

Built To Last 1

God Makes New Things

(preached 1/8/23)

Turn to *Psalms 51:17 & Ezekiel 36:26*.

“EVERYTHING BREAKS!” Have you ever complained that everything breaks nowadays? That the stuff made “back in the day” was built to last?

1940’S ROLLER. The oldest piece of equipment on our farm is a roller from the 1940’s. While it’s required repairs and maintenance over the years, the thing still starts right up and runs! I still use it to roll out new fields I’m getting ready to plant.

ARE WE BROKEN?! Let’s switch gears: *have you ever felt like YOU were/are broken?* Maybe something traumatic happened to you years ago, perhaps the environment you grew up in was bad, or maybe some bad choices in relationships have left you feeling like something is permanently wrong with you.

SMASHING PLATES. If a ceramic plate is dropped to the ground, whether by accident or on purpose, it shatters. One could attempt to gather all the pieces and glue them back together, but it wouldn’t be the same. Not only would you see the cracks, but the plate would forever be weaker even to the point of being unusable.

Have you ever felt like that (a smashed plate)? Are you feeling like that now?

If yes I have good news—**God isn’t just a fixer, He totally recreates and remakes things new.**

STEAK FOR THE SOUL. It may very well be chicken soup for the soul to say God will take the broken pieces of us and mend them back together, but I prefer steak.

Steak for the soul is that God makes new things that are built to last.

“BROKEN.” Before we get to that, let’s talk about the word “broken” in the Bible because looking up the translation felt like chasing a flock of geese. We have massive flocks of

Canadian Geese that like to hang around our pond and if you start to run at them, they scatter in 100 different directions.

MANY TRANSLATIONS. Most of the time I look up translations to words, I find anywhere from 1 to 5, 5 being rare. There are almost 10 when it comes to the word “broken.” I’m not going to give them all here, but let’s go the Bible for a few examples.

ANGUISH & IMPATIENCE. This translation implies a person or people living under very bad conditions, experiencing great oppression, and wanting out NOW. It was first used when God spoke through Moses to the Hebrew people who’d been living as slaves in Egypt for centuries. God says He’s heard their cries and is about to answer them, but this is their response:

Exodus 6:9 (ESV)

⁹ Moses spoke thus to the people of Israel, but they did not listen to Moses, because of their broken spirit and harsh slavery.

Now consider this and *apply to yourself* if appropriate: **there is a way out**. A solution offered up by someone with the means to carry it out, but the people reject it. Why would they do that? The verse tells us: **something inside them was broken by 400 years of slavery**. That means generation upon generation were raised to only know that way of life and therefore to say “it is what it is.”

The cold, hard acceptance of reality.

- The abandonment of hope for something better.
- A general attitude that this is the way things will always be.

JACOB BROKE THE PLATE. They likely blamed the past, likely their ancestor Jacob who left the PM and moved all his kids (the 12 tribes) to Egypt because there was a famine. If he’d had more faith in God and stayed in the PM, they wouldn’t be in this mess! In other words, Jacob is the one who dropped the plate on the ground that shattered. 400 years later, the 12 tribes are the broken enslaved pieces lying scattered on the ground.

DIDN’T LISTEN. Therefore even though Moses appears with a “thus saith the Lord” moment, the Hebrew people shrug their shoulders and go back to “same old same old” toiling. I bet at least one of them replied “we’re slaves and trapped here forever Moses, it is what it is.”

They weren’t able to believe in the promises of God because something in them was broken.

They wouldn’t hear the life-changing word of the Lord because of brokenness.

JOB. After getting a major smackdown on his life—we're talking everyone and everything he loved being taken away from him—Job says this:

Job 17:1 (ESV)

¹ "My spirit is broken; my days are extinct; the graveyard is ready for me."

CORE OF PROBLEM: SPIRIT. Now we're getting into some more detail, to the core of the problem. Job actually says "spirit" and he doesn't mean his heart, emotions, mind, or thoughts. In other words, he's not just saying that he's depressed or devastated—*he's saying that there's something wrong with his innermost being, his true self. His spirit.*

Our spirit is our foundation and if it's broken, then we truly are a plate that's been smashed on the ground.

