

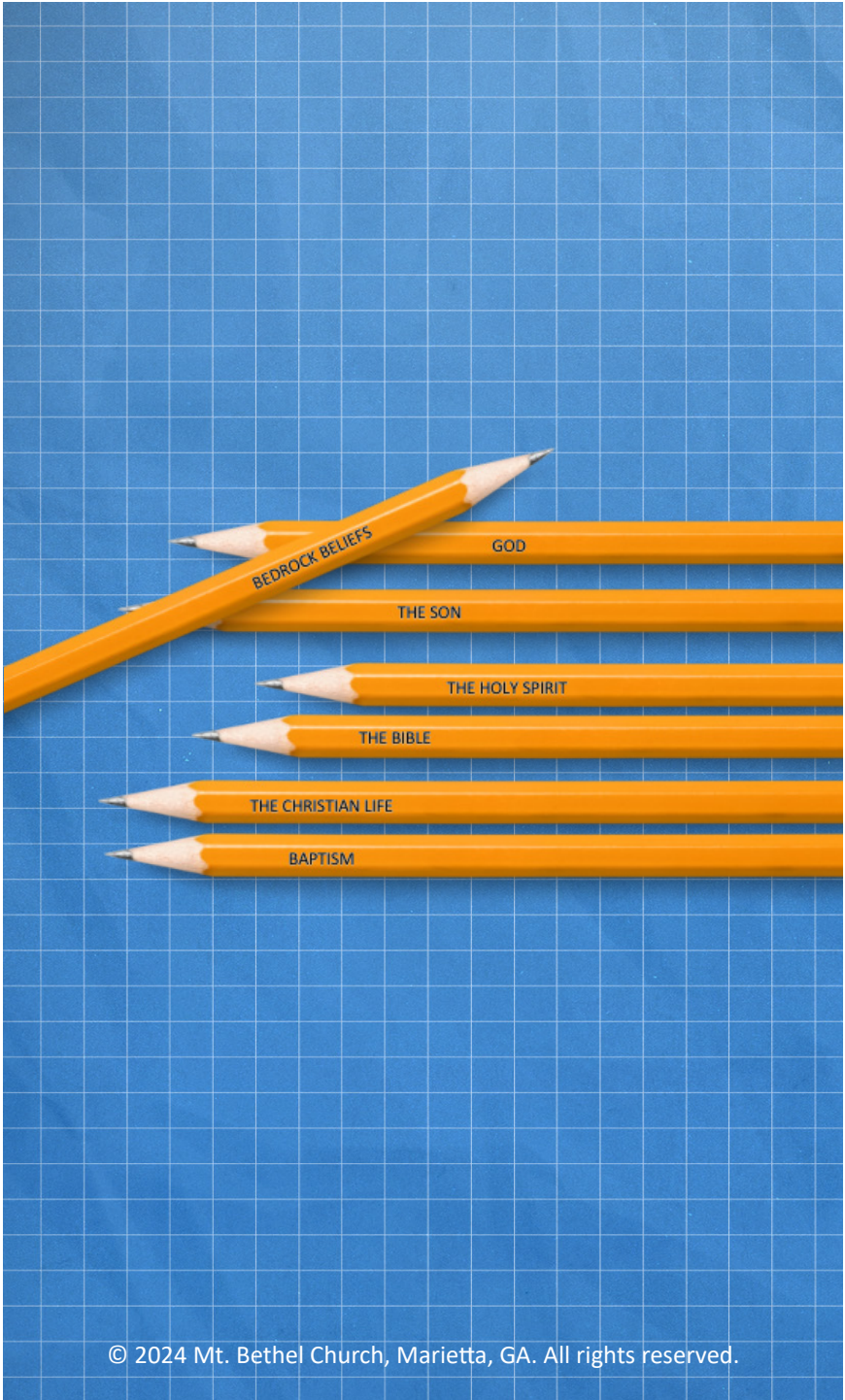
The background is a collage of construction-related items. It features a blue grid paper with faint white lines and circles. Overlaid on this are various pieces of wood, some with blue and white patterned tape, and a wooden ruler. The overall aesthetic is that of a construction site or a workshop.

— A Firm — Foundation

THE MARKS OF DISCIPLESHIP

The logo for Mt Bethel Church consists of a stylized white 'MB' monogram. Below the monogram, the words 'mt bethel' and 'church' are written in a lowercase, sans-serif font, stacked vertically.

