

Check out of HEARTBREAK HOTEL

*There's joy to be
discovered—even if the
person you love
leaves you.*

BY MARK W. UNGER

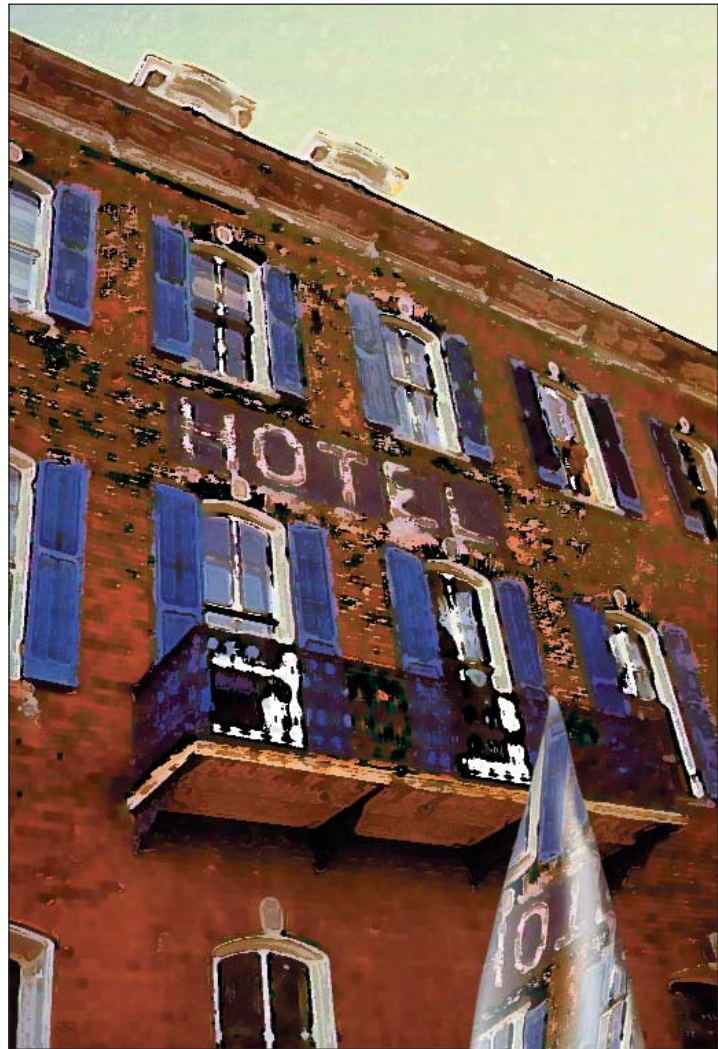
I'M SURE YOU'VE heard of the song "Heartbreak Hotel" by Elvis Presley. But have you ever checked into that hotel, so to speak? I have! Thank goodness I was able to check out very quickly, by turning my attention to God.

I met this girl one summer in a city a few hundred miles from my home. I was in my early twenties. We spent a lot of time together whenever I was in her area, and eventually we became very close. I fell in love with her and thought about her all the time. Then, once, after being away for several weeks, I went to visit her, only to find that she didn't want to see me anymore. She had another boyfriend. I was crushed.

Is time the only healer in such a circumstance? No. In fact, I've learned that time doesn't really heal anything. However, by turning to God in prayer, even something emotionally devastating can be healed.

At first, I was tempted to try to *escape* the problem rather than deal with it. I thought about going to the movies for the afternoon, and yet I knew that wouldn't solve anything. So I decided to turn to God right away.

I went to a nearby park to be by myself and



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to pray. I didn't know how this problem was going to be resolved, but there were some things I did know, so I started with them. I knew that God was there with me. Even though I didn't feel Him with me right at that moment, still I knew He was there from what I had learned of His all-presence from the Bible. For example, Jeremiah says, "Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord" (23:24). I had learned that God was closer to me than the air I breathe. Mary Baker Eddy, who discovered Christian Science, describes how close God is to

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continued

us: “As a drop of water is one with the ocean, a ray of light one with the sun, even so God and man, Father and son, are one in being” (*Science and Health*, p. 361).

I also knew that God had not caused this torturous emotional pain. Because God is all good, He sends forth only goodness. So I knew that, instead of God steering me wrong, I had taken a wrong turn in the way I was thinking about this relationship.

I had learned that God’s goodness, and His law of love, are in operation all the time. And if we are obedient to God, if our every thought comes from Him, our lives are filled with happiness and peace. Suffering happens when our thoughts aren’t from God, when they are ungodlike—filled with selfishness, envy, despair, and so forth. But even when this happens, the suffering we feel turns us back to God, to goodness, Love, and Truth.

That’s why I knew I needed to find out where I had gone off track in my thinking. Then I could correct my thinking and feel good again. I also knew that no matter what I had done, no matter how far off track I had gone, He would guide me back. That is where I started.

I actually began by thanking God for being right there with me, for comforting me, helping me, loving me. Even though I didn’t feel these things initially, I knew they were there. And I acknowledged this truth because I *wanted* to feel it. Jesus tells us, “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). I desperately wanted to be free.

After walking through the park and reaching out to God with all my heart for an answer, I got one. It was this verse from Ecclesiastes: “I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it” (3:14). I felt this was a heavenly message, an angel thought from God.

The first thing I did was to thank God profusely. I was so grateful for this message, even though I didn’t yet know how it applied to my situation. I was just happy that I was beginning to feel in touch with God. I could start to *feel* Him with me, and that gave me hope. It was like being in a cave that’s totally dark, looking for a way out, and suddenly you see a small stream of light. You don’t yet know where the opening is or how you’ll get there, but you know there *is* a way out, and you start to feel that you’ll make it.

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sage, I began praying for more light, listening for what this verse meant and how it applied to me. I began to see that I was depressed and disappointed because I was seeing this girl as the very source of good, the source of my completeness, and now she was gone. So, in one sense, I had made her my god. As I mentioned, I thought about her all the time, even more than I thought about God.

The truth I felt God was telling me in that message from Ecclesiastes was that He was the only source—“whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever”—and that whatever He creates can’t be added to or taken from. “Nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it.” In other words, this girl had not *personally* added anything to me. Together we had expressed God’s goodness, as His image and likeness, and none of that good was gone. It had come from God and was still with us both.

I was also realizing that all the good I can ever have comes from within me, within my consciousness.

The genuine good I’d felt while I was with this girl was actually my own completeness as God’s perfect child. God makes everyone complete. It doesn’t take another person to make our lives that way. In this case, being together helped to bring out the goodness already within each of us. Instead of thinking of myself as incomplete, at the mercy of someone else in order to be whole, I began to wake up to the fact that I am always complete.

I gradually felt myself changing from being depressed about a loss, to feeling grateful for what I had gained. I was being healed, right then and there. Within a couple of hours, I went from emotional devastation to near bliss. I checked out of the Heartbreak Hotel!

There is a little more to the story. Because this healing was so quick and so amazing to me, I wanted to put it to the ultimate test. I would know for sure that I was completely healed if I saw this girl and still felt peaceful.

She was working at a restaurant near the park, so I went there. I sat down at the counter, and when I saw her, I was able to love her genuinely, as the child of God that she is. I had no sad or hurt feelings, even though she basically ignored me. I was able to let the old relationship go, knowing that we had both gained from our time together. I walked away from that restaurant undisturbed by the thought that I would probably never see her again.

God truly has made each of us complete. He has given us everything we will ever need, and He is revealing that to us each moment. If we want to be happy, we need to stay aware of the fact that God is the source of all the real good that people and things and experiences represent to us. ♦