God didn't create us this way—Adam & Eve were His original design and they weren't broken. Eve dropped the plate on the ground by accident because she was deceived, whereas Adam purposefully smashed it on the ground because he rebelled.

Either way the result was the same—everyone born to the first couple didn't just inherit bodies that would die, *but broken spirits.*

JOB KNOWS HE'S BROKEN. In his lowest moment, Job knows his problem isn't just the horrible circumstances he finds himself in otherwise he would be saying that he lost his kids, his livestock, and that his wife told him to curse God and die. No...Job realizes that he inherited the same spirit that Adam and Eve broke and no person can ever fix that.

- Lots money and possessions won't fix it.
- Food, drugs, and booze won't put it back together.
- A wonderful spouse & great marriage won't heal it.
- Great kids who are loving & well-adjusted won't mend the issue.

HUMPTY DUMPTY. Once Humpty Dumpty fell off the wall, even the king's horses and men just couldn't put him back together again.

Psalm 31 is David writing about how his own son Absalom betrayed him and in verse 12 he says this:

Psalm 31:12 (ESV)

¹² I have been forgotten like one who is dead; I have become like a broken vessel.

David is saying he is the dish that was violently thrown on the ground and shattered.

What's the good news in all this? Are you hoping I was going to get to it soon, lol? Let's read *Psalms 51:17*:

Psalms 51:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

JUST LAST NIGHT MOVIE QUOTED THIS VERSE!!!

DEEP DIVE NEEDED. On the surface this is a strange verse, so we'll dive below and ask this question: *why would a broken spirit and a broken/contrite heart be the sacrifice God wants?* In the verses before this, David says he would offer up a sacrifice in the form of praise, but that God won't take it—He wants the broken spirit & heart instead.

BACK TO EXODUS. Let's start unpacking this by going back to *Exodus 6:9* where we started today—Moses delivers the good news that the Lord is going to end slavery of the Hebrews, but the brokenness of the people leads them to reject it. Didn't God want them to be broken? No. God already knew they were.

What He wanted was for them to **SACRIFICE** their broken spirits.

A sacrifice is something we hold dear and to “place it on the altar” is to give it up, to kill it, to crucify it.

NOT ALL GOOD. Our limitation is that we think that everything we hold dear does us good, but that isn't true. We're not talking about a kid or pet here, we're talking about things within us. Here are three examples:

- **SELF-RELIANCE** is a sacred cow that needs to be killed and grilled. God has commanded us to rely on Him from Genesis to Revelation. Yet we think of self-reliance as a good thing that we must hold onto when, in fact, all it does is inspire pride and separation from God.
- **UNFORGIVENESS**. There are people who proudly and loudly declare all the wrongs that have been done to them, and display their pain and offense like trophies. When called upon to let these things go, they get really mad and cling even more to these things.

- FEAR. Awhile back I preached a sermon where we mistake fear for wisdom and discernment. That we rely upon fear like a god that will protect and cover us when all it does is hold both God and others at arm's length.

WARNING! *I'm about to say something controversial that may step on your toes.*

There are people who are addicted to their brokenness because it gets them sympathy, love, and attention. They would rather hold onto it and even say it's who they are, vs. allowing the Lord to make them new.

There are others who are addicted to their brokenness because it gives them *a sense of righteousness*. They live in isolation feeling sorry for themselves, thinking of how others have abandoned and mistreated them, and they believe they've mostly done good for others.

If you're thinking of someone else right now, then you're not getting what you need from this sermon.

ASK HIM. If you're having an OMG moment and saying "that's totally my _____!" then stop that thought from going any further and ask the Holy Spirit if this applies to YOU. Don't ask yourself, ask Him.

Did you notice I didn't say "vs. allowing the Lord to fix them"?

The Lord doesn't fix things He creates something entirely new, built to last, and gives them to us.

It's time for us to sacrifice our brokenness.

It's time to bring it to the altar and leave it there.

- PAST. That means we stop saying it's who we are and always has been since _____ happened.
- PRESENT. That means we stop identifying with it and saying "it is what it is."

- FUTURE. That means we stop clinging to it and saying it will always be this way no matter what.
- USING IT. That means we stop using it to get prayer, sympathy, and attention.

