

# Pastor column: Beating ourselves up, finding comfort in God

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Pastor Jess Harren, Cross of Glory Lutheran Church

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It seems that it is human nature to beat ourselves up. To be mad at ourselves when things are not going well. Given my life this week, I can promise you that I speak from experience. I've been going back over decisions made a long time ago and beating myself up for not making different ones so that now would be easier. Of course, that's not really helpful. What is more helpful is thinking about how to move forward from the present reality. It has been hard, though.

This process can be especially difficult when I think that those decisions mean or change something about who I am. Not just our choices in life, but who I am as a person. It causes me to ask, "Who am I?"

It is times like these that I turn to my faith for answers. I find hope in a couple of different places. First of all, I am a child of God. And while that comes with some responsibilities to the rest of the world, it also means that no matter what choices I have or haven't made, I belong to someone. The one who created me, who loves me and who calls me His. I get great strength from knowing there's always a place to belong.

Second, since I am a Christian, there is Jesus. For me, when Jesus died on the cross and went into the tomb, he took it all with him. Everything that is broken and terrible about the world. And then Jesus came out of the tomb three days later to a resurrection — a coming back to life. I comfort myself with the knowledge that Jesus overcame death, so perhaps Jesus can help me overcome whatever is going on in my life. More than that, though, Jesus promises forgiveness. It is through Jesus forgiving me that I am able to learn how to forgive myself and move on. Jesus promises new life and resurrection, here and now. Not perfection, but the chance to be forgiven and to try again.

Third, I know the Holy Spirit is with me, whispering good things into my ear about how I can do whatever I need to do, and that I am a beloved child of God and forgiven and promised new life through Jesus. It is powerful to have a voice to replace the ones that constantly tell me that I'm not good enough and never will be. It is powerful to know a God that gives me a place to belong, a place to forgive and a place to try again. This is the story that moves me from beating myself up to discovering a way forward. What's your story?

If you are looking for a place to share your story, to let God change your story or to know more about God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit, then you are welcome to join us at Cross of Glory Lutheran Church for worship at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings.

*The opinions of this column are that of the writer. They do not necessarily reflect those of The Homer Horizon.*