



... FOR WHEN I AM WEAK THEN I AM STRONG

SHATTERED

A PRODUCTION OF

THE NORTHERN OHIO YOUTH CAMP 2019





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ABOUT THIS BOOK

The book *Shattered* comes from the 2019 theme of the Northern Ohio Youth Camp. The premise of this book has been compiled from the lessons, devotions, and prayer stations used during summer camp at the NOYC!

In **Part One** of this book, you will find five chapters surrounding the thought of becoming broken and shattered as a Christian. These five unique chapters take a challenging and in depth look into the call of a Christian to become weak so that through Christ we can be made strong.

At the end of each chapter you will find **Shattered Studies** provided, which summarize the chapter as well as provide study questions to help in applying what you have read. Consider answering these questions as you read through the shattered studies. Reading is great, but application is what changes us.

Then, in **Part Two** of this book there are 16 hands-on *Shattered* activities. Each unique and hands-on activity is specifically designed to match the four thoughts provided throughout the chapters. The activities take a personal look at the concept of Shattered. The most beneficial way to use the hands-on Shattered activities is to read a chapter in Part One of the book, and then complete the corresponding hands-on activity for that chapter in Part Two.

Lastly, each of the lessons provided in this book have been uniquely recorded and produced by the youth of the Northern Ohio Youth Camp. The unique series “Shattered” is also available in a DVD devotion series. This DVD series provides bonus content regarding this theme, as well as the same lessons provided in this book. If you would like to receive a free copy of the DVD devotion series, *Shattered*, please feel free to contact our camp headquarters via email:



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fwb.youthcamp@yahoo.com, by phone at: (419) 271-4788, or visit our website www.thenoyc.com.

We pray that this book will be not just a blessing, but a way in which God will speak to your heart to prepare your life for the *breakings* that will take place in your life. May He use this book to strengthen, challenge, and encourage you in your salvation.

FORWARD

I imagine you are going on some extreme adventure in to some foreign land, it's dangerous and breath taking- even possibly deadly. However, before you launch out into this adventure, you enroll in a class that will teach you all the ways to survive any danger you may face. You receive specialize training to combat every obstacle you will come up against. You become physically fit and mentally prepared and fully trained. Now as you head out on this adventure, instead of fear, you have confidence, even excitement to face the challenges and overcome them with your newfound skills. You're no longer looking at the dangers negatively but instead as steppingstones to the excitement that lies ahead. As you conquer each danger and overcome each obstacle, you get more and more excited because each step has shaped your wild adventure.

Shattered, it's not a very glamorous word- and for most of us the word is a real downer and definitely not something to get excited about. How could we ever get excited about the problems that tear our lives apart and leave us feeling like we are picking up the broken pieces from the ground? Actually, this is exactly why *Shattered* is exciting and extremely practical. No matter who you are - you will go through problems that will shatter you, it's inevitable. You can hope that you are the exception, you may resist it, but in the end you too will watch as your life falls apart.

This life we live here on earth is just like the wild adventure. It is dangerous, it is scary, and challenging. We can hide in fear, we can stumble through it hoping for the best. But we do not get the option of "*I want it easy with no problems.*" The book *Shattered* serves as valuable training to prepare you for hard times and to equip you to be prepared when obstacles come your way. Imaging facing the hardest thing you could ever face in life and coming out on the other side victorious. Imagine being equipped with an understanding that God breaks us to grow us closer to Him and give us a better life than before. Instead of



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spending all of your time worried about the “*what ifs*” in life, you instead go through life anticipating the blessing that will come with the next difficulty that you will face.

God doesn't send us problems because He is mad at us or because He doesn't love us. God uses hard times for our benefit. If we can learn this principle, we will be prepared to face life and all its challenges. We will be prepared to live a life of joy and faith that no matter what, God is working for our good. We hope that *Shattered* will leave you with a whole new outlook on life and when circumstances make you feel shattered, your faith is not broken but strengthened. Those who live in fear and worry are not living Biblical lives and they are not happy; they do not show a lost world how great our God is. The life of a Christian is subject to heartaches just like everyone else. However the difference is that when we become broken and weak He is our strength.

Pastor Garry Sorrell Jr.
NOYC Director

INTRODUCTION

What's Your Breaking Point? That's the question. Some would be generous of their assessment of their strength, while others have met their breaking point and in honesty would tell you at just what point they may become broken. We may realize it or we may not, but with life comes heartache, hurt, pain, trials, burdens, and struggles. And, if these hardships would just appear once in a while - here and there, one at a time - maybe we could convince ourselves we can handle it; maybe we would think I can get through this, I will be okay.

But, life's not that kind. The stress, the struggles, the situations, they begin to cause us despair, depression, and desperation. Soon we look around at the perfect life we once had and notice hairline fractures, cracks of all sizes forming around us.

We put a smile on, we say we're just fine, as we frantically try to keep the pieces from falling apart, hoping that just maybe, by some miracle, we can keep it all together. But, the more we try, the more impossible it seems. Denial turns to dilemma as we realize we no longer can hold the broken shards of our life - *WE ARE GOING TO BREAK*

Through this series entitled "shattered" we will take an up close and personal look at the many ways in which our lives can break. We will talk about how the pieces fall and how our lives are forever changed. But, more than anything, through this series we will find purpose to the pieces; we will realize the benefit of the breaking.

What if - instead of fighting the inevitable, instead of dreading the demise - what if we were actually audacious enough to invite a shattering into our lives? What if we welcomed becoming broken?



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Are you courageous enough to invite a crashing into your life? Do you have the faith to purposefully ask for your life to be broken to pieces? Are you bold enough to pray “*God, break me so that through the shattering of my life, I may come to know more of You.*”

Shattered. It’s going to happen; how will you make it through. Will you become bitter or better? Will you become burdened by the breaking or will your belief be strengthened?

Are you willing to become weak so that you can be made strong?

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SHATTERED

PART ONE

SHATTERED LESSONS



CHAPTER ONE

SHATTERED SALVATION

Have you ever met that person who drives the car that is literally falling to pieces? The car has scrapes and dings and dents all over; it's got a couple busted windows; its missing the hood; half of the roof has been ripped off; the muffler and exhaust and several other key components are hanging and dragging on the road underneath; and, it only has three tires -- with two of those being flat. But, they keep driving. "It's fine, we're good," you can hear them say from the driver's seat, denying that there's anything wrong with the hunk of junk they call a car. Chances are that as long as they deny their car is broken, it will never be fixed; it's never going to run as it was intended.

Actually -- with the car aside -- there are A LOT of people who have the same, sad problem. I'm going to cut right the chase: there are a lot of people, and their lives are a mess. Their health is failing, and their marriage is falling apart. They're addicted; they're buried in debt; they're facing failure of every kind. And yet, they keep going through life as if to say, "I'm fine. Everything's good here; nothing to see!" And, just like the hunk of junk jalopy, their lives will never be fixed from their broken state because they are denying that there's anything wrong.

What a lot of people fail to recognize -- especially outside of the church house -- is how the broken pieces of our lives were never a part of the plan. In other words, most of us know that God created a perfect,

complete, and absolute paradise at the beginning of time. And, it was His intent for there to be no sin, no pain, no heartache or struggles in our lives, yet man chose otherwise. So, the broken perspective we each experience was never a part of God's plan.

Let me try to explain this concept in another way. I want you to stop and try to imagine this scenario. Imagine the universe: all of the world around you that you know -- all of the planets, the solar system, the sun, all of the galaxies and stars. Imagine its vast entirety as it is today. It's pretty difficult to picture, I know; but, now I want you to imagine all of that which you're imagining on rewind from now from this point in time, and I want you to imagine pressing rewind on all of history up until this point, until you rewind existence far enough back to the moment that there is literally NOTHING. Everything that you were once picturing a few seconds ago is gone, removed, vanished from existence. Now we press play on the very moment BEFORE EVERYTHING, literally EVERY single thing, ever existed.

Now most of us, especially if you've grown up in church, have been taught the account of Genesis 1. In fact, we have it somewhat memorialized in our minds to imagine God speaking the words "let there be" and poof, like a magic trick, the sun, the planets, the waters all appear and the angels applaud at the cool party trick. And, don't get me wrong, he literally did create everything that has ever been simply by speaking. But, just briefly, I want us to instead picture all of creation in a much different way.

Picture, if you will for a second, God sitting down on a very large heavenly potter's wheel. With all of His majesty, all of His power, all of His might. This dynamic Deity takes all of His ability and with His heavenly hands He molds, shapes, forms, and creates a perfect universe. This handcrafted creation is faultless in every way. Every detail is perfection; every aspect is complete. If you believe that God is mighty and that He has all power and that He is all knowing, just imagine if He



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focused all of that might and power and knowledge into one single masterpiece, it would be beyond description. That's exactly what God did, then He looks down upon this vast masterpiece and says that it is good.

But then, looking down at the majestic masterpiece He has molded, God realizes that there is still one more creation He is in need of; there's a detail to this handcrafted creation that still needs added. This masterpiece is so marvelous that someone, besides Himself, needs to enjoy what He has created, and someone else needs to recognize just how much might He had in creating it. So, God once again takes the potter's wheel to work His wonder again. This time He makes the perfect man.

Now ladies, I don't know what Adam looked like, but you better believe that if God can make a universe in all of its wonder and beauty that is beyond impressive, the first and perfect man had to be a sight to behold! God created man and formed him literally from clay. God, after hanging stars, placing planets, gathering galaxies, after using His mighty hands to create it – all of the big amazing things we see – then reached down and formed flesh from a small amount of dirt. These big hands now held the perfect human.

We all know that the story goes on with Adam and Eve, perfect people living in this perfect place that God has created, dwelling in the perfect garden of Eden with every need met miraculously. In fact, the word Eden means "delight." This perfect world had no pain, no suffering, no labor, no death, sickness, disease, or any other terribleness we can think of. God looked down on His perfect universe that He pulled out all the stops for; He looked down on His perfect creation of mankind, and in Genesis 1:31 God had to admit that what He had just created, "it was very good."

What's more is the fact that because it was perfect in every way, God was able to abide there every day. In the most reverent way I can put it,

God is a perfectionist. And, what I mean by that is that He has a standard of perfection that is required in order for Him to remain Holy and to remain God. If He were to accept or abide in a less than perfect place, He would cease from being perfect and holy and, therefore, would cease from being God. And so, in this paradise of perfection with His masterpiece of mankind, God dwelt with Adam and Eve in the Garden of delight, in the garden of Eden.

We don't know how long this perfect paradise went on for or how long Adam and Eve got to enjoy this majestic masterpiece God had placed them in. It obviously was long enough for Adam to name every animal that God had created; but, regardless of how long it lasted, the point we have to grasp here is that this masterpiece that God created was plan A. It was perfect; it was faultless; it was complete in every way; it really was an absolutely amazing plan for mankind to enjoy forever.

Until that day. Now if you've grown up in church, you know what comes next. But I want you to bear with me for a second as we look at the next part in a different light. So, let's imagine all of the universe, God's perfect paradise, sitting on a perfect pedestal. And, next to it we see a second pedestal that He has placed His perfect people, mankind, upon. Both are fit for the finest exhibit that eternity could explain. God proudly displays them on the pedestal because the greatness of His creations brings Him glory. So as the master creator, the master artist that created perfection, it is only fitting that He places them on the pedestal for display.

That is, until one day that would change eternity forever. As the perfect paradise, the universe sits upon the pedestal with mankind sitting beside, then Satan enters the picture. We know that Satan tempts Eve, who tempts Adam to eat of the one single tree which God had commanded them not to eat from. And, upon biting into this fruit from this one tree, sin entered into the perfect paradise.



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But for just a minute, continue to imagine all of existence, the universe, again. Picture the earth and all of the galaxies sitting on their pedestal with mankind sitting on the next pedestal over. Now, imagine the very millisecond that Adam and Eve take this bite from this fruit it's as if they shove these majestic masterpieces off of the pedestals they sit upon. Picture the earth, the galaxies, and mankind in slow-motion, tumbling from atop the pedestals and falling to the ground below.

In a split second, God's plan A, the perfection of paradise, the majestic masterpiece of the Almighty Being, has fallen and now lies shattered into billions of pieces on the ground. Now, the world that man would live in, all that exists, and all of mankind are broken, shattered by sin.

This is the state in which each of us finds the world we are born into: Shattered. Every time we face a tragedy, every heartache, trial, temptation, every struggle is a direct result of plan A, the perfection of God's creation, laying broken on the floor because of the decision which mankind made. Some may say, "Well He's God; can't He just start over with a snap of the fingers?!" The problem is now that it's broken, and God, who is perfect, must distance Himself from the imperfection in order to remain God. So, He boots Adam and Eve from the Garden and moves on to Plan B for His masterpiece.

Many of us could point at Adam and Eve and with disbelief say, "Really?! You couldn't avoid that one tree? You couldn't watch where you were going so as not to break EVERYTHING?!" But the truth is, we are just as Adam. In fact, even if you were not born as a descendant of His race, the truth is that, in a very similar way, with the very first decision you make to sin, even as a child, you, too, are knocking God's perfect plan for you off of its pedestal, and with your first sin you separate yourself from God and perfection; what's left of your life lies shattered on the ground. And really, with every sin we make after our first, it's as if we step on and begin to crush the broken pieces of our lives into smaller and smaller and more broken pieces.

God has a perfect plan, a perfect life for each of us to live. He takes the heavenly potter's wheel and intricately designs the perfect life for you, and yet we chose this fragmented, crumbled, broken, shattered life instead, a life that separates us from God and His perfection.

But, many of us are like that person with the car we discussed earlier. We stand here with our life literally shattered into millions of pieces on the ground around us, denying there's anything wrong. "It's fine really; it's not as bad as it looks. I've got everything under control," we tell ourselves and those around us. When the truth is, we are a broken mess.

Even though God could have been perfectly justified in leaving us in this broken state that we chose for ourselves, the fact is God cared so much for His beloved creation that He set out on a Plan B to bring Himself unto the masterpiece of man which He so loved. The skillful and mighty hands of the master couldn't leave us in a sinful shattered state with no hope, and so He begins to place a plan into motion that would once again change eternity.

In the Old Testament, we see God working to convince us of our brokenness and need for fixing through sacrifice and the law. God provides all of these commandments, rules and guidelines and requires all of these sacrifices of different kinds, and most of us today look at these and scratch our head and think what's that all about. But, what if God, who was there when perfection prevailed, knew that there was a way for us to once again come near to Him in Holy perfection, but the only problem was we as humans could not figure out that we were broken.

Imagine that person with the jalopy from earlier meeting a mechanic who told them they could have the perfect car if they would just give it to him. So, the mechanic through his explanation begins to fix the flat tires, buffs out the scratches as an illustration of the perfection that could be and that the car was intended for. In other words, if left alone,



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this car's owner never would admit their car was broken or that it could be fully repaired until the mechanic showed them the potential that lied within, if they would just give him the keys.

God provides the law of the Old Testament, in a very similar way which was not meant to fix our life but was meant to help us to recognize that we are broken and are sinful. Because, in order for God's master plan B to work, we must realize we are broken. He cannot fix us and cannot pick up the shattered pieces of our intended perfect life and make us complete and whole again until we first accept that we need Him to do so, until we first admit we are broken.