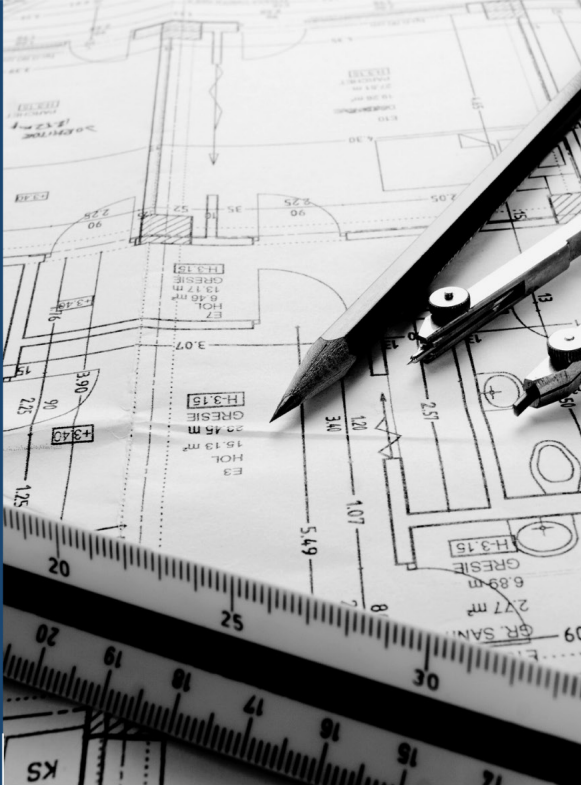
mt bethel
church



Week 3

Heals the Broken

By Dr. John Freeland



"He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds."

(Psalm 147:3)

Introduction

Brokenness is an undeniable part of life in a sinful world. Brokenness is everywhere. We find it in our own lives, in the lives of those around us, and in our communities. Most of us would go back in time if we could and change a bad decision, repair a broken relationship, or avoid an accident or correct a mistake. As C.S. Lewis said, “You can’t go back and change the beginning, but you can start where you are and change the ending.” Faith in Jesus does not exempt us from the fractures that afflict humanity. Instead, we are called to confront brokenness with a distinct purpose – to bring healing and restoration, for ourselves and for others.

Healing doesn’t happen in isolation. We were created for community (Genesis 2:18), so the call to heal the broken is a call to engage with people – both within and outside the faith community. The Apostle Paul, in his letter to the Galatians, captured this idea succinctly: “Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2, NIV). “Burdens.” The very word makes us tired. But, here is the good news, you are not alone. As you help carry your neighbors burdens another Christian brother or sister helps carry yours. Healing the broken means meeting the broken where they are and helping them follow Christ for a transformed ending.

Our mission exceeds the walls of the church. Christians are commissioned to extend their hands and hearts

beyond their comfort zones, reaching out to those who may not share their faith or societal privileges. Jesus’ parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) serves as a timeless reminder that our neighbors are not defined by their religious affiliations or social status. True Christian healing transcends borders and boundaries and extends to the marginalized, the oppressed, and the forgotten.

Navigating the brokenness around us challenges us to adopt a mindset of humility and empathy. The Apostle Paul, in his letter to the Philippians, encourages believers to consider others as more significant than themselves, looking out not only for their interests but also for the interests of others (Philippians 2:3-4). Get ready to turn the page as we discover together how Christians can actively listen, understand, and empathize with the pain of others.

Ultimately, the Christian journey of healing the broken is a gritty, hands-on endeavor. It involves an eagerness to get our hands dirty in the messiness of life, embracing the brokenness within ourselves and others. Through prayer, compassion, comfort, instilling hope, and intentional engagement with the disadvantaged, we embody the transformative power of Christ’s love in a world desperately in need of healing. It is time for us to rise up and minister healing to the broken, recognizing that healing begins with Jesus and extends far beyond the boundaries of our own lives.

Day 1 | Week 3

We Are on a Mission to Heal

By: Dr. John Freeland

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free.”

(Luke 4:18, NIV)

Day 1 | Week 3

We Are on a Mission to Heal

Humpty Dumpty?

