

April 30, 2020

Dear Sunday School Class,

Our study last Sunday was entitled "You Are Broken." This lesson led us through the fact that sin has left the world broken, and so are we. To quote the authors, "Unexpected change and difficult circumstances are routine occurrences in life. When calamity comes it can expose the real you," We have all heard it before, "conflict reveals character." We don't like to admit it, but when things don't go our way, we will always react in some way, and often our reaction is less than *spiritual*, revealing the flaws in us.

Part one of the study was "We're Broken Because The Whole World Is." This reminded us that we have to live, and try to function, in a world that is tainted by sin on every level. The key verse was Jeremiah 2:13 "For my people have committed two evils. They have forsaken me, the fountain of living water to hew for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water." Although it is easy to recognize sin in others, we need to realize that we are under the same curse, and sin lives and breathes in us. Realizing that fact should help us as we interact with other people when they hurt or disappoint us. They are broken just like we are, and we need to have compassion on them. We certainly want others to have compassion on us!

The next part of the study was "We're Broken Because We Choose To Be," That is a hard concept to swallow, but if we read Deuteronomy 3:15-20 we see that God has really given us a choice in the way we live. If we are His child, we are able to discern between good and sin, and make a choice in our thoughts and actions. While we can never be perfect until we go to be with Him, we can certainly make choices we are faced with moment by moment that are based on what His Word would tell us to do; choices for blessing and not evil. He did not make us robots that will automatically follow Him, but allows us to choose how we live. Therein is what often traps us in sin. We sin because at that moment we like how it makes us feel, and the result we get. One of the lies of sin is the power it seems to give us, and the pure enjoyment in elevating ourselves, and our getting what we want, when the sad truth is that it isn't powerful at all, it is a type of imprisonment that always will lead to defeat and disgrace at some point. The Scripture says, "Be sure your sin will find you out." Others will see us for what we really are, whether we try to hide it or not.

The last part of the study was entitled "We Are Broken But We Can Be Healed." What a relief! The authors' words summed it up the best. "Coming face to face with our brokenness can manufacture a wide variety of outcomes. We can reject the idea of our brokenness and declare our identity as a personal right or an individual choice. Or we can admit that we have no way to fix ourselves and that we need God's grace and mercy freely available in Jesus Christ to save us from ourselves." That is the greatest truth the world has ever known! We can have a Savior! He saves us from ourselves, and from the world if we just ask Him. So as we are faced with all the world, the flesh, and the devil throws at us, we can choose to rely on Jesus and His Holy Spirit for guidance and strength. Did anyone ever say it would be easy to make Christlike decisions? No, never. But it is possible, and it is necessary, if we are to grow in our faith. So our hope is to build our faith in God through Scripture knowledge, prayer and fellowship with His Body, which exercises our spiritual muscles constantly so we can face whatever tomorrow brings. We can have "victory in Jesus!!"

Have a wonderful week, and tune in to our Zoom meeting if you can. It is wonderful to fellowship over the wonder of technology!

Blessings,

Judy and Stephen