With the commandments God brings the system of sacrifices. Now if the commands intend to show us we need to be fixed and that we are broken, the sin sacrifices of the old testament show us that we can't help but to keep breaking. In other words, if it really was as simple as all of the brokenness from our sins being reversed by simply sacrificing a lamb or bullock, and then we could go back to Plan A and be perfect and be with God forever. You would think every person on the planet would sacrifice their lamb, and all would be well. But, the sacrificial system shows us that we are prone to wonder; we are so fragile and that every single time He would forgive for sins, we would bump the pedestal again and shatter God's masterpiece with our sin.

God needed us to realize that we are broken so He can fix us, but He also needed to show us that we can't fix ourselves, that we cannot remain unbroken by our own efforts. This is the Old Testament in a very simplified way: man realizing we are living a broken life that needs fixed and that no matter how hard we try, we cannot become unbroken; we cannot practice perfection in our own efforts.

Thankfully, this was not the end of God's plan B. In fact, it was more of a teaching point that was necessary for Plan B to be completed.

We then make it to the New Testament. The world and all of mankind

are still broken, living shattered lives in our sins, continually breaking the pieces smaller and smaller. And then, Jesus enters the scene. The same God that began with a blank vast nothing and formed with His words all that ever would exist, the masterful creator who perfected paradise and watched as His creation broke it, put on the same clay that He had formed mankind from. This mighty God who has all power and might literally took the clay He formed into man and begins to cover Himself with it.

This God-made man comes to earth in flesh and blood. He lives a perfect life in every way, never sinning, never slipping up, never making a mistake even once. By God living perfectly while in the flesh, He lived an example of what life was intended to be. God, covered in clay, gave a glimpse of mankind in Plan A, in the perfect condition and life we were each intended and showed what a life would look like that was not broken and shattered.

Jesus would live in this perfect and whole state for 33 ½ years on this broken earth, but that was just the beginning of Plan B. If it were not shocking enough that this all powerful God would place Himself in clay, in flesh, and come to this broken earth, He then placed Himself upon man's pedestal.

Upon the cross which man had formed for torture and death, a cross that was a direct result of the original breaking that man had caused, upon the cross Christ places Himself--the skilled, masterful, and powerful deity now wrapped in fragile clay--places Himself upon man's pedestal that is the cross. And, Jesus there makes the ultimate decision to become broken Himself, not as a result of a sinful mistake of His own such as man made, but as an act of love.

You may know that the book of Isaiah says that *"he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."* It's so fantastically fitting that



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the word “bruised” as in bruised for our iniquities literally translates to the word broken, crushed, or shattered. Jesus took the pedestal of man and allowed for Himself, in all of His perfection, to be broken, even more to be crushed, and shattered for our sins.

Why would God in all of His ability and might and power, why would the hands of such a skilled and masterful creator, choose to stretch the same hands He created perfection with, and stretch them upon a cross and die and become broken and shattered for, not even the sins of His own, but for our sins? What we have to realize is that this is the only way it could be. By dying on the cross Plan B was set into motion, but it was far from over.

Jesus would die that day on the cross, on man’s pedestal of torture. He would be placed in a tomb that was sealed and guarded. But that was far from the end. In all of His might and power this same shattered Savior would restore perfection by becoming whole again. Christ arose from the dead and defeated sin, death, hell and the grave. The word defeat means to win victory over, to reject or block, to render null and void. When Jesus raised to life on the third day after dying and being shattered, He fulfilled Plan B. Jesus defeats death; He wins victory; He rejects, blocks, and renders null and void the shattering broken state that man had self-chosen.

He Himself was made whole and complete once again. But in doing so, Jesus Christ made a way that each and every single person that will ever live upon this broken earth can leave behind their shattered self. They can forfeit their broken lives and have a life that is forgiven, whole, and perfect through Christ. This, this is Plan B. Actually, if we’re being truthful, this was always Plan A.

We may have to dwell on a planet that is far from perfect, we may have to endure a life of hurt and heartache, but we can be restored with every single broken piece we have caused, put back together and formed into a the beautiful state He created us for, all because of what Jesus did upon that cross and in that grave.

It really is an amazing story that many have become so numb to we no longer appreciate it. But the fact of the matter is, this is what life is all about: This story--the story of salvation, the story of redemption from our broken state, the story of being made whole and complete again in Christ-- is **THE MOST IMPORTANT STORY** that you will ever be a part of.

What is sadly overlooked actually is the part that we do play in the story. It would have been so much simpler if that were the end and all of mankind were forgiven from that point on. However, just as man chose to intentionally, through our sins, break the masterpiece and all of perfection that God had meant for us, it is also up to each person individually to choose to be made whole again. Each and every single person who lives and dies upon this earth has two choices that all of life could boil down to: A) Be broken. Remain in your shattered state with the pieces of your life lying on the ground all around you as you continue to break more and more with each decision you make. You can deny there is anything wrong and ignore your shattered self, denying that you need help; denying that you need the pieces put back together. Or, B) Believe that you are broken, admit that you've done nothing but make a mess of your life. Accept that you are a breaker who needs a final fix, a righteous repair.

We cannot become saved until we believe we are broken. How can God fix you, how can Christ pick up the pieces of your life unless you first admit it's in pieces. He cannot save those who will not admit they are lost. This may be a bit controversial, but too many people are visiting the altars in our culture today and leaving in just a much of a mess as they came. Jesus never intended to allow Himself to become crushed so that we could ask Him as our Savior and yet remain unchanged, unaffected, and in full honesty un-needing of His sacrifice.

Instead, for anyone who will come in humility and brokenness and openly and fully admit that they are in need of Jesus Christ to make



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them whole, to take the mess that is their life and make it His masterpiece once again with His same might and powerful hands that formed existence and stretched out on the cross, He will reach down, scoop up the broken pieces of your life. He will forgive you of everything you have broken, and He will restore you once again.

After we accept and admit we are broken and sinful and in need of a savior, He makes us whole once again through His might. And in our restored state, He can once again dwell among us, commune with us, and be our God. He can make needed repairs when we begin to fracture along the way. He can work on our fragile selves daily to become that perfect masterpiece He intended.

But it all starts with you. Do you believe you're broken?

Outro: In the May 1982 there was a British violinist named Peter Cropper who was world renowned. Cropper's work was so outstanding that the Royal Academy of Music in London had honored him by lending him a priceless 258-year old Stradivarius violin. It is the dream of every violinist to be able to play such an instrument and was of the highest honors, but a terrible thing happened while Cropper was performing in Finland. He tripped and fell on top of the Stradivarius violin and broke it. Cropper's pleasant dream of playing such a prestigious instrument was turned into a horrible nightmare. Peter was, as you can imagine, inconsolable.

Then a London violin dealer told him of a master craftsman who could repair the Stradivarius violin. The repairs were made by the master craftsman to the broken violin, and, in fact, the repairs were so perfect that they could not even be seen, and the soaring notes of the instrument were more beautiful than they had ever been before – all because the broken parts were placed in the hands of a master craftsman who then applied his healing touch to what was admittedly broken.

So, do you want to stay broken? Or will you accept the savior's shattered salvation?

SHATTERED STUDIES

Can you guess what the most recorded song in history is? This song has been recorded an estimated 6,600 times by countless artists from around the world. Over twice as many times as the second most recorded song (“Yesterday” by the Beatles coming in at 3,000 recordings). This song rings out when tragedy strikes, when people are hurting and seeking. This song has inspired millions of lives of both Christian and secularists alike. This song is also a record breaker in its endurance of relevancy and recognition. Even though this song may have been written 200+ years ago, it is still more recognizable than any song on the planet. Have you guessed the song yet?

By now not doubt you’ve figured out the song to which we are referring is “Amazing Grace.” Yet, ironically, many of us who sing out this old song miss out on the meaning of its rich lyrics.

Think about the words to the first verse of “Amazing Grace.”

*Amazing Grace how sweet the sound,
that saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost but now am found,
was blind but now I see.*

Amazing Grace was written in 1779 by John Newton of England. As a young man Newton was raised by his mother who constantly instilled in him the importance of reading his Bible and attending church.

However, at age 19, John would eventually begin traveling where he would one day be taken by force of a press gang who would literally enlist men forcibly into employment. Newton would be forced to work on a ship which specialized in slave trade. Upon entering the ship, the

captain ordered for Newton to be stripped and flogged. Eventually he would go on to not only endure the harsh working conditions of a slave trade ship, but Newton would begin to thrive and even enjoy his work.

Newton completely abandoned his faith which had been instilled by his mother, and, in fact, he ran as far away from God as possible. Not only was Newton involved in the trading and poor treatment of human beings for a living, he also became infamous for his riotous living and was notoriously known as the life of the party. John Newton would mock faith each day of his life as he fled as far away from God as a life can go.

However, one day in 1748 John was aboard a ship that was in bad shape. While setting sail, the ship began to take on water as parts of the ship fell apart during a fierce storm. Crew members began to be swept away, and Newton, who had lived a life upon the sea, was fearful for his life. Newton tried with all of his might during the duration of the storm to keep this ship from going under. As he did so, he could not help but reflect on the condition in which he found his life. John Newton realized that he had ran from God; he mocked God; he had hurt other people for a living. Newton had made a terrible wreck out of his own life. Realizing that this storm aboard this ship may be the very thing that takes his life, Newton couldn't help but wonder, would God forgive him even after Newton had rejected Him.

With nowhere else to turn, in a lost and hopeless state, Newton realized the only hope he had in life was to ask God for forgiveness. Newton would survive the storm that night, but even more, John Newton would become saved through the Grace of God which he found to be amazing.

Newton would go on to become one of the most respectable preachers and pastors in England. He would work effortlessly to lead those who mocked God to redemption. Newton also worked boldly to abolish the slave trade in which he had once taken great part. Newton would write

the song “Amazing Grace” which still, hundreds of years later, touches the heart and lives of millions of people who have lost their way.

Think About This:

1. ***What did John have to do before he could be “Found”***
2. ***In what ways was John Newton’s life “Shattered”***
3. ***Why was it necessary for Newton to become broken before he could become saved?***
4. ***Read Luke 19:10 “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” If Jesus came to seek and save the lost, what do you think Jesus’ reaction is to those who do not consider themselves to be lost?***
5. ***Why is it so difficult for people to admit they need to be saved/found?***
6. ***Define the word Repent.***
7. ***Why can we not be saved from our sins without first repenting?***

“I once was lost , but now am found.” Salvation begins after we make a decision that our lives are lost, broken, destroyed, filthy and worthless. When we determine that there is absolutely nothing in our lives worth keeping, there is nothing valuable or worthwhile, we then realize that we are lost, and we are in need of being found. We then admit we are a sinner in need of a savior, believe that Jesus died to find us, to save us - and to forgive us of our sins. We then ask Jesus to be that Savior, to save us from that old terrible way of life, and now give us a new life in Him. *Amazing Grace, Oh how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost, but now I’m found, was blind but now I see.*”

CHAPTER TWO SIN SHATTERED

You may find it rather interesting – or maybe even alarming – how many reports throughout history, even modern-day history, that the sky has opened up and stones have begun falling from the sky. One such example took place in the state of Ohio. On October 31, 1901 in Harrisonville, Ohio, the small-town newspaper reported that a small boulder had crashed through the window of a local resident named Zach Dyes, even though there was not a single soul in sight to sling the stone. Within a few days, the whole town of Harrisonville began being pelted by stones from a completely clear sky. The townspeople, who were obviously puzzled by this phenomenon decided to take action. So, they gathered up all of the men and boys of the town, since they believed no woman would be capable of such an act, and they began to intensely question each of the male residents of the town, ensuring no mischievous stone throwing had taken place. Sure enough, after the interrogations were completed, there was no evidence that any individual threw even a single stone. Several days later, the stones again began falling from the sky upon Harrisonville, Ohio, and then stopped just as suddenly as it had started – with no explanation ever to be found.

Since this event in 1901 there have been numerous other reports of raining rocks around the world, including in Sumatra in 1903, Belgium in 1913, France in 1921, Australia repeatedly between 1946 and 1962, New Zealand in 1963, New York in 1973, and Arizona in 1983. Each with the same M.O. as in Harrisonville, leaving riled residents and a missing meaning to the raining rocks.

Now this may be a bit of an odd question to ask next but have you ever heard the expression, “People who live in glass houses should not throw stones”? Now typically, this supposed Chinese proverb means don’t speak harshly or critically of someone if you don’t want to receive the same in return. In other words, I shouldn’t call you fat if I don’t want to hear you tell me I’m ugly, the idea being that I can expect consequences, or in this case stones, as a direct result of my choices. *“People who live in glass houses should not throw stones.”*

Now, this is not to say that the folks of Harrisonville, Ohio, and all of those other locations around the globe were calling God “fat” per say; however, we do know it’s not beyond God’s capabilities to throw stones.

This statement may have you scratching your head a bit. It might seem like we are calling God a childish stone-slinger who can’t take criticism. But, truth be told, that statement is Biblical. That’s right: God has a rock raining reputation.

One perfect stone slinging sample can be found in the book of Joshua. Now, before we look at this rock raining report, let’s first get a bit of back story. So, as we know, Israel’s fearless leader Moses – who led the jail break out of Egypt, who wandered in the wilderness – comes to the end of his life. Joshua is chosen as Israel’s next leader and the commander over Israel. So, this make-shift army of God’s people now prepares to take the land that God has promised to them, but not without a few obstacles. When reading through the books of Numbers and Joshua, we see nation after king after nation that Joshua and Israel who, through God’s might, defeat one after the other.

Now specifically, we read in Numbers chapter 21 that Joshua and the Israelites ask King Sihon of the Amorites if they can peacefully pass through their land, without stealing or harming or causing any sort of ruckus. Instead of giving the green light, King Sihon and the Amorites



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say, “no way!” In fact, they even go as far as to block and attack the Israelites. It almost sounds like the Amorites started “throwing stones” at God and His people.

And then, it happens. Only a couple of years later we read in Joshua chapter 10 that Joshua and Israel have another encounter with the Amorites. Only this time, no doubt as a consequence of their “stone slinging” decision in Numbers 21, God decides to rain rocks upon the Amorites. Here’s the account in Joshua 10:11; *“And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel...that the LORD cast down great stones from heaven upon them...”*. The Amorites throw a stone at God and, guess what? God starts throwing stones back! Only as you can imagine, the rocks God rains down are much larger than the stones of the Amorites.

If that’s not proof enough that God throws stones, consider the plague He rained down on Egypt after they held God’s people hostage. The third plague that God sends to Egypt is hailstones. God tells Pharaoh to let His people go; Pharaoh says, *“Ain’t gonna happen,”* and so God responds by raining hailstones; God starts throwing stones.

We could look at the book of Revelation, which obviously hasn’t happened yet, but after the world rejects Christ and follows evil, are there any guesses what God tells us He’s going to rain? That’s right: rocks. In Revelation 16:21, we read that God will rain rocks weighing as much as a person!

Then, of course, there are the obvious commands of God that the Bible gives as a consequence for sin. Now this may be a bit PG-13 and certainly could be considered inhumane in our PC culture, but in the Old Testament the Bible commanded that for certain sins and breaking of the commands, the culprits should be brought before everyone and stoned to death. Literally, God commanded that people who sinned should be put to death by pelting them with stones.