The Gospel clearly reveals the heartbeat of Christ's earthly ministry, but it is also a call to action for believers to step into the world of the hurting, the disadvantaged, and the lost. Christ's mandate extends beyond the confines of sermon and liturgy – it beckons us to the front lines of human brokenness and sends us into shopping malls and grocery stores, alleys and gutters. Everywhere we go is a mission field.

Brokenness is not confined to physical ailments but extends to fractured relationships, shattered dreams, and hopelessness. As Christians, we are called to follow in the footsteps of Christ. This means stepping into the lives of those who are broken, not with judgment or condescension, but with humility and compassion. The hurting, the disadvantaged, and the lost are not mere projects for us to fix; they are individuals created in the image of God, deserving of dignity and love.

Embracing Luke 4:18 sends us on a mission of intentional engagement with the brokenness that permeates our world. As we delve into this weekly devotion, let us keep in mind that our mission field is not restricted to the grand stages of life but unfolds in the everyday spaces we inhabit. Whether it's a neighbor struggling with loneliness or a co-worker facing a crisis of faith, the call to proclaim good news, freedom, and restoration resonates in the ordinary moments of life. We can live out Christ's mandate in the nitty-gritty of our daily interactions if we recognize that every encounter is an opportunity to extend Christ's love and bring hope to those who desperately need it.

Proclaiming Good News to the Poor

The good news that Jesus proclaimed to the poor was not confined to material wealth or temporary relief from distress. It was a message of profound transformation with eternal significance. As Christians, our role in any ministry that heals the broken begins with sharing this good news by embodying the love of Christ in practical ways – feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and providing shelter for the homeless.

Proclaiming the good news to the poor involves addressing the underlying issues that perpetuate poverty and marginalization. It calls us to advocate for justice, work towards systemic change, and stand alongside those who are oppressed. The transformative power of the Gospel extends beyond immediate needs, touching the roots of darkness. In our proclamation, we not only bring physical relief but also strive to cultivate an environment where the inherent dignity and worth of every individual is recognized, breaking the chains of poverty and fostering holistic well-being.

Freedom for the Prisoners

The call to proclaim freedom for the prisoners extends beyond physical incarceration. It encompasses the chains of addiction, sin, and spiritual bondage that ensnare countless lives. As Christians, we are tasked with bringing the message of freedom found in Christ, breaking the shackles that bind individuals to destructive patterns and sinful lifestyles, by actively engaging with those in the grip of addiction and enslaved by sin, and pointing them towards the transformative power of Christ's redemption.

Bringing freedom for the prisoners compels us to confront the less visible but equally powerful prisons of the mind and heart – places where people grapple with guilt, shame, and the weight of past mistakes.

As ambassadors of hope, we offer the liberating truth of God's forgiveness and grace. This involves not only ministering to those physically imprisoned but also reaching out to the emotionally and spiritually captive, guiding them toward a path of healing and restoration. By extending Christ's redemptive message, we participate in dismantling the multifaceted chains that bind individuals, allowing them to experience the profound freedom that comes through a relationship with the Savior.

Recovery of Sight for the Blind

Spiritual blindness darkens minds and hearts preventing individuals from receiving the truth of God's love. Recovery of sight for the blind involves helping people see the reality of their need for a Savior and the beauty of God's redemptive plan. It means witnessing through word and action. When we shine the light of God's love on spiritual darkness, we help others see the transformative truth of the Gospel.

The recovery of sight for the blind fosters a deeper understanding of God's purposes and His unfathomable love. It involves guiding individuals to see beyond immediate challenges and circumstances to see the eternal hope found in Christ. This requires patience as we walk alongside those who may be spiritually blind or confused, to illuminate the path toward a vibrant, faith-filled life.

By actively participating in the recovery of sight, we contribute to a spiritual awakening, enabling individuals to behold the light of God's truth and recognize the boundless grace that awaits them. Through our words, actions, and persistent love, we help remove the veils of darkness.

Setting the Oppressed Free

The call to set the oppressed free resonates profoundly in a world marred by injustice and systemic oppression. Setting the oppressed free means addressing the emotional, psychological, and spiritual wounds inflicted by a broken world and being agents of healing by offering comfort and support to those who have been crushed by the weight of sin, darkness, and oppression. Setting the oppressed free is a commitment to uprooting the strongholds created by fear, rejection, and unforgiveness.

