

“A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice; he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his teaching the islands will put their hope.” Isaiah 42:3-4 NIV

lectio // Isaiah 42:1-9

No one left behind. I wrote about this in my book, *The Pharisee Factory* (<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B081DDDKJ5>) in Chapter 10. Isaiah makes yet another bold, prophetic proclamation about the messiah, he comes to bring justice, but does so in a way that doesn't CRUSH the weak. Those (who honestly is a lot of people) who take a little longer to catch up and keep up with the spiritual pace of others. Why are they "bruised" or "smoldering"? Who knows. I know for me, I lived a very chaotic, challenging life as a kid and young teen. It framed a huge part of who I am and how I see the world. My past reinforced issues of safety, trust and healthy boundaries. So, for me, I was the SMOLDERER, I was BRUISED. It took a long time for me to grasp simple concepts of love, forgiveness, mercy and grace - for myself and towards others. I was an extremely S L O W learner. Christ has healed my reed and rekindled my flame! My question is, why can't we do that for others? Why can't we nurture the bruised and gently trim and foster the faltering, flickering flame? (sorry for the alliteration run). In our quest for rapid growth and hockey-stick results, we tend to snap off or snuff out the weaker ones. This is why it is easier to LEAVE the church than it is to TRUST the church. And it really represents Christ poorly to the unbeliever. We can do better when we all slow down and just spend a little MORE time with LESS people.

oratio

Dad,

I know how much time you have invested in me. I know how patient and graceful you have been towards me. You still disciplined me, like a father, but you also taught me and helped me through a tremendous amount of change in how I see you, how I see myself, how I see others and even how I see the world. Thank you for your kindness that brings me to repentance and the strength it takes to hope once again. Help me to ALWAYS be that for fellow smolderers and bruised.

contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root