Now, this is grotesque, it’s cruel and unusual, and it was possibly the

absolute worst way that a person could die back in this day, or even today for that matter. But do you know why the punishment was so severe? It's because God took, and still takes, sin very seriously. For the individual being stoned, it would have been a very excruciating and painful death. Rocks of many sizes, even large boulders, would be thrown as hard as possible at the individual. The bones throughout their entire body would be broken, crushed, and shattered. They would suffer internal bleeding and typically would lose consciousness before blacking out and eventually dying. It really was an unforgettable and very direct consequence for sin.

So, man would sin and, in doing so, would hypothetically “sling stones” from their fleshly, feeble glass house in God's direction. As a direct consequence of this decision to sin, God would make sure the sinning individual received a stone back. If you would allow, we could say that a more accurate saying that the Bible teaches is: *“People who are made of breakable clay shouldn't throw stones by sinning against God.”*

The truth of the matter is, sin shatters – always. We may not commonly see modern day stonings in our public square any more, but the same truth remains. Even in the year 2019, there is a price to be paid for sin, and there is a consequence for choosing to sin. If you don't want your life to shatter; don't sin. Don't sling stones at God. Just as the rocks that were thrown in an Old Testament stoning would break and shatter bones of every kind, when we choose to do what God has clearly told us not to do – SIN – we hypothetically throw a stone in God's direction. Whether we like it or not, whether we believe it or not, whether we want to admit it or not, there will be a price to pay for that sin. God will, in some way, shape, or form throw a rock back at your clay flesh, and it will break. It's a rock raining result of sin.

Most of the time, when we talk about being broken before God as a Christian, we are speaking of a painful but good thing. And the truth is, we, at times, will endure a trial and breaking process which has



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absolutely nothing at all to do with us. We haven't sinned, we haven't thrown a stone of any kind; yet, God knows we need to be broken. However, there's also the breaking that we choose ourselves as a direct result of our sin.

If we were looking for an absolute perfect example in scripture of a person who had a good, even a *great* life, but threw it all away because they decided to sin, they decided to throw rocks at God and as a result they became so broken that their life was shattered by their own choosing, we could look no further than King David's Dilemma.

Now, we know that King David has become the epitome of what it looks like when someone sins or when a Christian slips up. But, have you ever considered just how big of a rock came raining down on David because of his sinful stone-slinging? Have you ever really looked at just how broken David would become, for no other reason than that he sinned against God?

What we have to realize about David is that this is the same guy who, years earlier, God handpicked as an unlikely king. David, as a shepherd boy, would have God's Spirit poured upon him. He would have strength unlike those around him. He defeated bears and lions with his own hands. He picked a fight as a teenager with a name-calling giant whose tone David didn't like – and he won! David goes on to serve in the kingdom of Saul, and eventually we know that David took the throne himself as the King of Israel. In fact, not just any king, but David would become the standard, the favorite – the King to beat for every King to follow. Even today, thousands and thousands of years later, King David is the favored King in Israel. David not only accomplished all of this greatness, but David was real when it came to serving God. So, many Kings in Israel would serve God halfheartedly, seeking their own desires and sprinkling it with God here and there; but not David. He loved God, he craved God, he cherished God's commands, he desired God's will in his decisions – he was a godly individual, to say the least. Even more so, God Himself calls David a man that was after “His own heart.”

We read in Psalm 17 that David was “*the apple of God’s eye*”, which means he was cherished above all others.

So, we see that this guy we’re talking about wasn’t just an evil sinner or a common Christian. This man was an upright, godly, loyal, and faithful servant of God who truly, in his heart, wanted to please God and do His will. And yet, even with all of this being true, David, living in his clay flesh, still slung a stone at God.

If David, a man after God’s own heart, can sin, who am we to think we won’t? Don’t we often fool ourselves into falling for the lie of, “*I would never do that!*” We convince ourselves that only the really bad sinners sin, only the weak Christians stumble and slip up, but not me! No doubt, David easily could have thought that to himself before. And yet, there came a day when David would commit such severe sins that his life would have no choice but to be shattered.

It is so vital that each and every one of us realizes that anybody is able to sin, really sin. Parents, Sunday school teachers, song leaders, youth leaders, your pastors, and you – especially you – are able to sin.

Some of you are sitting in your glass houses, your fragile clay vessels, and you’re playing with the rocks. You’re seeing just how high you can throw them without God noticing. You may not be REALLY sinning, but you’re getting as close as you know how without going all the way. Instead of looking at naked pictures, you’re looking at almost naked pictures. Instead of swearing, you’re using words that sound similar. You may not be the one inhaling, injecting, or taking a drink, but you’re present when it’s taking place. Or, maybe you’re not “*going all the way*” with your boyfriend or girlfriend, but you’re getting pretty close! LISTEN, God is not fooled. He’s not into your “how close can I get” kind of games with God. And the fact of the matter is, that some of you are going to end up very surprised because one day – even if you didn’t



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think you threw the stone at God all the way – He is still going to sling a stone back. You’re still going to be broken because of what you’ve done.

Some of you still aren’t convinced that you could ever be capable of committing crimes against God such as David did. Some of you think you are super Christians who laugh in the face of temptation, but you’re still telling little lies here and there, you’re still gossiping, you’re not faithful to reading your Bible or to praying daily. Maybe you’re jealous all the time, maybe you don’t go to church like you should, or you just hang out with bad influences. Some of you think because you are throwing small stones that God won’t notice; but, rest assured – He knows! And here’s a little secret: the size of the stone God throws back is not always what you’d expect! Remember, that in telling a “little lie” Ananias and Sapphira were killed on the spot! Talk about a big stone! Any sin, ANY SIN, is a stone slung against God, regardless of the type sin or stone’s size. And so, any time we sin, we must accept that there will be a consequence. We’re going to receive a rock raining down upon us.

David, even though he openly admitted he loved, craved, and desired God’s commands, he still went on to throw stones, and he broke every one of the 10 commandments. Now without going into all the gritty details, think of the 10 commandments and the “big sins” we find there. Realize for a minute that David did all of these! Adultery, murder – the big ones! David came to a place in his life where he really threw some major stones in God’s direction.

We read in 2 Samuel 12 verses 10-12 of the “stones” that God slings back at David’s clay vessel. God tells David, “because you have sinned against me; because you have disobeyed and broken my commands, the sword will never depart from your family, David. There will always be murder, war, and fighting. Because you sinned against me, evil will be raised up from within your family, your sons will betray you, there will be incest and murder and conniving from within your own flesh and blood. David, because you slung stones, I’m going to take your wives and give them to your neighbors, just like you took them from your

neighbors. I'm going to take this sin and make it public so that the whole kingdom and the whole world will know what you've done. David, because you sinned, your child will perish and die after birth." This was David's demise as a consequence of his sins.

Now that's quite a list of consequences, but David had quite a list of sins! And the entire rest of the days that we read of David's life fulfill each and every one of these consequences. Every one of these rocks rain down upon his life.

Throughout all that we read in scripture up until this point, David has been a strong, mighty, and confident individual. But in verse 13 we read of the prideful king admitting, "I have sinned against the Lord." The rest of the chapter we read of just how broken and how shattered King David had become. David prays and begs God not to take his child, he falls upon the earth all day and all night, eating and drinking nothing. He didn't change clothes; he just wallowed and mourned and pleaded with God. In fact, David was so broken by the stones slung his way that when the child finally did pass away, David's servants were afraid to tell him of the bad news because of what he may do to himself. David chose to sin and sling stones at God, and now David's flesh would become so broken and shattered by the consequences of his sins that he would become almost unrecognizable to those around him. Because of David's sin, his larger-than-life stature was diminished, his great reputation ruined. He was now known as a lying, adulterous murderer. David was humiliated, and, for all intents and purposes, David's life as he knew it was broken to bits, pulverized to pieces; David was shattered.

We may not receive the same rocks of consequence for our sins as King David did, and just as the consequences and our personal pebbles, or sins, differ, so do the broken pieces of our lives. Some people suffer from addiction because of their decision to sin. Even after becoming a Christian they can't stop or give it up because they threw that stone and now they're stuck. Some may suffer physical conditions and ailment as a



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consequence of their stone slinging. Others may have lost their friends or their family. Or, maybe like King David, they've lost their prestige and position, their reputation becomes ruined and they are humiliated. Whatever the case may be, the shattering sequence that follows is intended to hurt, it's intended to cause damage, and it's intended to break us.

We read a firsthand account of David's depiction and how he was feeling in Psalm 51. David would admit that he had reached the very bottom, and that he had absolutely no hope in this life aside from God. He continually brings up his sin in Chapter 51, proving that it is obviously always on his mind, the fact that he has sinned and failed. In Verses 16 and 17 David declares that he himself has sinned against God and God only, and in order to correct the wrong he has done David says; *"For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."* David faced the reality that because of his sin, the only thing that now could take place in his life was becoming broken.

David became broken and humbled and learned a very valuable lesson that God desires for each of us to understand: we are not intended to pick ourselves up from the dirt and mire we find ourselves in. We're not supposed to cleanse ourselves, work harder to have forgiveness handed to us. We cannot make things right in and of ourselves. David told us God doesn't want more sacrifices or burnt offerings; instead, God only wants a broken spirit and a contrite heart. If we will give this to Him after we have sinned, He will look at the pathetic mess we have made and look at us in our shattered state, and He will lovingly say "this I can use." As David put it, "He will not despise"; He will not cast away or count as worthless.

Even in the broken state that this once godly king found himself, he recognized that God was with him. David would fully receive every one of the foretold consequences, but David would also receive an abundance of Grace from God. While David would never be the same, he would righteously recover. The only reason that this occurred for David is because He humbled himself and became broken before God.

But, not everyone in the Bible, or in this day and time, are as lucky. Take, for example, King David's predecessor, King Saul, who slung stones at God and got some stones slung back. He wound up dying as a result of rocks raining. We could talk about the wicked people of Noah's day who wouldn't listen to God and were wiped off the earth, or the people of Sodom and Gomorrah who were wicked and fire fell from heaven, or Achan who slung stones by stealing from God and he and his family were stoned to death for it. Ahab would throw every stone imaginable and would be wounded in war as a result of a raining rock. Even Judas would never recover after slinging stones at the Savior and selling him out for silver; he would die a depressed death. There are so many others in the Bible who made the decisions to sin and, in doing so, received consequences from which they could never recover.

The absolute bottom line is that there is a penalty for sin. We must always repay our rocks. While we live under a new covenant since the Old Testament, the same God is in control. Here's a little gem from the New Testament in the book of Romans – you won't find this on a coffee cup, bookmark, or t-shirt in any Christian Book store! *"...after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and*



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wrath, Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil". Or consider this verse from Colossians 3:25, "But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons."

Case in point: those who live in clay flesh should not throw sinful stones. In the modern culture we live in, everyone around you at school, on TV, at the gym, at work, and even at church is telling you that sin doesn't matter very much, that it's more important to be relevant, to love everyone, or to not pass judgment. We're told that God loves everyone, God wants us to be happy, and that everyone has to find their own truth for themselves. But, each piece of this terrible advice is a lie that is inviting rocks to rain down. Sin is sin is sin, and sin still matters; it still counts; it's still relevant. If God said not to do it, He meant it. Listen, and save yourself from having to endure a breaking, a shattering, as a result of your decision to sin and sling stones.

You can stop the sin shattering before it takes place; you can avoid the anguish and entirety of the pain and consequences that follow – if you choose to live a Godly life, avoiding sin in every way. We all slip up, but when our hearts are set on pleasing Christ, His grace is sufficient, and protects us and directs us in the ways in which we should go. You may think the way you live your life really doesn't matter all that much. As long as you believe in Jesus and claim His name, the rest is minor details. But friend, the truth is you're wrong – it does matter.

The final eruption of Mount St. Helens in May of 1980 was not a sudden event. In fact, for two months prior to the massive blast—the most deadly and destructive volcanic eruption in American history—there were earthquakes and volcanic activity which signaled major events were underway. Authorities had plenty of time to sound the alarm and warn those living nearby of the looming danger. Yet, despite the

seriousness of the threat, some people chose to disregard the warnings, knowing the truth but choosing the consequences of ignoring them.

Probably the best known of those who refused to evacuate was Harry Randall Truman--no, not that one; not the old president. This eighty-three year old man was the owner and caretaker at the Mount St. Helens Lodge at Spirit Lake. He had survived the sinking of his troop ship by a German submarine off the coast of Ireland during World War I, and he was not about to leave just because scientists thought there was danger. Mr. Truman told reporters, "I don't have any idea whether it will blow. But, I don't believe it to the point that I'm going to pack up." On May 18, 1980, Truman and his lodge were buried beneath 150 feet of mud and debris from the volcanic eruption. His body was never found. Truman was warned, and instead of heeding the warning, he received the consequence that he deserved.

You can choose your sin, but you cannot choose how your sin will shatter your life.

SHATTERED STUDIES

Most of us here have been to a zoo at one time or another. A favorite exhibit of both adults and kids alike is the monkey exhibit. We love to watch as they swing from limbs, make funny faces, walk upright, and goof off for a good time. However, have you ever considered how these quick gangly creatures were “caught” in the first place? Do you know how to catch a monkey?

It’s no monkey business, but while there are no doubt many ways to catch a monkey, primitive people of the jungle for years have easily caught monkeys in a very simplistic way. First, they would obtain a coconut and drill a hole that is just big enough to fit the hand of the monkey. Then, they would hollow out the coconut and place rice, fruit, or something shiny inside. Next, they would chain the coconut trap to a tree. Lastly, they would wait and watch.

Before long, a curious monkey will approach the coconut. Unable to resist the temptation of the treat that lies inside, the monkey will insert its hand into the coconut to grab what lies inside. However, as the hole you have drilled is only large enough for the monkey’s open hand to just barely slip inside, the monkey, upon grabbing and holding the treat in its closed fist, will be unable to pull its fist through the hole. What’s more, a peculiar thing takes place psychologically as the monkey literally cannot make itself let go of what it is holding on to, even after knowing that because of this tempting treat it has now been caught in a trap.

While people certainly did not come from monkeys, we do have this flaw in common: we, too, cannot let go at times of the things that will trap, bind, and enslave us. Because of the decision of this monkey to not let go from the coconut trap of the jungle, it may be captured and placed for a lifetime behind the bars of confinement.

Think About This:

- 1. Name some “traps” or sins that we often can’t let go of***
- 2. How do we fall for the traps of sin?***
- 3. How does sin enslave and bind us?***
- 4. Why do we choose bondage over letting go of sin?***
- 5. How does sin cause brokenness?***
- 6. What is the penalty of sin?***
- 7. Read: Galatians 5:1, John 8:36, Romans 6:18. Why should a Christian never live in or be bound by sin?***

We are born into bondage as humans. Because of the decision to sin by Adam and Eve, each of us enter into this world in chains and shackles. Every time we make the decision to sin, the cuffs are tightened down further and further. Jesus died upon the cross with His life to literally buy the keys to our chains so that He could free us once and for all.

If you have been saved and born again, you are free as the Bible tells us; you no longer have to wear the shackles of sin upon your life. However, when we make the choice to sin, it’s the same as if we snatch the keys back from Christ’s hands, open up the cuffs again, and of our own will put them back on our lives.

Many of us realize that the sin we have chosen has bound us, and so we again ask for forgiveness, which the Bible says “He is faithful” to give to us. And, so once again, Jesus unbinds the chains. However, there are those of us who continue to fall for the same coconut, the same trap or sin that we were bound by once before. This is why the apostle Paul tells us to take extreme measures to keep from returning to the sin that keeps binding us.