Setting the oppressed free compels us to be active voices against discrimination, marginalization, and social injustice. As agents of healing, we are called not only to address immediate wounds but also to introduce the Gospel to a world where oppression has replaced compassion, fairness, and a genuine recognition of the intrinsic value of every person. In our pursuit of setting the oppressed free, we align ourselves with God's heart for justice, becoming catalysts for lasting change in the lives of the downtrodden.

Gatherers of Pieces

Accepting the ministry of Luke 4:18 urges us to step into the brokenness of the world with humility, compassion, and the transformative power of the Gospel. We are called to be the King's horses and the King's men, conduits of healing, in a fractured world, recognizing that the work of healing is not reserved for a select few but is the shared responsibility of all believers. Healing the broken is not optional – it's at the core of our identity as followers of Christ. Let your life of ministry begin today. Heed the call to proclaim good news, bring freedom, restore sight, and set the oppressed free in the name of Jesus.

The thing about being King's horses and King's men is we can't put Humpty Dumpty back together again. God puts the broken back together. We are called to gather the pieces and bring them to our King. As gatherers of pieces, we are called to engage with the brokenness around us, recognizing that our words, actions, and even silent presence can contribute to the process of restoration. Healing the broken aligns with the comprehensive nature of Christ's ministry, where physical healings were often accompanied by words of comfort, forgiveness, and spiritual renewal.

The call to heal the broken necessitates a commitment to ongoing learning, self-reflection, and a deepening relationship with Christ. As we embark on this daily mission of healing, let us cultivate a spirit of humility, acknowledging our own need for healing and redemption. In doing so, we become authentic vessels of God's grace, inviting others to experience the transformative power of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Our obedience to this call to heal the broken is more than an act of service. It is a profound expression of our identity as followers of Christ, marked by a genuine love that seeks to bring wholeness to a broken world.

Questions for personal reflection:

1. What specific actions will you take to embody the call of Luke 4:18 in your daily life?

2. What changes do you need to make to align your approach to healing with the comprehensive nature of Christ's ministry?

3. In cultivating a spirit of humility and acknowledging your own need for healing and redemption, how will you pursue becoming a vessel of God's grace and invite others to experience the transformative power of the Holy Spirit in their lives?

Day 2 | Week 3

Got Prayer?

By: Dr. John Freeland

“Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise. 14Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. 15And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. 16Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.”

(James 5:13-16, NIV)

Day 2 | Week 3

Got Prayer?

Connecting With The Healer

Today's lesson centers on a foundational aspect of our engagement with the hurting and the lost – the power of prayer. James understood pain, and his words echo through the centuries to address the Christian response to suffering. James understood that to pray was active engagement with the pain of the world. In the midst of suffering, James declares, “Pray for each other.” In affliction, prayer is a mandated and immediate response; an acknowledgement that our dependence on God is paramount in navigating sickness and pain.

Prayer is a profound conduit for divine healing in response to brokenness. Prayer is not dependent upon our eloquence or the perfection of our words; rather, it hinges on a sincere and authentic connection with God. Praying for those who are sick, confessing sins, and seeking forgiveness is active participation in God's redemptive work. The prayer offered in faith demonstrates our faith in a God who heals and restores.

James calls believers to a communal aspect of healing through prayer – an interconnectedness that extends beyond individual concerns. The encouragement to confess sins to one another and to pray for each other highlights the shared responsibility within the body of believers to contribute to the healing process. This communal engagement with prayer fosters an environment of vulnerability and support. In our shared journey of healing through prayer, we become a community that actively participates in each other's restoration, recognizing that the prayers of the righteous are powerful and effective in bringing about transformation and healing in the lives of the broken.

Interceding for the Sick

James encourages those who are sick to call upon the community of believers, particularly the elders of the church. Prayer and anointing with oil is a tangible expression of faith in the collective power of the Christian community and the sovereignty of God. Hebrews 4:16 invites us to “approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” The prayer of faith

has the potential to heal and restore. It's a testament to the mysterious yet profound link between God and man, where the cries of the afflicted are met with the compassionate response of a loving God.

Anointing with oil, as mentioned in James 5:13-16, symbolizes a tangible connection between the spiritual and the physical. It serves as a visual representation of consecration and a recognition of God's presence, in the person of the Holy Spirit, in the midst of suffering. The act of anointing with oil is a powerful act, strengthening our belief that our prayers are not mere words but expressions of profound faith in God's willingness and ability to intervene in the lives of those in need.

