail as to why. The reason why this is bothersome to me is the language itself. We are not god, not even close. However, we are made in the image of God. Being made in the image of God, we can reason, create, love, and being made in the image of God, Satan desire to destroy anything that bears God's image and uses his creation to do that. We do have the Holy Spirit to guide us and walk with but I do not believe it makes us god. The trinity does not include us. Another teaching was mysticism. This may add to doctrine and to the character of God. God is holy and out of his holiness his character is true. We worship God in Spirit and in truth. I also found lacking is the gospel. We all need the gospel 24/7. What makes God's love so amazing is we do not deserve it and in his sovereignty, he pursues us. Salvation is from God and we respond to that with a broken heart or a hard heart.

I was blessed by Gregory K. Popcak his teaching on the longings of our heart and our pursuit of abundance, dignity, justice, peace, trust, well-being and communion. We can never get enough of the desires that do not satisfy our soul. Our soul is only satisfied when it is quenched with what our souls were created for – the glory of God .

Fighting against pride is humility. The “I” in pride is changed to “U” in humility.

Fighting against envy is dignity. Our envy becomes a competition in our relationships, instead of giving others the dignity in the act of kindness.

Fighting against wrath is justice. Our wrath is our selfishness unleashed. Just as God is patient with us, we must be practice patience with others.

Fighting against sloth is peace. With diligence in doing the will of God, we will discover peace.

Fighting against greed is trust. The root of greed is fear. By practicing generosity, we fight our fear of losing what we have and trusting God for what we need.

Fighting against gluttony is a divine longing for well-being. (Mental and physical). With practicing a balance of pursuing and using all good things in healthy ways, we fight against gluttony.

Fighting against Lust is a divine longing for community. Practicing purity with those we are in community with, we fight against lust. We need communion to be fully human. This is backed up in studies with infants regarding their needs being met and the significance of their future development. If our lacks of needs are not met during our young lives, we become “programed” in adapting which usually means that we fulfill our needs destructively. Love is a to care, to bring the best out of another, however, when we use another for gratification or to get something, we have dehumanized one that is made in the image of God. “The sin of lust has everything to do with treating a person as an object, we are not designed for this” ...when something is treated in manner for which it was not designed, it breaks down...the human person who was designed for love breaks down and has a harder time receiving true love and experiencing communion when they have been used by other or have used themselves through lust.

The study goes deeply into each longing with contrasting pitfalls that we encounter because of sin. Our longings are a tool that is bring us to the presence of God, a deep relationship with Him to know Him and be known by Him. Each chapter ends with a prayer and the acronym **COAL** which stands for Curiosity/Openness that encourages you to dig deeper, to ask yourself questions and with understanding/discernment not judgement. Judgement always brings up walls and shuts down any progress to reconciliation. Acceptance of your past experiences and acceptance of God’s will. Love with a care that steers you to the direction of what will truly satisfy your soul.

I found some very beneficial teaching especially with dealing with my needs. My background has been to repress my needs but by doing so, I have built a wall to protect my heart.

I love this quote...Our union with God, ...is not merely some self-improvement project, a duty that demands to be met, or a job that needs to be completed. It is our joyful participation in the greatest love story ever told.

With the theological differences, I was encouraged by his teaching and the contrast of my weakness and the strength of God.

A special Thank you to Crown Publishing and Netgalley for ARC and the opportunity to post an honest review.

Ann Yeong says

Why do we sin? Can it be possible that God means for us to fulfil all the deepest longings of our heart and restore us to a beauty and perfection we can only dream about in this fallen world? In "Broken Gods: Hope, Healing, and the Seven Longings of the Human Heart," Gregory K. Popcak explicates for us the theological term 'theosis', or, divinisation - the process in which God transforms us fallen, imperfect, sinful human beings into perfection in Him.

Popcak explains that our hearts are filled with divine longings of the perfect harmony and wholeness that humanity knew before the Fall. We all have in us the divine longings for Abundance, Dignity, Justice, Peace, Trust, Well-being and Communion. Yet, in our fallen state of concupiscence, we tend to seek satisfaction in things other than God, settling for a counterfeit and distorted version of what we actually long for. Thus we commit the seven capital sins of Pride, Envy, Wrath, Sloth, Greed, Gluttony and Lust.

In Broken Gods, Popcak provides us with a hopeful and healing perspective to battling our sinfulness by showing us how we can orientate our divine longings to their only proper and true end - God. He provides a new angle with which to understand the Seven Capital Sins and the corresponding Seven Heavenly Virtues that will help us grow in wholeness and holiness. Popcak gives us a tool with which to approach our brokenness that will orient us towards healing instead of despair.

This book is a wonderful marriage of classic Catholic theology with the insights of contemporary psychology. Reading it was a restorative and healing experience for me as I now realise that the sins I have struggled the most with in my life correspond with the divine longings that I have always felt most keenly. This book is a real gem for anyone seeking to grow in intimacy with God and self. I cannot recommend it highly enough!

Elizabeth says

I really like the way this book approached sin. Sin is when we try to fulfill a diving longing in a broken way. For me, this has been helpful in recognizing the roots of what is going on in my life and responding in a more appropriate manner.

Nsikan Akpan says

This spiritual book has changed my perspective in such an amazing way. I see God in a clearer for all of the good that He and all the good He has for me. I also see myself differently. I feel so guilty every time I'm tempted, but now I understand that the temptation is only a sign of the Divine Longings that God has placed inside of me. Every single thing leads to Him, even the bad things, if we trust Him.

Felicia says

Overall, it was a great book. Help to build self-confidence through god's love

María Renée says

Perfect!

Loved it! A perfect preamble to study TOB deeply and profoundly. This book is a must for every single catholic out there.

Matthew says

A must-read again and again and again.

Monica Zeringue says

A thought provoking and encouraging read! Popcak is salt of the earth and light of the world in his effort to encourage and gently challenge Christians everywhere to eradicate their lives of vice, yet not to be discouraged while doing so.

The author affirms mankind's goodness while emboldening the reader to reach for that holy perfection (not perfectionism) by professing a great truth of Christianity: we are fearfully and wonderfully made!

Christopher says

We truly can "never get enough of what [we] don't really want" (Mark Shea, 2001). So what is it that we truly want? What is our innermost heart's desire?

Written with profound clarity and precision, Dr. Popcak helps to (re)orientate readers back to what we really want in our lives and who we really are in the eyes of God. This book touched my heart deeply; it was a thought-provoking, mature and honest insight to the seven longings of the human heart. In particular, I especially enjoyed the manner in which Popcak was able to systematically deal with the seven deadly sins and seven heavenly virtues in relation to the seven longings of the human heart.

I highly recommend this book.