Paul’s remedy is so extreme that he suggests we maim our bodies, cut off a part of the body so as to ensure we won’t fall for that again! If your eye offends you, Paul says to pluck it out. If your hand is the problem,



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cut it off. It's better to be missing an eye or a hand than to miss salvation completely and spend eternity in Hell.

It's a traaaap. How easily we forget and fall for the same ruse time and time again, even as blood bought, born-again Christians. Be on alert when you see a coconut chained to a tree; cut off your hand if you need to so that the chains no longer fit, because sin reaps death, and sin breaks lives, and sin is waiting for you to be its next victim. Indeed, it's a trap.

CHAPTER THREE

SURVIVING SHATTERED

Anyone who knows me well knows that I am an avid coffee lover. In full transparency, that's probably an understatement. Sometimes I think I need coffee more than air... I know I have a problem.

So as you can imagine, it's not much of a surprise that for years I have collected coffee cups. It probably started when a well-meaning family member wasn't sure what to get me for a gift, so the coffee cup seemed an obvious choice. Soon, these one or two coffee cups turned into a small collection; then it filled a cabinet in the kitchen; then two cabinets. Eventually, I had so many that there were coffee cups everywhere. They were in boxes in storage, in several cabinets, on the counter as decorations. Eventually I gave into the craze and began to embrace to coffee cup collection.

Upon going on a trip or vacation, a lot of people would pick up a t-shirt or a keychain to remember it by. I got - you guessed it - a coffee cup. I had coffee cups in every shape, size, color, from many states and countries around the world. You may have noticed I said that I "had" these coffee cups. That's right, past tense.

You see, one day, that was just like any other, we were going along with life as usual, and my wife and I decided that ice cream was a necessity to unwind for the evening. We got out the tub of our favorite flavor, grabbed a couple spoons from the drawer, opened the cabinet door to



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get a bowl, placed the bowl on the counter, and shut the cabinet door, and then...it happened.

I've never been present when a literal bomb has gone off, but let me tell you, what came next is about the next closest thing I can relate to. As the door to the cabinet shut, it somehow wiggled the pin loose that held the shelves of coffee cups, and as the pin came out, a literal ceramic avalanche of coffee cups came pouring, overflowing onto the shelves below, onto the counter and the floor. The earth shattering sound of hundreds, maybe even a thousand, glass coffee cups shattering into tiny miniscule pieces upon the floor was a noise I will never forget.

In seconds, what had taken me years to collect, what I was so proud of - my beloved coffee cup collection - lay shattered all around me. In fact, these coffee cups were more than shattered, they were almost dismantled into dust. We found pieces of broken glass for months, maybe even years, to come. There were pieces in every room in the house; even rooms that were closed off on the opposite end of the building had tiny shards of shattered glass from my once-coffee cup collection.

Needless to say, we didn't eat the ice cream after that. It took a few minutes of making sure that each other was okay and bandaging up a few bloody cuts, then we stood there in shock, in disbelief of what had just happened.

What had started as just a normal evening with a craving for ice cream quickly became a shocking, shaking, shattering moment in our lives. Now, the broken pieces filled our home; they could never be put back together; we could never go back to the moment before it all broke.

Shattered. Honestly, there is no good use of the word. It's not like you can use it in a sentence and you have to clarify if you mean the good use or the bad use of the word. When you say "shattered," instantly anyone listening knows this won't be pretty. The dictionary defines shattered as

“to break suddenly and violently into many pieces, to damage or destroy.”

I would love to sit here and tell you that coffee cups are the only things that shatter in our lives, but the truth is that would be a lie. In fact, if you were to look around at every other person sitting in this room with you today, chances are 100% - not 27, 43, 50, or 75% - but 100% of the people in this room have experienced, are experiencing, or will experience a life shattering at some point. 100%. How's that for statistics! Unfortunately, this is just a part of life that comes with the territory of being human.

So, if we will all experience being shattered at some point and if it's just a part of life, then how do we shatter correctly? How do we make sense of the shattering, and how do we survive being shattered?

Typically the obvious “go to” person for hardships and trials in the Bible is the story of Job, and for good reason. Unfortunately, we have become so use to the clichés within Job's story that it loses its effect and application in our lives. We usually will hear of how Job went through these tragedies and he trusted God and God received glory, and in the end Job endured to receive more than he had before. And so we should to. And I'm not saying these things aren't true, but there's so much more for us to comprehend about this story so that, like Job, we can survive being shattered.

Job's shattered story starts out giving us a bit of an insight into who exactly Job was. According to God, Job was a “perfect and upright man that feared God and hated evil.” That was how God described Job - not how Job, or his family, or his wife described him - but these were the adjectives that God chooses to explain Job - a perfect man. Beyond this explanation, the Bible tells us that Job had a lot of stuff, quite a collection, if you will. He was wealthy, had a lot of family and possessions, servants and lands.



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And so, this perfect man is going along living his life for God. He's worshipping, sacrificing, and living a godly life by all intents and purposes...until, that day.

Some of you are getting ahead of me, no doubt, but take a second just to appreciate that there came a day in Job's life, a day that literally started like every other day before. When Job woke up, maybe he made some ye old coffee, looked out the window and thanked God for His goodness. Job possibly went to the breakfast table and had a bite to eat, read the ancient newspaper, and at this exact point in time of Job's story, he no doubt was satisfied with his life. At that moment, he was happy, joy filled and felt as if his life could not get any better.

That is, until Job hears a bone-chilling knock at the door. On this normal, typical, average day, Job's life would take a sharp, severe twist that no one could have expected. Imagine Job rising up from the breakfast table, walking to the front door, and, upon answering, he sees his servant standing there. The servant is out of breath and panting from an obvious urgency that he ran in to Job's home. The servant frantically tells Job of how the Sabeans attacked and stole Job's livestock, and then they murdered Job's servants in cold blood. Now at this moment, Job no doubt was concerned; this average day just got a bit darker.

However, at this point in time, no doubt Job easily could have recovered from this terrible news that this servant had just delivered. Yet, as this servant is stating his story, out of the corner of his eye, Job looks out and sees another one of his servants in the distance desperately approaching. You can just imagine as the servant nears, Job notices the concern upon the servant's face, and a knot begins to form in the pit of Job's stomach. Right in the middle of the conversation between Job and the first servant, the second scared servant interrupts. Gasping for breath, he begins to tell how out of nowhere fire started falling from the sky.

“Master, it, th-the fire started falling from heaven out of nowhere! We tried to herd the flock, but master we, I, we couldn’t.. in an instant the herd..the flock. Master, the sheep, the servants , the, they..they’re all gone, burnt to a crisp!”

Job is now standing there on his front porch, as the second servant scrambles for his final words, in disbelief; Job can’t believe what he’s hearing. He’s sick to his stomach and gravely concerned at the loss he has just suffered. But still even then, Job could have thought, “It’s okay; you’re fine. You can replace them; it’s going to be okay.” That is, until Job sees another familiar face approaching from the other direction.

You can just hear the first servant sobbing, the second servant stuttering, and you can hear as Job takes a big “*gulp*” as the third servant quickly arrives. Wasting no time, the third servant starts his speech. Through tears you can hear him. *“Master, master. It’s, it’s, it’s the camels. Master, out of nowhere the Chaldeans raided the reservation and they made off with your camels. We, I..We tried to stop them, master, but they have slain the other servants... and the camels, the servants, m...m...master they, they’re all gone.”*

In only a few short minutes from Job’s mundane morning, Job has lost nearly all of his livestock, his livelihood and his hired help. But even then, as a man who trusted God and was surely hurting, still Job could have surveyed the situation, and, in the back of his mind, Job could have easily thought, it’s going to be okay.

That is, until one more time Job notices another servant approaching. I have to believe that of all the servants that hastily approached the home that day, this servant brought the most concern of all. This was the servant that tended to Job’s family. As the third servant was still speaking, it was as if everything went silent in Job’s mind. His eyes glaze over, and everything around him begins to move in slow motion. Job’s eyes are locked in and immensely attentive on the fourth servant running his way.



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You can just picture tears welling in Job's eyes as this servant nears, and you can hear the words running through Job's mind. *"No, Lord. Please, please... God, please take anything, anything You want, just not what I think You're about to take from me."* In the next split second Job's life would be forever changed. The sobbing servant begins to speak, *"Master, I am..oh, master, I am so sorry. Th...th..the wind...there was a...a great wind from the wilderness. It wiped out the walls of the home that your children were in, and master, oh master, I..I... I am SO sorry; they've perished. Your children and the other servants, th...they...they're gone."*

In this short span of seconds, the pin that held all the things that Job had collected, the shelf that stored all that Job cared about, let lose. In seconds, everything Job had laid shattered, and life as Job knew it from this moment on would never be the same.

This mediocre morning would soon become a moment in time that Job could never forget. In fact, it without a doubt goes down in world history as the worst day anyone has ever had; it had to have been a Monday. We all know, as good little church boys and girls, what Job does next: Job falls to the ground in a very broken state and he worships; Job has a righteous response to all that had just happened. Job animatedly admits that he came into this world with nothing, and, sure enough, he will leave the same way - empty handed.

Honestly, there are a lot of us who could be transparent right now and say that if we had been in Job's shoes and had endured all that he had just gone through, the chances of us reacting in the same way are slim to none. But even more, for those of us who do feel we are "Super Christians," do we not at times think that if we instinctively trust God and worship Him even when things are bad, that maybe we will change His mind? However, that wasn't the case for Job. This worship that we see here after Job's shattering starts is the most genuine and pure kind of worship that exists. It wasn't based on Job's blessings; it wasn't based on Job's belongings; this worship was solely based on that fact that Job believed God was good.

I'm going to be honest with you, it was bad, really bad for Job, but unfortunately, for Job things will only get worse. Soon enough, in just a few short verses, Job's shattered story starts again. We read this time that Job's very own body is struck with sores from the top of his head to the soles of his feet. Now, his heart is hurting, his body was broken, and Job was as low as a man can get, destroyed and shattered in every way.

Now, through Job's shattering story he never did curse or blame God in any way - the Bible is clear about that. But, let me let you in on a little secret: Job was miserable. Many people want to tell us that when life gets tough just grin and bear it and there will be a brighter day. But, when our life starts to shatter, it's bad, really bad. It hurts; we are in pain and agony, and, to be honest, we don't know if we're going to make it. Job was so stricken that he desires to die; he bewails his birth. Job was depressed and downright distraught – even as a godly, upright, and perfect man.

There are some of you who have been there. You have endured trials and pain that most people will never know. And, instead of hearing good news, you continue to hear the haunting words that we read in the book of Job that say, “Then came another, then came another, then came another.” There are those of you who have known so much grief and heartache that you've honestly wanted to die, you were depressed and destroyed inside. Each day you endure is more painful than the last, and you just hurt so much you feel like you can't breathe.

Can I let you in on a little secret: This is what the substance of shattering looks like. Like Job, if we had a minor mishap in our lives we could easily overcome the obstacle in our own faith. We could think to ourselves, “Ouch, that hurt, but it's okay; everything is going to be okay.” But, when you get to the place of brokenness that Job knew – it wasn't a minor fracture, or a small break – that Job could pick up the pieces of in his own might and put back together. Instead, Job's life was completely, utterly, and in every way, broken and shattered to the point



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that he was hopeless. Job could look at his life laying shattered on the ground and see no end, no hope, no relief in sight. Just pain.

What's very interesting is the request and reaction we read through the rest of Job's shattering story. Many people would expect that Job, in sorrow and agony, may pray that his health be returned, or pray that his wealth be restored, or pray that somehow his family be resurrected. Yet, throughout the entire story of Job, we never once see him request these things. Sure, we see him mourn; sure, we see him in despair and in depression. But, even through his pain Job desires one single thing, or should I say he's seeking someone, and that is God.

Now for those of you wearing your daily halos this may seem obvious. But, humor me for a moment. The ironic part of the story that we skipped past was the behind the scenes action that had been taking place. You see, there are couple more characters cast in the shattering story of Job.

If you can just picture for a moment, Job's life is a Broadway production, minus the goofy costumes and cheap musical numbers. And, in scene one, we see Job rising in the morning; we see him as he eats breakfast; we recall the act where the doorbell rings and the servants, one by one, arrive. Yet, while these scenes are actively taking place on the stage that is Job's life, if you were to peel back the curtain backdrop, you would notice there are two main characters pulling the strings and making the movement take place in Job's life, two cast members who, behind the curtains, have concealed control.

First, Satan approaches God. Out of his sly and sneaky ways, Satan admits he has been searching the whole earth for someone to mess with. From Satan we would expect nothing less, but the surprising factor that we didn't see coming is who places Job on center stage. God, Job's beloved maker, who he trusted, and worshipped, feared, and revered. God, He is the one who suggests Job to Satan. Literally God offers up Job on a silver platter as a shattering student to Satan.

The scenes and acts on stage continue as one after another of the servants take stage left and tell of the shattering story of Job's life – each scene allowed, directed and even suggested by God Himself. In fact, the second servant says that it was God who sent the fire from heaven which consumed the servants and sheep. This same God that Job served, praised, and trusted in— He was the one who allowed and even played a role in the shattering of Job's life.

Now, the fact that Job is in front of the curtain - on the stage of his life - and is totally oblivious to the hands that are pulling the strings behind the scenes is a factor that only we have the advantage of knowing. Yet Job would be wise to recognize that God played a part in his destruction, because he states in chapter 2 that if we are willing to receive the blessings of God, we, too, must accept the calamity of God. Eventually, Job catches on to this fact that the deity he has been devoted to is the destructive hand responsible for Job's demise. Job says in chapter 13 “though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.”

Honestly, it's not easy, but it's comprehensible to trust God when we are facing a trial and when we believe Satan is attacking us, when we think that all of the tragedy and heartache around us is from the hands of our enemy. We believe God will get us through and we will be victorious over this valley. But, do you want to know what's hard – and even nearly impossible? Knowing in your mind that God Himself - the one you love, the one you trust, the one you have placed your hope and confidence in - His hands are the ones causing your pain; His hands are the ones destroying you, shattering your story. Having this realization, and yet still- even then, with this always in your mind- still trusting Him, still praising Him.

Though He may slay me, though He may hurt me, cause me agony, He may break my life into millions of pieces- but even then I will trust Him. Even then I will love Him, even then I will serve Him. Are we serving God for His stuff and what He can do for us? Or, are we serving Him



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for who He is? No doubt this was a question that Job quickly had to ask himself.

Now, I don't know about you, but this is a pretty hard pill to swallow. We have a God here who provides pain, suggests struggles, hands over hurt, and who still through the worst pain that a person can receive in life expects that we serve Him. And then there's the why: Why would God do this? Why would God allow this? Why would God even suggest this?! Most of the time we're just unable to understand.

God, I am hurting right now, I have lost – God, I have lost literally everything. My job, God, it's gone; my finances have faltered; God, my health is failing; I've lost my home; my grades are slipping; my marriage is a wreck; God, I've lost my love one; I've lost my family. The pain is so real; the hurt is so heavy. God, at times I can't breathe it hurts so bad. I have more questions than answers, God. There are days I don't even care if I'm alive. In fact, God, I honestly would rather just die than live this in this life. God, I feel like you've abandoned me, you've hung me out to dry. I feel like I'm just a pawn in a scheme I never asked for. God, what are you doing?! Why me? God..God?..God.