You're right if you're saying that the plate is broken and can't be glued back together.

You're wrong if you're saying that you can't have a new one.

The new one comes when we give up the old one.

THE ALTAR. When we SACRIFICE it. The altar in the Bible is where animals were laid down and killed as an offering to God so they could be blessed by Him.

God wants us to lay down our broken spirits and hearts on said altar so He can give us new ones.

Revelation 21:5 (ESV)

⁵ And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

Verse 5 is present tense, and word I want you to start noticing when reading your Bible is "renewed/renewal" and I'll start you out: *Romans 12:2* and *Titus 3:5*.

RENOVATION. Renewal doesn't mean to fix the old one up, but translates to "renovation." When something is renovated the old is torn down and disposed of, and new is put up whether walls, floors, the roof, etc.

WIP. We like to talk about being a WIP—work in progress—and that God is working on us which is true.

RENOVATING NOT FIXING. But please understand: He's not fixing us. Instead He's tearing out the moldy walls, the rotted floors, and leaky roof and giving us all new. We're undergoing a complete renovation.

We just read ***Psalm 51*** where the Lord says to sacrifice our broken spirit and heart, and now we move to this:

Ezekiel 36:26-27 (ESV)

²⁶ And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

²⁷ And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

God gives us new hearts and spirits and He's not fixing the old ones.

WHY HARPING? I keep harping on this because many of you know that the old you is broken beyond repair. You may even see yourself like a shattered dish that's lying in pieces all over the ground.

Other people have tried to fix you: your parents, counselor, pastor, spouse, kids, and friends. Whether they gave you a shoulder to cry on, some advice, a hug, or what have you their intention was to apply some glue. It may have felt better in the moment, but then "same old same old" came back.

God's idea was never to try and fix what Adam & Eve broke.

The Gospel is not designed to put the pieces of the old you back together.

The Gospel puts the broken plate on the altar and gives it to God, Who then gives us a brand new plate that's built to last.

HEART. The word "heart" that God used in Ezekiel means both our emotions and thoughts, both heart and mind. Ironically, the translation of the word goes on to say that a new heart gives us wisdom, understanding, and makes us friendly. Remember the Hebrews in the days of the Exodus? Because they chose to hold onto their broken hearts they refused to listen to God and therefore remained in slavery vs. embracing freedom. Had they brought their brokenness to the altar, they would have moved forward more quickly in the destiny God had laid out before them.

MIGHT HAVE READ. Therefore the verse in Ezekiel might have read: "And I will give you a new heart that will make you more friendly, wiser, and smarter. You won't have to live with PTSD, trauma, anxiety, and depression any longer."

NEW SPIRIT. The new "spirit" God gives us is exactly that, and the NT Apostles used the word "regeneration" when they spoke of it. It means this: *the old spirit that Adam*

broke died, and then was resurrected into a completely different one that looks just like Jesus.

ROSE FROM DEAD. When Jesus rose from the dead He didn't look like the old one...at all. Have you ever noticed in the Gospels His own disciples had a hard time recognizing Him after His resurrection? The various Jesus movies give us a false impression, although I still love most of them. Whatever actor played Jesus pre-resurrection is the same one who plays Him when He walks out of the tomb...understandably so.

NOT SAME BODY. The false impression it might give us is that His resurrected self was exactly like His old self. While He still bore the marks of His crucifixion, His new body was made from the stuff of Heaven and looked quite different. Lazarus was put back into his mortal body and looked the same when he emerged, but not so with Christ nor us when we experience our own resurrection.

EVEN MARY. 1 Corinthians 15 says we're getting one that's completely new, a renovation, and made from Heavenly materials so it's built to last...forever. That's the way Jesus was when He emerged. Mary Magdalene was the first to see Him and, even then, it wasn't until He spoke her name that she realized it was Him...because He looked different.

***The new body we're getting reflect the new spirit that's inside us—
completely new***, completely different, looking like Jesus. Eternal, everlasting, even above death and sin. Your new self cannot be broken, defiled, chipped away at, or corrupted in any way.

I end with this verse then ask you come forward for prayer:

Titus 3:3-7 (ESV)

³ For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.

⁴ But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared,

⁵ he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,

⁶ whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

⁷ so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

