

Broken and Beloved

The First Steps of the Journey—part 1

January 7, 2018

We're all on a journey, the destination will be one of two places and each of us will determine where we finish.

DAY ONE: Broken

1. There is something wrong with man. You can see it on an international scale, you can see it on a national scale, you can see it at work, you can see it in neighborhoods, you can see it in family members, and you can see it in your own home.

Isaiah 53:6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

2. How does the prophet Isaiah diagnose what is wrong with man?

3. The apostle Paul also gives us a glimpse into what is wrong with man.

Romans 3:23 ...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

4. The word “sin” has different usages depending on the context in which the word is used. It can mean any of the following:

a. To miss the mark, like an archer, who no matter how close he may be to the target continues to miss the target.

b. To fall short, of what is expected, required, the goal, etc.

5. Paul also tells us what the “goal” is to be for all of us: “the glory of God.” Falling short of the glory of God means we fall short of living up to the standard of how God means us to live. Unfortunately, no one “naturally” cares if they live up to God’s standards.

6. The word “**broken**” is used in three different ways:

a. We use “broken” to mean something of being defeated: “I was ‘broken’ by: my divorce, getting laid off, having to take a menial job, my biopsy came back positive,” etc.

b. That we are “broken” means that there is something faulty in human nature that we cannot fix through greater effort, New Year’s resolutions, trying harder, greater will power, accountability partners, etc.

c. The bible uses “broken” to describe a positive trait: admitting my unchangeable condition and calling out to God in repentance. (It is similar to our how culture thinks of “hitting bottom”).

DAY 2: Broken: willfully blind

1. There is something wrong with man. You can see it on an international scale, you can see it on a national scale, you can see it at work, you can see it in neighborhoods, you can see it in family members, and you can see it in your own home. But there is one place where it inescapably escapes your view. You cannot see what's most wrong in you.

2. The problem of human nature is compounded with a second problem which makes the first problem of even admitting there is something wrong virtually “impossible.” Man is not only blind to his own sin; he is willfully blind!

3. When the prophets scolded the people for their blindness, the people scolded the prophets for accusing them of this, and often made the prophets pay for their “audacity.”

4. God confronts the people, once again, through Isaiah:

Isaiah 6:9 He said, "Go and tell this people: "Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving."

¹⁰ Make the heart of this people calloused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed."

5. God is using sarcasm in chiding them for their willful blindness. The people claim to be open-minded and eager to learn wisdom, but the reality is just the opposite. The people simply hear what they want to hear and see what they want to see. They do not hear what they do not want to hear and do not see what they don't want to see. This same reality is in the heart of every human being.

6. This same willfulness is stated in three different ways in the gospel of John. Underline each of the three ways:

John 3:20 Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed.

7. What is the one thing to which human nature is most committed? Our pride. We insist on maintaining the illusion that whatever problem we may have is not a serious one, certainly one that we “can't handle,” and certainly one that neither necessitates humbling ourselves nor calling out to God for mercy.

DAY 3: Beloved

1. After reading through the first two devotionals of the week you may wonder why God has anything to do with us at all.

Titus 3:3 At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another.

2. This verse is a summary of the failure of human nature. After reading this simple verse, what would be God's response to us?

3. In the very next verse we are met with something absolutely stunning!

Titus 3:4 But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, ...

4. But the kindness and love of God is not just drippy sentimentalism. God's kindness and love is demonstrated in action, and in history. Paul continues:

Titus 3:5 He saved us, ...

5. Note that Paul does not say we "saved ourselves," nor did we "get our act together." We were rescued!

Titus 3:5 ...not because of righteous things we had done, ...

Titus 3:5 ... but because of his mercy.

6. God did not have to have mercy on us. We were guilty "as sin."

*Titus 3:5 ... He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit,
6 whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior,*

7. Notice the saving acts of God for people who could not save themselves!

Titus 3:7 ...so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

8. We were made "right with God" (justified in the eyes of God) simply by God's undeserved favor (grace) AND given the gift of eternal life!

DAY 4: Beloved and wanted!

1. We are not “beloved” in just a theological way. We are God’s beloved in a personal and relational way! WE ARE WANTED!!
2. It’s easy to walk around with a low-level sense of shame about ourselves. We know we don’t measure up to our own standards let alone God’s standards.
3. But the stunning news of the gospel, which means “good news,” is that shame is a thing of our forgiven past.
4. Instead, we have been ushered into God’s family. It’s as if God went to family court to adopt us into His family, with Himself as our Father, and Jesus as our elder brother!
5. Let’s look at a few verses that highlight this glorious reality. Underline the words or phrases that stand out to you:

Ephesians 1:5 He predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will...

Ephesians 2:19 Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household,

Hebrews 2:13 And again, "I will put my trust in him." And again he says, "Here am I, and the children God has given me."

1 John 3:1 How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

6. What stands out to you the most from these verses?

DAY 5: Broken + beloved=conversion

1. Jesus' first words in public ministry were these:

Mark 1:15 "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"

2. Conversion happens when we repent of sin and believe what God has done for us.

Acts 17:29...we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone – an image made by human design and skill. – In the past God overlooked such ignorance but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.

3. To “repent” has two meanings:

a. To change your mind. Once you thought sin was good and faith was unnecessary. Now you believe sin is bad and faith is necessary.

b. To change your direction. Once you followed the ways of the world and the ways of your “natural” desires. Now you desire to follow the ways of God.

4. When Jesus says to “believe the good news” He is not just saying to mentally assent to the truths of the gospel. He means to put your faith (trust) in what He did at the cross, taking on our sin as a sin offering in our stead. Our salvation does not rest on ourselves but on what He has done for us!

*Hebrews 9:27 Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment,
28 so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.*

5. We did NOT get what we deserved (wrath and judgment) while He DID get what He did NOT deserve (wrath and judgment).

Ephesians 2:8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God--⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.

6. According to these two verses in Ephesians, how is someone saved?

7. How is someone not saved?