And, in that moment, as if we are the actor on center stage who is at a loss for the words of his next line, we gently hear God whisper from behind the curtain, *“My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness...for when I am weak, then am I strong.”* In that moment, with the bright spot lights shining on our shattered story, the realization hits us that this brokenness, this hurt, this pain, this deep despair – He shattered our story so that we had need for one thing only in this life, He broke us so that we only would need Him. In our shattering He supplied our solution: Himself.

We fast forward to the end of Job's shattered story and find that God finally, after 36 chapters, He finally speaks to Job's suffering. And, after all of the questions, all of the searching and begging that Job does

through his story, the only single answer we find God providing is: Himself. God spends the next 4 chapters continually claiming that He is the only thing that Job needs! He is the solution to Job's problems; He is the answer to His questions; He is literally by every definition of the word – God is EVERYTHING that Job needed.

At the end of Job's story, I just have to believe that if God had given Job the option of the collection of things in Job's life that he cherished OR having God Himself, it would have been a no-brainer for Job. It was in the weakness of being broken, the weakness of having his life completely and utterly shattered that God provided His grace, His unmerited assistance. Through the shattering Job, no doubt, began to cherish his sufferings, for in the deep despair and the sorrow he endured, Job found God in a new light, a new strength that he had never and would never have been able to find had he not first been shattered.

We collect a lot of stuff in life—our possessions, our wealth, our health, our family. And, don't get me wrong, these things are good and are glorious blessings from God. They sit on the shelf we call our life, and we're proud of them, cherishing them. Yet, God knows that each and every one of these things cannot eternally satisfy; every one of these collectables will one day pass away. And, when they do, we will be left with nothing. God knows that while we may think we are strong now, the truth is we first have to be made weak to know true strength. He looks down on our lives and realizes that even though it's going to hurt, even though it will be painful, what we really need is to be broken. So, God sets out on a perfect plan to shatter our story, breaking and at times literally ridding our lives of everything we hold dear. And in doing so,



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He ensures that we are left with everything we need, we are made weak in order to find Him as our strength.

Sure, we may seek answers from God, we may beg and plead that He gives reason for our sufferings, yet as we hear the ear piercing sound of our lives falling and shattering on the floor, like He said to Job, we hear Him say, “I am everything you need.”

Outro: A tour bus was journeying through the countryside of Israel with a group of anticipating tourists. Upon traveling, the bus and tour guide noticed a shepherd carrying a lamb in his arms while the rest of the flock were scattered behind. The bus slowed as the tour guide motioned for the shepherd to near the bus. The tourists were thrilled with this unique opportunity to take pictures of the authentic shepherd with this beautiful lamb.

However, one little boy allowed for his curiosity to take voice as he loudly yelled from the bus to the shepherd *“Why are you carrying the little lamb in your arms? Can’t he walk by himself?”*

The shepherd smiled and said, *“Oh, you don’t understand. This little lamb had very little need for me as its shepherd, that is, until I broke his leg. This may seem cruel, but it truly was for his own good, because I am the only defense that he has. Now, unlike the rest of the flock, this little lamb gets to be closer to me than any other; he is now fully dependent upon me.”*

Do you want life’s stuff, or do you want the strength of the savior that can only come by surviving shattered?

SHATTERED STUDIES

If you've been alive for any amount of time at all, chances are you have gotten ill a time or two. When you get sick, what are some "cures" that you have found or been told will help? (e.g. tea, cold shower, Pepto-Bismol, Tylenol, Aloe, sleep, etc.)

When you're sick most of the time, you will try just about anything to find a quick cure. But, what if you were told that there is a substance that could cure nearly any ailment? This substance can infiltrate infection, relieve inflammation, clear your skin, remove fungus and bacterial build up; it can relieve insomnia, stomach pains, varicose veins, and heart disease. This miracle juice can calm stress and anxiety; it aids in cell regeneration; it heals wounds, increases blood circulation; it equalizes hormones and enzymes; it relieves allergies, fevers, and more. Beyond its healing capabilities, this special substance can be used as a perfume, a deodorant to top it all off! The catch is that this miracle medicine costs \$70,000 per pound. However, what if you were told that right now there is a bottle in your medicine cabinet and that you are now the owner of this highly expensive, special substance.

Actually, this substance that was just described is real! It's called spikenard. In ancient days, spikenard was a highly valuable and coveted possession that only the wealthy could dream of affording. You may remember hearing of an audacious act by a woman in the Bible who owned a very expensive box of this special substance called spikenard. Here's the account:

Mark 14: 3-9 *"And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head. And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment*



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made? For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her. And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me. For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always. She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.”

Mary of Bethany, an owner of spikenard which was valued at a year's wages had no doubt placed great faith and confidence in her possession. When hard times hit and difficulties are delivered, she could be comforted in remembering that she had spikenard by her side. Yet one day, Mary found something well worth trading every drop for. In an audacious move, Mary breaks the box that held her beloved spikenard, and begins pouring out this perfume onto Jesus.

Some may say that Mary could have opened the box and poured a little out, but keeping most back, as not to waste this expensive substance. However, Mary recognized Jesus was worth EVERYTHING. She knew that she needed Jesus plus nothing. She shattered her box, she poured out the oil, and there was no going back, no second guessing this decision; she now was all in. Even if she wanted to, once the breaking had taken place, there would be no way possible of gathering back the oil that she had just poured out. Every drop of her security, of what she had placed her faith in, was instantly used up.

We have many things in life that we place our hope in. When problems arise, we think, “At least I have my...” But this begs the question: *Do I need Jesus plus my stuff? Would I worship Him even if my stuff were taken away?*

In life, anytime a breaking takes place in our lives and when a shattering starts, the result will *always* be a loss of something valuable that we hold dear. For Mary, the breaking of her alabaster box resulted in the loss of her most valuable possession; she lost her security in an oil that held her wealth and riches, that held her health and wellbeing, and maybe even her social status, in an instant, gone to never return again. In our lives, when we begin a breaking, we will no doubt lose something that we count as invaluable and that we hold so dear. However, what we need to realize is what we gain.

Yes, Mary lost her spikenard after the box broke, but she gained the attention of the Savior. In fact, Jesus went as far as to proclaim that ANYTIME the gospel is spoken, what Mary did should be told! Jesus was moved, touched, and impressed by the faith this woman had and by the fact that she wanted to risk it all on Him! A shattering is an opportunity, an invitation to become closer to Christ. Yes, it will hurt, it will be excruciating and it will leave your life feeling out of control; but, it will place your confidence in the One who is fully in control.

Do you want life's stuff? Or do you want Jesus? If you're hesitant to answer that question truthfully, maybe you need a shattering.

Think About This:

- 1. Why did Mary break the Alabaster Box and pour all of the spikenard out?***
- 2. Why is it dangerous for our faith to be dependent on Jesus plus anything?***
- 3. How would the result of the story have changed if Jesus actually decided to take the alabaster box and break it Himself without Mary's permission?***
- 4. What is the "spikenard" in your life? To what do you look to during trials and think "at least I still have..."?***

5. *Why is having Jesus better than anything we can have in life?*
6. *What did Jesus say in regard to Mary's decision and why?*
7. *Do you want life's stuff or do you want Jesus?*

CHAPTER FOUR
SALVAGING SHATTERED

If you have ever made it through a long winter of being shut in the house only to make it to spring and you just want to literally throw everything away, chances are you're suffering from spring fever and have the itch for some spring cleaning.

You always can tell which houses have been hit by the spring cleaning craze on trash day as the streets are lined with garbage bins, and those certain houses have mountains of vacuums that don't work, broken furniture, ratty clothing and shoes, and a plethora of other things. Most likely they had been previously kept by the owner with the intent that one day, "I'm going to get around to fixing that, making this repair, or stitching that up," only they keep putting it off and putting it off until eventually the owner realizes, "this item is useless to me." So, out to the curb it goes guaranteed for some landfill somewhere.

For a little over a decade, viewing audiences tuned in to a peculiar TV show on the Discovery channel called "Junkyard Wars." Each week, viewers could watch as the cast of the show would face off in a, well, a war in a junkyard, to see who could find the best useless junk in the junkyard which others had discarded and thrown away. The teams would then take their junkyard finds and salvage them into amazing creations that would blow your mind!

It wasn't like they would take a broken lawnmower and makes a better lawnmower; instead, they would take parts of various pieces of junk and



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make crazy cool creations. Salvaging the broken pieces of what an item was intended for, and instead making something completely different and new. Those who regularly viewed may remember teams creating rockets, hovercrafts, gliders, dive suits, and even cannons from their junkyard finds. Each hodgepodge project comprised of discarded items that were deemed useless.

We have spent a lot of time talking about broken things, and the fact of life is that each and every one of us are absolutely going to go through life, and things will break. Each day that passes by, the odds of finding a broken piece of your life increases, and we're all going to be tempted, like those starting spring cleaning, to discard the broken pieces because they are useless, hopeless, and an eyesore in our life.

But, what if you were told that there was Someone out there who not only can make something from your discarded junk but actually solely seeks out broken things! He's not interested in new, shiny, complete, and whole lives that have everything together, but instead, broken, shattered lives that are a mess with pieces everywhere. Whether it's pieces of our broken lives from sin, broken pieces of our lives from a struggle or trial, pieces that we deem ugly, unfit, or unworthy, He is seeking out pieces of our lives that are broken and asks that we do one single thing with each of the pieces: give them to Him, the Salvaging Savior.

We live in a culture that tells us only perfection will do. We continually see celebrities who set the status quo for what a perfect body looks like. Your school or teacher may expect perfection when it comes to academics; your coach or parent may require the best time, score, or play. Yes, even the church has fallen for the perfection proposal as we convince ourselves that we must be perfect and always look like model Christians who have it all together.

The problem with each of these people or systems who are expecting perfection of us is that they do not take into consideration that life isn't

perfect. If we live our lives with perfection as the only acceptable goal in life, we will never be satisfied nor content. And, as the pieces of our life start to fall apart, we are left devastated and convinced that our lives are useless and a total loss.

The sports star whose coach tells them only a perfect score will suffice will become broken every time they come close but do not fulfill the coach's expectation of perfection. When the teenage girl strives for that perfect body that the culture, her friends, and even her parents or boyfriend expect her to have, she will become broken every time she looks in the mirror and doesn't see what they want. When the grade comes in a point or two below expectation, when the career doesn't work out, when sin creeps into the model Christian's life, we are left broken, because we have believed that only perfect will do.

And, so many of us live in this state of high hopes, lousy let downs, and always feeling like we will never be good enough, like there will always be someone we can't please. Some people have even stopped trying, giving up all hope of success or accomplishing anything in their life. If they can't please everybody they won't please anybody. Others downright despise themselves because they just can't pull off the perfection people expect of them. We're left depressed, distraught, exhausted, and burned out in defeat for most of our lives.

What's left is a broken being. A pile of broken, shattered pieces that once made up a promising life that are now reduced to seemingly worthless lost hopes and dreams. And, truth be told, there are many people who leave their lives this way indefinitely. They see no use in trying anymore, no reason to go on, or hope that there's meaning to these broken pieces of their life. Yet, we, as Christians, were never intended to stay in this state of broken despair.

What a promise it is that we can overcome ANY shattering, a breaking of ANY kind, if we're willing. Consider a few examples in the Bible of



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people who suffered a life shattering yet did not remain shattered but overcame.

King David, as we know, sinned big time. We talked about this earlier. He murdered, lied, coveted, adulterated, stole, and on and on. His life became so broken that his family, his career, his kingdom, his future, his reputation — every area of David's life — was in pieces around him with absolutely no hope in sight. That is, until David repents. He humbly, in a desperate state, cries out to God to take the pieces from the mess he made and make sense of them, use them somehow for His good. David gives all the pieces of his sinful situation to God, and God forgives him.

The beautiful aspect that many people fail to recognize in the sin-shattering story of King David is what God does following David's repentance. After giving God every single piece of his broken life, God grants David a son with Bathsheba, the woman with whom he committed adultery. Some would expect that because of the mess David and Bathsheba had made, because of the circumstances surrounding this birth, that God would despise and reject or resent this child. Yet do you know what God does with the broken pieces? God gives them a son which God calls Solomon. The name Solomon means "most beloved by God." This child, who God loves so affectionately would go on to be blessed mightily by God in many ways. He would take the throne of Israel and would become the wisest and most prosperous man to ever live. A story that seemed so hopeless, so ugly, and shattered by sin, God scoops up each and every piece from all around David and makes something beautiful.

Job, of course, had his life shattered by no actions of his own. For no other reason than God wanting to prove Job's devotion, God allows Satan to break and shatter every single area of Job's life into something that was so distorted and destroyed it was completely unrecognizable. Job's life was left a mess that seemingly had no hope, no chance, no comeback in sight. Yet God was not willing to leave Job in this state. God reaches down, He delicately picks up every single shard from the

shattering and takes them into His loving hands. Praise God that Job's story doesn't end in chapter 41, because in chapter 42 we read that God graciously restores Job's wealth and possessions, his relationships, his family. In fact, verse 10 says that *"the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before."* Job went from a pile of pitiful pieces to a prosperous fulfilled promise from God. The pieces of Job's life which once seemed so meaningless, painful, and without a ray of hope now fit together through God's design, and Job was restored and greatly blessed.

We could look at Joseph and how his life continued to fall apart chapter by chapter. The pieces of his life were a shattered mess. Yet, God picks up every piece that Joseph encountered, He pieces them together, and by the end of Joseph's story the shattered pieces led him to become second in command over the most powerful nation in the world. He saves his family and is restored to a much greater place than where he started, all because God took control of Joseph's shattered pieces.

Jacob broke his life to pieces through family conflict, back stabbing, trickery, and cruelty. Jacob would wrestle with God and would have his hip painfully broken. Yet, through pieces that Jacob had made his life into, God does not leave Jacob in this shattered state, but God places them side by side and makes Jacob into Israel, the beginning of God's people.

Or, how about the life of Moses. He's born out of brokenness, he slays an Egyptian, lives on the run as a murderer, lacks ability and confidence, and allows for his life while in hiding to become meaningless and mundane. Moses is broken many times throughout his life before and after Egypt, yet God never leaves Moses there; instead, He picks up each broken piece and creates something brand new. With the pieces that were Moses' life, God creates something amazing and unexpected as this once broken being now leads God's people from captivity.



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We could go on and on, but the point being there is literally no one in the Bible or in this day and time who endures a shattering, who gives the pieces freely to God, who is left in this broken state. It just doesn't happen; instead, God takes each piece and finds a perfect fit for them into a beautiful masterpiece that He makes out of our lives.

We know that 2 Corinthians 5:17 says that after we become saved we are a “new creation, old things are passed away, behold all things are become new.” When you look at your life you see a mess, a pile of pieces that are worthless and painful. But, this is only true when you view this pile of pieces in light of what you thought could have been or should have been.

When the broken pieces of your life are seen as a missed opportunity for what you were or what you hoped to become, you will be disappointed and let down every time. But, we must come to Christ's conclusion that this was never your purpose, this was never His plan, that He never intended to make you into the thing you strive for but, instead, that all along He planned to pick up each and every broken piece of your life and make something completely new, something unrecognizable, something amazing of which you never could have thought.

Anybody can become a model, an academic genius, or a sports star if they really try hard enough and devote their entire lives setting their mind to this one goal. However, only God can take a life with intent, break it, pick up the pieces, and make something completely new, completely unique, completely beautiful.

For some this is great news. There's still a glimmer of hope for what you truly believed had been lost forever for your life. However, there's a catch that some will not like: Only He can make sense of the pieces. If mankind is truly as fragile and breakable as it appears, then we're just going to break -- period, and it is a part of life. However, being the determined minded people we are, many have tried at the hands of God to pick up their own pieces, to make sense of the puzzle that is their

broken life. They hold on to the pieces with such grit and tenacity still ridiculously saying, “I can fix this!”

Friend, no matter how smart, talented, or bullheaded you are, it is not possible for you to make sense of the mess of your life. It’s not possible to put the pieces of your shattered life together and make something new. Consider a few examples of people who possessed pieces and tried in their might to make sense of the mess of broken pieces:

Abraham and his wife Sarah are migrating at God’s command to a land away from their home. Their once simple life of wealth and local prestige in the comforts of their home was broken; they are sent by God into a land with no direction or specification. Only instead of allowing God to direct their path, Abraham lies about Sarah being his wife. He says she’s his sister, and Abraham almost loses her to the local king. Abraham was trying to save his family after the shattering nabbed the pieces, and he tried to take control. And, it didn’t go well. Abraham and Sarah would go on to be promised a child, only God breaks their lives by making them wait a very long time until they were very old. Abraham didn’t learn his lesson. Instead of trusting God with the pieces of His promise, Abraham takes the pieces from God’s hands and says, “I can fix this; I can make this happen!” Abraham plots a twisted tale to have a child with his handmaiden, and let’s just say this was a bad plan for the broken pieces.

Jonah becomes broken by being sent to preach to a lost nation he despised. Instead of politely handing the pieces over to God and doing as God had said, Jonah gets an attitude, and he grabs the pieces from God’s hands and says, *“I think these pieces would fit better this way; I can still salvage this on my own!”* Jonah boards a ship in the opposite direction than God sends him, and you already know what happens next. Instead of fixing the mess of broken pieces, Jonah breaks the pieces even smaller. He ends up aboard a ship in a storm, is thrown overboard, swallowed by



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a great fish, vomited on shore of the exact place he is running from.
Jonah - 0, God - 1.

Moses sees the broken state that his people were in as slaves in Egypt. Moses becomes obsessed and broken by the bondage they suffered. God, in fact, said He will deliver the Israelites; He insists He has a solution for their shattered problem. Instead of handing this brokenness to God to fix, Moses takes the pieces into his own hands and slays an Egyptian then buries him in the sand. The body is found and now suddenly Moses is a fugitive on the run for murder. All because Moses tried in his might to make sense of the mess, to put back the pieces.

We could go on and on, but you get the point: when left to ourselves, not only do we not fix the problem, we, in fact, make the mess so much worse! Instead of a handful of broken pieces that was our lives, after getting involved and trying in our own efforts, the broken pieces become mountainous. Don't force the pieces to fit where they were never intended. Don't take it upon yourself to do God's job; He's the only One qualified to make sense of the mess.

Then, there are others of us who understand that we can't fix what's been broken. We know that even if we tried our very hardest, we cannot put the pieces back together. But, we still aren't willing to hand over ALL of the pieces; we only want to stash shards of our broken lives.

Maybe you're holding on to a piece that you know you can't do anything with, but it's sentimental. You know you'll never become that sports star, but because that was the dream your dad had for your life, you can't let go. Maybe you're holding on to a piece that you think is just too broken -- it's just too dirty, ugly, or disgusting -- that you, God, or anybody could ever have a use for this piece. You tighten your grip because of how badly broken the piece is. It could be that you are keeping back a piece because it's what defines you. You are this broken version of your life and you honestly don't know anything else except how to feel broken and defeated. And so, you keep the piece close,

unwilling to let go out of fear of what life would be like without it.

The problem with holding back pieces of our broken lives from God is that even though He is willing, even though He is more than capable to make sense of the mess that is your life, His life requires EVERY piece in order to make you into that new creation. Refraining from giving Him even one piece, regardless of its size, keeps you from becoming that new creation that He intended because the old has NOT passed away, and ALL things have NOT become new as the verse says.

If each piece of our broken lives is uniquely intentional by God and each piece has a one-of-a-kind place in His plan for our lives- then keeping even one piece for yourself keeps Him from completing that plan. Imagine that God is an artist and His next masterpiece is the new creation that He intends to make your life into. He looks at the current state, the shards, the pieces, and the brokenness that lies all around every day of your life. He inspects each piece intensely, He understands what you were before, He sees the hurt in every single piece and the pain that you endured from being shattered.

But, as He scoops up each and every part of our broken life, He lays them all out to see what He has to work with. And all of a sudden, God begins to get excited. What you thought was worthless, useless, and meaningless -- what you hid or handed off as a waste -- He sees as potential, He sees as a fulfillment, a completion, and an opportunity to complete what He had been waiting for. He takes up each piece into His hands, He moves them, and arranges them. Soon enough, these worthless broken pieces of your life come together.

With a large smile He steps back, and you can see the anticipation and excitement overwhelming His face. With fear, doubt, and reservations you turn to look at what He has created. At first glance, you're a bit confused. There must have been a mistake; this couldn't be your life. What you gave Him was so ugly and messy and worthless; what you



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gave Him was meant for the junkyard and contained nothing worthwhile. But now, what He is displaying before you so beautiful. You think that surely there is some mistake; He's showing you the wrong life -- this must be the life of someone else.

That is, until you take a closer look. As you step closer and begin to evaluate each piece; tears begin to well up in your eyes. This shard hurt - - that was when your boyfriend dumped you for that other girl. And that piece was so hard -- that was when your mom or dad walked out. There's the piece from when you didn't get into the college you wanted or you didn't get that job you were counting on. That's the piece from when you told that lie and really hurt your best friend. There is the piece when you got the bad test results from the doctor and were told there was no hope. And that one, the pain is still raw from that piece when your loved one died.

On their own, each of these pieces were painful, messy, hurtful, and of no use or value. Each of the broken pieces seemed to harm you instead of help you. But now that you've given Him the pieces, now that He has taken each into His hands, now that He has completed His master mosaic with each of the broken shattered pieces, before you is a breathtaking, beautiful, completed masterpiece like you've never seen.

Even more, as you step back once again and admire the entirety of this work of wonder, you notice something strange. As Christ stands accomplished next to this masterpiece, you look at Him and you look back at the mosaic of broken pieces that is your life, and you notice what once resembled pain, agony, treachery in your life now strangely resembles Him. The life that seemed so pointless with no hope or meaning, the life that was ugly and a mess, now with each piece assembled strategically, looks like Christ.

It's now that you truly can see the sense behind each and every broken piece. If you hadn't endured the trial, if you hadn't made it through the valley, if you had missed the misery, those pieces would have been

missing from this mosaic masterpiece. The picture would never have been completed; the beauty that brings God such glory would be gone. If you had not had the problem that brought broken pieces, how much less you would have turned out to be a Christ-like mosaic masterpiece.

There is never such a thing as a meaningless suffering in the life of a Christian. There will never be a pointless pain that we will ever have to endure. Each and every trial, temptation, tragedy, and triumph we endure produces a peculiar weight of glory in Heaven which brings us closer to Christ. Every time we face a new breaking, a new shattering in our life, may we remember this truth. May we embrace the breaking and savor the shattering, and with open hands may we willingly give God each and every broken piece that falls apart for His next work of art.

Generations have come and gone since the name Chuck Colson was a household name, but some may still remember how Colson's early career in secular politics was successful. Prior to the shattering that would define him, Colson was given the nick name in which he relished as President Richard Nixon's hatchet man, and he was known inside the Nixon cabinet as an "evil genius." Colson was once quoted as saying "I would walk over my Grandmother for Richard Nixon," proving his relentlessness and extent in which he was willing to go for the President.

While President Nixon was the face of the Watergate scandal, it was Chuck Colson who was the mastermind behind the scheme. In 1974 Charles Wendell Colson would plead guilty to obstruction charges as well as many other charges in relation to the Watergate scandal. Colson who once served the president of the United States, who was at the epitome of prestige in politics, was now hated by his country that he betrayed as he served hard time in prison.

Colson was shattered, to say the least. His career was over, his livelihood leveled. Colson had nothing left but the broken pieces of his life. That



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is, until 1976, while still in prison, Colson would give every broken piece to Christ. Colson would become a born again believer in Jesus and even more would begin the world's largest prison ministry called "Prison Fellowship."

Because Colson handed Christ the broken pieces of his life, Christ would create a mosaic masterpiece which included receiving countless awards and achievements for his Christian advocacy and ministry with prisoners. He would be a monumental part of a document initiated and signed by two other Presidents of the United States. Colson would receive a lifetime achievement award from President George W. Bush; he would write multiple books and would travel the world standing up and speaking for Christ. Colson would begin a radio ministry, which still airs to this day. The radio broadcast that was derived from the shattered state that he reached, he titled: Breakpoint.

Chuck Colson was broken and battered before the eyes of the public in a way most will never know. However instead of keeping the pieces or deeming them worthless, Colson handed each piece to God who made a masterful mosaic that looked a lot like Christ.

Broken or beautiful, the decision is up to you.

SHATTERED STUDIES:

We use our hands for many things in life. Our hands are used to write book reports, sign pay checks, to fix leaky pipes, hold handle bars, play basketball, complete intricate surgeries, sculpt masterpieces, and so much more.

What is the most valuable thing you do with your hands?

A basketball placed in your hands may be worth around \$19, but a basketball placed into the hands of Michael Jordan is worth around \$33 million.

A Baseball in your hands may be worth maybe \$6, but a baseball in the hands of Mark McGuire is worth \$19 million.

A tennis racket in your hands might be worth a measly \$12, but place that same tennis racket in Venus William's hands and suddenly it's worth \$95 million.

A computer in your hands is worth at best a few hundred dollars, but a computer from the hands of Bill Gates \$102 Billion.

A paint brush in your hand may make a mess and only be worth \$3, but if you placed that same paint covered brush in the hands of Bob Ross, he could paint happy little trees, and instantly the brush would be worth \$6 million.

Looking at not what is being placed into someone's hands, but instead at whose hands something is placed into greatly changes the value and worth of an object. For some of us this may be depressing because our life seemingly has little to no value. Yet, if we know the right person to place our hurt, heavy hearts, our struggles, sins, our pain, problems into—suddenly our worthless life sky rockets in value.



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Consider a few more examples of whose hands...

A rod in the hands of Moses may have been used to murder an Egyptian, yet Moses's life placed into God's hand can use a rod to part the Red Sea.

A slingshot in David's hands may fend off a wolf from his flock, yet David's life placed into God's hands can use that slingshot to kill a giant.

A small packed lunch in the hands of a hungry boy may calm his growling stomach, but the lunch of the same boy placed into the hands of the Messiah can feed thousands!

A few nails and a couple pieces of wood in your hands might be used to make a sad looking birdhouse, yet 3 nails and 2 pieces of wood held the hands that purchased the salvation of the world.

It all depends on whose hands they're in.

My faults and failures, my sins and setbacks in my hands will bring me regret and remorse. Yet if I will place these same faults and failures in to the hands of Jesus He can bring value. It depends on whose hands they're in.

I may place the plans of my life and my future into the hands of my parents, my friends, or my coach; and at best they may lead me to mediocrity. Yet my life in the hands of Jesus can lead me to the miraculous. It all depends on whose hands I'm in.

There are no larger, powerful, majestic, and mightier hands than the hands that hold the world. God, during each millisecond of eternity orchestrates life, the galaxies, and all of creation in a grand movement that we take for granted. He hangs stars, He protects His own, He gives life, and avenges Himself- all with His mighty hands. And while we may at times convince ourselves that because God is doing all of this and so much more- all at once- there is NO way He has time to pick up my tiny pieces of my broken life. And yet, it's not the stars or galaxies that he

desires; God desires the broken. (Read Psalm 34:18 *“The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.”*)

God literally holds all of creation in His mighty hands, yet when His child becomes broken and contrite- He saves them. He uses His mighty, all powerful hands to pick up our broken pieces. It all depends on Whose Hands.

Think about this:

- 1. Why does holding something in my hands hold me back?*
- 2. How does placing the same thing into the hands of Jesus further me?*
- 3. Whose hands do we often trust to hold our life, problems, etc.?*
- 4. Name some people who kept their lives from the hands of Jesus. What was the result?*
- 5. Name some people who have or are giving their lives completely to the hands of Jesus. What is the difference between this person’s life and the person from Number 5?*
- 6. Whose hands will I place my life into?*

CHAPTER FIVE

SHATTERED FINAL THOUGHTS

While our flesh convinces us there is nothing worse that can take place in our lives than becoming broken, our spirit knows that there is nothing sweeter than being shattered. As a Christian we have two options and every time we face a trial in our life; we can allow this breaking to make us bitter or we can allow this breaking to make us better.

If you fully understand that it is by God's infinite wisdom and all-knowing plan that He allows for our lives to become shattered, we can be comforted and even strengthened when our lives fall apart. What many believe will weaken our faith, what people say will lead to our demise- instead provides the strength we need to keep going.

The breaking will happen. It's up to me whether I will allow it to strengthen me and bring me closer to Christ, like He intends.

Jon Jorgenson shares a spoken word poem which provides a perfect picture of become broken and finding strength through being shattered.

A MILLION PIECES

"I am broken. Damaged. Shattered. And crumbled to a million pieces. What started as a small crack in my windshield was never taken care of and so it split and splintered and snapped until the whole thing exploded in my face leaving me quite blind to see where I was going.

How do you build yourself back up when every piece of who you are has been broken into a million pieces? When the pit would be a paradise compared to my present pain. When lifetimes of crying couldn't clean up this stain. I rise from the floor wondering what all of this gore was for. Is there purpose to this pain? Can there be meaning in

my mess. Where can I find beauty from my brokenness? And from this darkness and when I can't find strength to say it much less pray it suddenly I discover that my life can become a mosaic. A picture or pattern produced by putting together small broken pieces. I will become an art piece. Formed from the pieces of me that once put together reveals something far more beautiful far more powerful and far more wonderful than I ever dreamed of. When I was whole. So break my body break my heart you can't touch this soul. I may walk with a limp but my spirit has never been stronger. Because after blow after blow ill build up slow and discover my new glow. So, when you look at me I want you to know that's not a scar that's a beauty mark. Those are scabs their armor of a mighty warrior. It's not the bruise it's war paint. I want you to know these tears their not for you there for watering the seed that fell to the ground and died but with time will produce an even stronger tree stronger me. So chop me down break me apart you'll only add more wood to the fire. From which I'll rise and the size of my burden is only outdone by the size of my breakthrough when I shock the world and am made new from the pieces."



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... FOR WHEN I AM WEAK, THEN I AM STRONG

SHATTERED

PART TWO

SHATTERED HANDS ON

CHAPTER ONE
SHATTERED SALVATION**ACTIVITY 1: DOCTOR'S DILEMMA**

Do you remember your last doctor's visit? Interestingly enough, according to a recent study, 9 out of 10 millennials, or 93%, have stopped going to the doctor and have sworn off of doctor's visits completely. Do you believe that 93% of millennials are no longer getting sick and just don't need a doctor? The fact still remains that no doubt millennials are still sick, experiencing ailments, and getting hurt - yet without visiting a doctor.

Read: Luke 5:31 *"And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick."*

Think: When you visit a doctor, chances are they will ask you what your symptoms are, what's been bothering you, or what is going on in your life with respect to your health. If you have a broken arm, but you tell the Doctor you have a slight cough, your arm will never be healed. If you have a bad stomach ache, but you tell the Doctor that you stubbed your toe, your stomach ache cannot receive the attention it needs. Likewise, if you go to the Doctor and fail to provide him with any symptoms at all, your ailments, your sickness will never be addressed and can never be remedied.

If we want Jesus to heal us from our brokenness, if we want Jesus to heal us from our sins, there's good news: Jesus says this is what He came



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to earth to do. But like the millennial, there is one requirement on our part. In order to be healed, we must first admit we need to be healed, we must first admit we need forgiveness of our sins. It starts by admitting our sins, admitting the areas in our lives which need forgiveness, and then the remedy, the solution can be provided: Jesus.

Action: On a sheet of paper, list the “symptoms” that are causing you to be spiritually sick. Make sure to be completely honest - as healing can only come with being truthful about the problem. Write the sins that keep you from growing closer to Christ.

Action: After writing what your symptom or sins are, it is now time to find the remedy or prescription which can be applied so that you can be healed and forgiven. inspect the various prescription bottles which people may use to fix their sickness and their sin. After inspecting each option, take the “medication” from the container you believe can fix your problems, and glue it to your list of ailments.

Pray: With your sins and your sickness in hand and with the remedy having been applied, sincerely pray that Jesus would do the following;

- *Forgive me of the specific sins I have written that are in my life. Free me from the sins that I continue to commit which keep me from growing closer to Christ*
- *Help me admit when I sin, when I go astray from God so that the remedy can again be applied.*

Extra action: Jesus in the Bible refers to Himself as the great physician; He is the only hope for true healing in this world. On a piece of paper, draw Jesus as a doctor and draw Him giving you a checkup and providing you healing.

ACTIVITY 2: SELF-SMASHER

If you drop a clay pot on the ground, would you consider it broken if it only broken into several large pieces? What if you picked up each piece of the pot and dropped it again so that the larger pieces cracked into several smaller pieces. Would you consider the clay pot broken? Thinking further, what if you stepped on the pieces of the clay pot to crush them into even smaller pieces. Would the clay pot then be

broken? Thinking even further, what if you took a hammer and smashed the pieces of the clay pot until there was nothing but clay dust. Would the clay pot be broken then?

Think: As a human born on earth, we are born into a broken state because of the decision to sin by Adam. As if that were not bad enough, each and every time we choose sin over God we become more and more broken. When left to our own decisions apart from God, we are like the clay pot we just discussed that finds itself in a worse and more fragile and more shattered state each day of our lives. The only way to keep from breaking the pieces into smaller and smaller shattered pieces is to give our broken-sinful state to Jesus. He can direct our lives to keep us from breaking the pieces of our lives smaller and smaller.

Read:

Jeremiah 17:9 *“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”*

Psalms 34:21 *“Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate.”*

Romans 6:23 *“For the wages of sin [is] death; but the gift of God [is] eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”*

Romans 3:10 *“As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one.”*

Psalms 51:5 *“Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.”*

Ecclesiastes 7:20 *“For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.”*

Action: Take a piece of paper and rip it into large pieces. Imagine the pieces are broken pieces of a clay pot. Consider your relationship with Jesus Christ or the lack thereof.

- If you have been saved from your sins, if you have become a Christian by asking for forgiveness from your sins and having become new creation in Christ, write your name on the front of the paper piece.
- If you have not made the decision to become a Christian and have not asked for forgiveness of your sins, if you have not become a new creation in Christ, and if you are living life YOUR way instead



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of Christ's way, then take the paper and tear it into smaller and smaller pieces. Each time consider that because you are living life your way instead of God's way, you are choosing to break your life into smaller and smaller pieces.

Pray:

- **If you are saved:** With your name on the front, hold the paper piece in your hand and thank God for saving your soul. Thank Him that even though you were born into brokenness, He made a way that you could choose to live life His way and avoid shattering your life into smaller and smaller pieces.
- **If you are unsaved:** With the pile of pieces that represent your life, consider if this is the way you truly want to live the rest of your life. Consider the cost, the consequences, the crushing that results from living life for yourself instead of for Jesus. Is this really what you want?

Extra Action: Carefully examine the paper piece. Notice the size and shape, the sharp edges that were caused by the breaking. On your paper piece, write a prayer thanking God for saving you before the pieces were broken any smaller.

ACTIVITY 3: PLANET IN PIECES

We live in a broken world. Each day we see more and more evidence of the evil, sinful and broken state of the planet we call home. Consider and carefully read the list on the next page that shows the proof of the broken state of our world;

- Abandonment
- Abortions
- Abuse
- Addiction
- Adultery
- Aids
- Alcohol
- Alzheimer's
- Amputations
- Bombings
- Bullying
- Cancer
- Car accidents
- Corruption
- Cruelty
- Death
- Deceit
- Depression
- Dictatorships
- Discrimination
- Disease
- Dishonesty
- Dishonor
- Division
- Divorce
- Drugs
- Earthquakes
- Executions
- Famines
- Flooding
- Fornication
- Gender confusion
- Genocide
- Gossip
- Heart attacks
- HIV
- Holocaust
- Homelessness
- Homicide
- Hopelessness
- Hurricanes
- Hypocrisy
- Infection
- Labor
- Leukemia
- Lust
- Malnutrition
- Mass murder
- Mental illness
- Murder
- Obesity
- Orphans
- Poison
- Pornography
- Poverty
- Pride
- Racism
- Rape
- Rebellion
- Riots
- School/ public shootings
- Selfishness
- Sex slaves
- Sex trading
- Sexual abuse
- Slavery
- Starvation
- Stealing
- Strokes
- Suicide
- Teen pregnancy
- Terrorism
- Torture
- War



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Think: Even though it is so difficult to imagine, the fact is that NONE of the items listed were a part of God's plan for our world and our lives. While many people want to shake a fist and point a finger at God, blaming Him for every tragedy and misfortune that takes place, God's plan never included any of these things. Read the verses below. Identify who exactly is at fault for the broken state the world is in.

Read:

Genesis 3:17-19 "...*cursed is the ground **for thy sake**; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.*"

Romans 5:12 "*Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, **for that all have sinned**;*"

Think: Consider that when man is in control, the results are in the above-mentioned list. Yet, when God is in control, perfect peace and paradise (Eden) are promised. Think about your life and who has more control - you or God. Consider the consequences of your answer and what this may mean for your life. Think about the hope that God has promised that we will one day be with Him again in paradise where none of these evils exist.

Action: On the list listed above, draw a circle around the item that has personally affected you or your family. Remember the pain, the hurt, the sorrow that this brokenness brought into your life.

Pray: Looking over your selections from the list, bow down and pray. Pray that God would open your eyes to the ways in which you have

taken control of your life, and pray that He would show you the consequences of doing so. Give a prayer of thanks for the promise found in John 16:33.

John 16:33 *“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”*

Extra Action: On a piece of paper, draw yourself holding the world in one hand and the cross of Jesus in the other. Pray that you would always remember that JESUS is the answer that this world needs, and, if you are a Christian, that you have a calling to take Jesus to this hurting world.

ACTIVITY 4: CRUSHED CHRIST

Why do we endure brokenness in life? Why do we have to go through trials, tragedies, and heartaches? Many people have concluded that it's just not fair when their life becomes shattered. Consider the following verse.

Read: Isaiah 53:4-5 *“Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised (crushed) for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.”*

Action: As you read, underline the words that describe what Jesus went through. Then Circle the words that explain why or for whom He did what He did. Look at your reflection in the mirror.

Think of what Christ endured while on the cross. Consider the pain, the torture, the torment. Think about the pain, the embarrassment, the hurt that He went through. Look in a mirror, As you see your reflection,



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remember that YOU are the reason that He was broken. YOU are the reason that He suffered and died.

Realize that Jesus went through the agony of the cross and became broken for one reason and one reason only: YOU,

Pray: Say a prayer of praise and thanksgiving for the price Jesus paid for YOU. Ask Him to help you understand that when you become broken and endure trials, He can relate because He was broken too.

Extra Action: Draw and cut out a cross on a piece of paper. Then rip the cross into several pieces. Carefully rearrange the broken pieces of the cross together to form the cross. As you do so, reflect on the broken state that Jesus became for you.



CHAPTER TWO

SIN SHATTERED

ACTIVITY 1: HOW CLOSE IS TOO CLOSE?

People from all over the world travel each year to see the spectacle that is the Grand Canyon, and for good reason. This natural phenomenon displays some of the planet's most beautiful sights. However, park rangers and the local government have become increasingly concerned as the death toll rises of tourists visiting this giant canyon. Do you have any idea how many people have plummeted to their death by getting too close to the edge of the Grand Canyon? To date, 770 people have mistakenly fallen into this grand beauty. Chances are the numbers are much higher as records have only recently been kept.

Action: Make a paper football using a piece of paper. Draw a person on one side of the football. Then, flick the triangle from one end of a table, trying to get as close as you can to the opposite end of the table, WITHOUT going over.

Read:

Galatians 6:8 *“For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.”*

Romans 8:8 *“So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.”*

1 John 2:15 *“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”*



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Think: The saying goes that sin will take you further than you want to go and keep you longer than you want to stay. Many people live their lives getting as close and near to sin as possible with no consideration to the edge, the line, the impending danger. Just like the 700+ individuals who got too close to the edge and fell to their doom, many people live their lives in a similar fashion. Just like the person you flicked, some may safely land before the line, some may get just close enough to the line, but others will go over the edge.

When we desire to get close without getting close, the Bible says we have a heart problem. We are sowing to the flesh, and the flesh cannot please God. We love this world instead of loving Jesus.

Action: On a piece of paper, write a prayer asking God to show you where your heart is bent toward sin. Ask Him to reveal to you that there is a price and a consequence, not just for sin itself, but for the desire to sin. Pray that God would help you to want Him more than the temptations of this life. Lastly, pray that He would keep you from the sins that you live dangerously close to.

Extra Action: On the reverse side of your paper, draw a cliff such as the Grand Canyon. Next, on the steep side of the cliff you just drew, write a list of the sins that you have a tendency towards. Lastly, draw yourself on the safe side of the cliff, turning away from the danger and the sins.

ACTIVITY 2: PAINFUL PLAY

Have you ever played the game “Red Hands?” Players will extend their left hands to each other and will place them side by side, palms touching. Then, one at a time, players will take turns smacking the outside of their opponent’s hand, escalating the force of the smack each time. The first player to “give” and remove their hand loses.

Think: The reason this game is so painful is because you get back what you dish out. The only way to stop the pain of the other person's hand is to stop slapping the person first.

Read:

Romans 2:5 “...after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil.”

Colossians 3:25 “But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.”

Isaiah 59:2 “But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid [his] face from you, that he will not hear.”

Galatians 6:7-8 “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.”

Proverbs 14:12 “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof [are] the ways of death.”

Think: Consider the consequences of sin as specified in the verses provided.

Action: On a piece of paper, trace your hand. Next, write a consequence of sin that you read in the verse as well as any others you can think of.

Pray: With your paper hand, pray that God would show you the sins in your life. Ask that He would search your life for any areas in which there are sins. Pray that He would reveal to you how this sin can bring you harm.



WHEN I AM WEAK, HE IS MY STRENGTH

Extra Action: In the Bible, look up each of the following verses and consider how our hands can be put to a good use instead of a sinful use. (Psalm 134:2, Psalm 90:17, Job 17:9, Acts 19:11)

ACTIVITY 3: SIN SIZE

The age old question is this: does the size of the sin matter? Many would have us to believe that a small sin does not matter in comparison to a large-sized sin. However, the Bible is somewhat mum on the consequences that are dependent on the size of the sin.

Action: Consider this – Place an Oreo cookie in front of you. Are you willing to eat that Oreo? Now, imagine that there is a tiny shard of glass somewhere in that cookie. Are you still willing to eat the Oreo cookie knowing that a shard of glass is in it? What about something bigger, like a whole pizza – would you be willing to eat a whole pizza if it had that same tiny shard of glass somewhere in it?

Think: While there are seemingly different sizes of sins in our eyes, sin, regardless of its size, is harmful. If the Bible says we should not do it, this is for our own good. Whenever we give in to even a tiny sin, we are sinning against God, and it can harm us.

Read:

Galatians 5:9 *“A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.”*

James 2:10 *“For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one [point], he is guilty of all.”*

Action: On a piece of paper, write down the sins you commit that you consider to be “small.” Be completely and brutally honest, because even the smallest of sins can bring great harm.

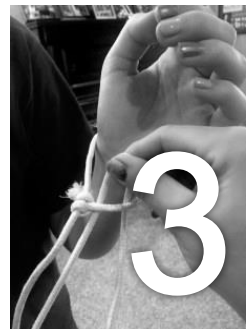
Pray: With your paper in hand, ask God to forgive you for sins in your life that are of any size. Pray that He would help you to recognize the sins that you believe are no big deal or won't hurt anything.

Extra Action: On a piece of paper, draw God using a magnifying glass to examine your life and the way you live. What do you think He would see?

ACTIVITY 3: FREE THROUGH FAITH

Even though we may know that Sin Shatters, the truth is we are human and that we will inevitably sin. Consider the teachings of the Apostle Paul which tells us that the things we should do we often don't, and the things we should not do are the things we usually do. Sin can be binding and restrictive, often we become slaves to our sins.

Action: With a partner, each of you take a 4-foot piece of rope and tie it to each of your wrists as shown in Image 1, with each end of your rope tied to your wrist with your rope crisscrossing with your partner's rope which is tied in the same manner as yours. Now, you and your partner attempt to free yourselves from each other's rope, as shown in Image 2. If you are unsuccessful in freeing yourselves, you can simply free yourselves as shown in Image 3.





WHEN I AM WEAK, HE IS MY STRENGTH

Read:

Romans 6:18 *“Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.”*

Galatians 5:1 *“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.”*

John 8:36 *“If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”*

1 John 1:9 *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us [our] sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”*

Think: Christians were never intended to live in defeat, to live in bondage to sin. We will sin, but when we do sin we can fight it and try in our own might to free ourselves, or we can simply repent, ask for forgiveness, and He will faithfully forgive us.

Action: Using a piece of rope, tie your hands together (get help from a friend if necessary). Close your eyes and picture the sins that are in your life. Tug and pull at the rope and notice how it has control and keeps you from being free. Notice any pain or discomfort caused by the irritating rope. Envision your sins as this rope and how it restricts and binds your life from what God intends for it to be.

Pray: With your hands still tied, pray that God would help you to live victoriously and not remain bound by sin. Pray that He would help you to be freed from the sins that so easily ensnare you. Pray that He would show you the ways in which sin binds you and makes you its slave. After you are finished praying, remove the rope.

Extra Action: Choose one of the Bible verses above, and draw a scene that represents the verse on a piece of paper.



CHAPTER THREE

SURVIVING SHATTERED

ACTIVITY 1: FIGHT OF FAITH

What if you were told that your life is one big boxing match, a faith fight if you will, only this is no typical matchup. Instead of two brute boxers going at it in the ring, in one corner coming in at infinite pounds, we have the almighty: God! And, in the other corner we have the awful adversary, the painful puncher: Satan. As if having these 2 opponents in the ring were not novelty enough, what makes this faith fight for your life even more peculiar is the fact that you will choose the winner.

Think: As in the story of Job, God and Satan have a wager, if you will. The winner of the wager would receive glory. Each time we face a trial in our life we have a choice: praise God anyways and give Satan a black eye, or question, curse, and despise God for what we are going through, and give Satan a win.

Action: Imagine you are wearing a boxing glove, and that you are standing in a boxing ring with two figures. One figure represents God, and the other represents Satan. Imagine further that YOU get to choose who you will lift up and who you will let down. If you have determined no matter what to praise God no matter how hard or difficult life may get, then take your best swing at Satan. If you believe God is to blame, if you do not trust Him, if you think you could do a better job yourself, consider who receives that hit.

Read: Ephesians 6:12 *“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”*



WHEN I AM WEAK, HE IS MY STRENGTH

Pray: On a piece of paper, write a prayer to God. Consider what Job prayed, after having lost his family, wealth, possessions, prestige, and so much more, still saying “*the Lord gives, and the Lord takes away-Blessed be the name of the Lord.*” Write a similar prayer and promise to God that no matter what you go through in life, you are His for the long run. In this faith fight God Wins!

Extra Activity: On the reverse side of the paper, draw a scene where God is victorious over Satan in a literal boxing match. Draw God victoriously standing atop Satan as you - the Ref - choose the winner of this faith fight.

ACTIVITY 2: GOD’S CLASSROOM

When your life falls apart and, like Job, you face the trial of your life, most of us will be left with more questions than answers. We may want to know “Why?” “How?” “When?” We may pray for the pain to depart, or we might ask for an explanation, and most of the time when we ask these questions, what we hear from God is not quite what we expect as He provides the answer: Himself.

Think: Have you ever had the thought or prayed that God would do what you wanted Him to? Most of the time we pray that God would remove a pain or that He would allow our life to go our way, as if we know what’s best. Yet, God’s infinite wisdom and knowledge far supersedes our smarts every time.

Read: Job 38-39

Action: On a piece of paper, consider each question below as it applies to your life and to the trial you may be going through. Feel free to add any other specific questions that you may have for God regarding what you are facing.

Life Test

1. Why _____?

2. When _____?

3. How _____?

4. How long _____?

5. _____?

Answer: _____

6. _____?

Answer: _____

7. _____?

Answer: _____

8. _____?

Answer: _____



WHEN I AM WEAK, HE IS MY STRENGTH

Pray: With your test in hand, pray and ask yourself if you truly consider God to be a sufficient answer to each question listed. Be honest. Would you rather have the answer you want to each of these questions, or would you rather have more of God instead? Pray that God would work in your heart to accept Him as the only answer you need. Pray that you would let go of the need to control and have all of the answers and become satisfied with God as the answer. After you have prayed, if you truly mean it, write “*God*” on each line as the answer to each question.

Extra Action: Read chapters 38-39 of the book of Job. Then, with the information provided in these verses, list God’s accomplishments, abilities, and knowledge on a piece of paper. Consider the vastness of His might and wisdom in comparison to yourself.

ACTIVITY 3: STUFF OR SAVIOR

In life we collect a lot of stuff! Some of life’s stuff is important, others not so much, but all of life’s stuff is expendable.

Action: On a piece of paper, draw a clay pot. Inside the clay pot, list the important things in your life (family, health, possessions, etc.). Once you have written your prized possessions on the pot, rip the clay pot drawing into as many pieces as possible.

Read:

Job 13:15 *“Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.”*

Psalms 51:17 *“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.”*

Think: If God were to take away the things you wrote on the pot, would you still be willing to serve Him? Don’t just give the knee jerk reaction and say yes because that’s what you’re supposed to say. Instead, really ponder, take a minute to imagine your life without each of the items you wrote. Picture living without the things that matter most, and imagine God Himself actually taking these things away. Are you still

willing to serve Him even then? Do you want life's stuff or Jesus Christ, your Savior?

Action: On a piece of paper, write your name. With what symbolizes “your life” in your hands, earnestly seek which you want more: life's stuff or the Savior. With your life in your hands, pray that God would help you to accept the things you cannot control in life, accept the losses that you may endure.

Extra Activity: On a piece of paper, list as many things as you can think of that you care about in life. Then, draw a square around them. Color in the square over the items you have listed- leaving only the word “JESUS”

ACTIVITY 4: SHATTERED SHELLS

The fact of life is that we will all go through trials. The only question that remains is how we will endure these trials. God can use trials to make us stronger, closer to Him, or we can allow trials to make us grow cold, further from God and bitter instead of better.

Action: Take a carton of eggs, open it and place it on the floor in front of you. Now, walk across the dozen eggs while they remain upright in the egg carton. Next, remove the same dozen eggs from the carton and place them horizontally in a plastic container. walk across the same dozen eggs. (The first should not crack at all, the latter should break instantly)

Think: The eggs when facing upward endured the pressure applied and survived this person walking across them. Yet the same exact eggs when postured horizontally crushed and were destroyed under pressure. When storms and trials come our way we are faced with the same options: look upward and survive or look horizontally at our efforts, at our ruined life, at those around us, and as a result become shattered and destroyed.

Read: **Psalms 121:1-3** *“I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.”*



WHEN I AM WEAK, HE IS MY STRENGTH

Action: Take a piece of the egg shell. Hold it in your hand and consider how fragile this shell is. Think about how, like the egg shell, just how fragile your life is and how little it takes to become broken. On the egg shell write the words “He is all I need.”

Pray: With your egg shell in hand, pray that when you do endure trials that you would always look upward. You would look towards God who is everything that you will ever need. Pray that when He sees fit to give you burdens in life that they would make you better instead of bitter.

Extra Activity: On a piece of paper write a short poem which speaks about the fragileness of life and yet the mighty and stable hand of God. Draw a picture that illustrates Psalm 121:1-3



CHAPTER FOUR

SALVAGING SHATTERED

ACTIVITY 1: STASHING SHARDS

God is more than able to take the broken pieces of our lives and make something beautiful. However, He is often kept from doing something great with our broken pieces because we stash shards of our broken life, keeping them for ourselves and from God.

Think: Look at a nearly completed puzzle. Notice how the beautiful picture is so close to completion, so close to looking as it was intended, yet it is still missing something, and is not made whole. What pieces of your life are you hoarding? What are you holding back from God? How is this keeping Him from completing a work in you made of the pieces of your life?

Action: On a piece of paper draw a puzzle piece and write the thing or things that you are keeping from God inside. It may be a possession you aren't willing to give into His control, an addiction or sin you can't stop, control of a situation, a family member or friend, or any number of thing(s).

Read: **Hebrews 13:21** *“Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”*

Pray: With your puzzle piece in hand that you have written on, say a prayer of surrender to God. Ask that He would help you to give all of the pieces of your life to Him, holding nothing back so that He can complete His perfect work in you. After you have truly surrendered, close your eyes and imagine placing the puzzle piece into the “Hand of God.”



Extra Action: On a piece of paper, draw a picture of Jesus putting together a puzzle that is your life.

ACTIVITY 2: MOSAIC MESSIAH

What if the trials and burdens of our lives were not random and meaningless? What if every single broken piece that comes from our life falling apart has a specific purpose to make us into something new?

Action: On a piece of paper write the word “JESUS” in large letters. Then, tear the paper into several pieces. On the blank side of each piece write a trial that you have endured, are enduring, or could endure in the future. On each piece write a burden that you carry in life. After every piece is written on, turn the pieces over and put each piece together to form the word you previously wrote. Place a small dot of glue on the blank side of each piece and glue the mosaic to the cardstock.

Think: Just as the broken pieces that you wrote came together to form the word “JESUS”, so it is in our lives. Each and every trial, burden, and heartache is working together to create a Christ like design from the broken pieces.

Read: **2 Corinthians 4:17** *“For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;”*

Pray: Pray over your mosaic Messiah. Ask God to help you to always remember that there is no such thing as a trivial trial or a meaningless burden. Pray that He would help you to understand that each heartache is making you more and more like Christ.

Extra Activity: On a piece of paper, use the words that you wrote on your broken pieces and form them into the word Jesus. Then, under your picture, write a prayer of thanksgiving that there are no meaningless sufferings.

ACTIVITY 3: BROKEN BEINGS

How often in life do we find ourselves trying to fix what has been broken? The problem is that most of the time we are not intended to fix or restore what has broken in our lives. Instead, God wants to use the pieces of what once was and make it into something new altogether.

Think: No matter how hard we may try we cannot create. There is a reason God is the creator and we are the creation. Because of this we are set up for failure when it comes to restoring and making something over. Just as the broken clay pot can no longer hold water as it was originally intended, the pieces are not useless, but instead can become repurposed. God has greater plans with for our broken beings.

Read: **2 Corinthians 5:17** *“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”*

Action: Tear off a piece of tape (roughly 2 feet long). On the non-sticky side of the tape, write the things God wants YOU to do with your brokenness, and then write what GOD can do with your brokenness.

Pray: With your piece of tape in hand, pray that you would be committed to doing what God wants with the broken pieces of your life and that you would allow for Him and trust Him to do what He should with the broken pieces. Pray that He would help you to stop trying to fix what has become broken in and of yourself and that you would simply give it to Him.

Extra Activity: On a piece of paper, draw a piece of broken clay. Inside, write a list of the ways in which you try to fix and hold together the broken pieces of your life.



ACTIVITY 4: PERFECTION IN PIECES

We live in a world that constantly insists on perfection. The media, celebrities, our friends, family, relationships, employers, and even the church each try and tell us what we *should* be. This often leaves us feeling like failures, like we are not good enough, and exhausted from trying so hard.

Action: Look through a magazine(s), or do a quick online search and find an image or images that represent the things you try to be or try to achieve in life. Carefully cut out or print the image(s). Next, take the image(s) you have selected and tear them into as many pieces as you possibly can.

Read: Matthew 5:48 *“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.”*

Think: Christians are, in fact, called to perfect; however, the perfection we are called to is often not what we are striving for. We will never have the perfect body, the perfect career, the perfect family, the perfect finances, etc. But this is not what we are called to strive for. Instead, Jesus told us to be perfect *as He is perfect*. Our goal of perfection should only be in being like Jesus.

Pray: With the pieces of the picture in your hand, pray that God would help you to become what He desires, not what others expect of you. Pray that He would help you to accept and let go of the plans for perfection, the expectations, and the misguided goals that hold you back. Pray that God would give you Godly goals that intend to make you more like Christ.

Extra Activity: With the pieces of the pictures on the table, arrange the pieces to spell the word JESUS. Glue the pieces to another piece of paper.

ABOUT THE NOYC!

We know there are a lot of summer camps, including youth and church camps out there. So you might be left wondering why exactly you may want to consider attending the Northern Ohio Youth Camp. From the very beginning of the NOYC! in 2010 the camp was started out of a desire to unite and spiritually challenge the youth of churches. Many of whom are going through similar struggles and situations, and are seeking direction and answers. Now located in Mendon, Ohio, at the Beulah Grove Campgrounds, the NOYC! had A record attendance of 307 people for the 2018 week of camp. Beyond this we give God all of the glory for the 30+ souls, 6 young men called to preach the gospel, and countless lives surrendered to Christ during 2018.

While many youth programs and youth camps are focused heavily upon fun and games, there is often a lack of spiritual and real life application that will leave a lasting impact upon the lives of these youth. However the Northern Ohio Youth Camp directly sets its sights on relating, effecting, changing, and challenging the youth who attend summer camp. Don't get us wrong we have a ridiculous amount of fun during camp, however this is always an extra added bonus to the real reason we are there; to become more like Jesus.

During each day of camp attendees will enjoy 3 unique devotions that are developed specifically for the youth and tie in with our week's theme, such as *Shattered*. In addition, each day the youth will go through 4 special prayer stations which directly challenge the youth to be honest about their selves and their Christian walk. Lastly, each day everyone at camp joins together for the famous NOYC "WOW" services. During these special worship services the youth sing, testify, worship, and line the altars- doing business with God.



WHEN I AM WEAK, HE IS MY STRENGTH

Every day we make it a priority to saturate the campers and counselors in as much Bible teaching and spiritual activity on a personal level, as possible. Strong preaching, God-glorifying singing, and great fun are all in store for you at the NOYC!

On the fun side of things, daily youth will enjoy 2 sports, several wacky games and team challenges, as well as a craft/competitions. During the week teams will also go head to head in a Minute to Win it challenge, the NOYC! Mestival; a day filled with slimey fun, Kiddy-Pool Kickball, and the unique and one of a kind NOYC! Escape room. Additional bonuses include 3 delicious hot, home cooked meals, as well as snack and soft serve ice cream, many prizes, the ever popular fun and silly music class, and so much more! In addition everyone who attends the NOYC! goes home with a free t-shirt and CD of each year's camp songs.

We may be biased- but we believe the NOYC! is a very special place where God does an amazing work that only He can do. Each year a multitude of lives are saved and changed forever during the week of camp. But don't take our word for it- give us a try and join us for yourselves!

What drives our camp after a decade in ministry? The strong desire to see young lives changed, set ablaze, and put on a path for serving the Lord. Many of the children who first attended the NOYC! are now actively involved in leading many of the camp activities such as singing, counseling, and games as young adults. While the main focus is youth, we have received a great response from older generations who have come and invested time in the camp, and who have been deeply impacted as well.

Our desire is to reach a generation who has seemingly turned their back on God. Through God's provision we have witnessed a miracle take place each year at camp- and that is a generation of young people turning their attention to the things of the Lord. Not only are the youth who attended impacted, but they are actually interested and seeking God and His Word both at and after camp- only God can do that.

We invite you to join the NOYC! family and witness what can only take place at camp- we know you won't regret this life changing experience!

For more information regarding the NOYC! Please visit our website www.thenoyc.com or check us out on Instagram @thenoyc or on Facebook by scanning here;



Have questions about the Northern Ohio Youth Camp?
Feel free to contact us;

Email: fwb.youthcamp@yahoo.com

Call/text: (419)217-4788

Mail: 7703 Mason Road, Sandusky, Ohio 44870



OTHER AVAILABLE RESOURCES



The irony of the Christian faith is that in order to be victorious, we must first admit defeat. As a Jesus follower, each of us must commit to surrendering our lives to Him when we ask for salvation. But beyond that- every day of our lives we each face the decision whether to hold on to our way of life, or surrender to His will for our lives. This is what white flag faith

is all about- coming to the place where every day you are willing and desire to wave the white flag in faith.

Everything that happens in life is a part of God's plan for you; you just have to recognize His hand while on the road trip. We are meant to recognize that this life is not our own, and that there is a much bigger road map that we may not be able to see. So even though the events in our life may seem hard, painful, or less than fair- remember it's all a part of God's plan to get us to our destination along Life's Highway.



In this modern day we live in we can meet likeminded people who are just a mouse click or scroll away. Just like the '#' which brings similarities together, in life there is one factor that we all face which unites us; struggles. We all have them.



ONLY AT THE NOYCI!