The oil, a symbol of the Holy Spirit's comforting and healing presence, reminds us that our prayers are not simple speech but are wrapped in the mystery of God's mercy and grace.

As we intercede on behalf of the sick, we affirm our shared responsibility in the ministry of healing. This collective approach is a testament to the biblical principle that we are members of one body, and the well-being of one part affects the entire body. Our prayers for the sick become a demonstration of the love and compassion that characterize the Christian community.

Confession, Prayer, and Healing

Confessing sin to one another and praying collectively creates a powerful answer to brokenness. The prayer of confession opens the human spirit to the possibility and hope for healing. It's an acknowledgment that the brokenness within us often hinders our ability to receive healing and experience the fullness of God's grace. Certainly, confession of sin, even with another member of Christ's body, can be awkward and embarrassing, but James' charge was given understanding the powerful stronghold sin and unforgiveness creates in our lives. In the modern Western body of Christ, the church, confession of sin is a rare occurrence, but we mustn't let our embarrassment or discomfort keep us from physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual healing.

The act of confessing sins within the context of a supportive Christian community not only fosters a culture of vulnerability and authenticity but also dismantles the isolating power of guilt and shame. Repentance creates a climate of grace as understanding emerges providing fertile ground for healing to take root. The communal act of confession transforms the narrative of brokenness from one of solitary struggle to a shared journey toward redemption, as each individual finds solace in the collective commitment to grace and restoration.

The prayer of confession is an intentional surrender to God's mercy and forgiveness. It is an admission that, in our brokenness, we are wholly dependent on His grace. This vulnerability becomes a powerful catalyst for healing as we relinquish the burdens of guilt and shame at the feet of a compassionate and forgiving God. The collective prayer of confession, rooted in humility and a desire for transformation, sets the stage for a divine exchange where brokenness is met with God's unmerited favor. Through this sacred act of confession and prayer, we participate in profound spiritual healing that extends beyond us to embrace the entire community, fostering an environment where the grace of God flows abundantly.

The Prayer of a Righteous Person

The prayer of a righteousness person is not born of a self-righteousness based on perfection but a humble and sincere alignment with God's character and will. Such prayer invites us to live authentically, acknowledging our dependence on God's grace while actively striving to live a life worth pursuing. The prayer of faith is intrinsically linked to righteous living. The integration of our prayer life and our commitment to live a life centered on Christ in service and worship of God is vitally important in any and every way.

The transformative power of the prayer of a righteous person extends beyond personal piety to a collective impact on the broader community.

As righteous believers pray, the power of the Holy Spirit is manifested through that prayer. The righteous person is one who is trading the pursuit of more for a life worth pursuing in Jesus Christ. Through the prayer of faith, a righteous person becomes a dynamic force that not only transforms individuals but also empowers the Christian community to actively engage in the redemptive work of God, bringing healing to a broken world. It serves as a reminder that the authenticity of our prayers is revealed not only in our words but in the tangible expression of God's love and righteousness in our own lives.

Prayers of a "Righteous" Person

Prayer is not a substitute for active engagement with the suffering; rather, it is the dynamic force that propels us into the depths of human brokenness. The prayer of a righteous person has great power, actively working to heal the broken. Renew your commitment to prayer that transcends the boundaries of personal concerns and extends to the cries of the hurting, the sick, and the lost. As we lift our voices in prayer, may we be propelled into action, becoming tangible expressions of God's healing grace in a world desperate for restoration.

James encourages believers to actively intercede for the sick, calling on the community of faith to participate in the healing process. This intercessory prayer is not a passive plea but a fervent engagement with the pain and

suffering of those who are unwell. As we renew our commitment to intercede for the sick, let us recognize the profound impact of the prayer of faith. It's a call to be active conduits of healing, recognizing that our prayers are not isolated endeavors but are interwoven with the compassionate response of a loving God.

collective prayers of the righteous are powerful and effective.

Before we put too much pressure on ourselves, righteousness is not of ourselves. We have all sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). But the good news is that God made Jesus, who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (2Cor. 5:21). We have little to do with our righteousness. We are made righteous when we acknowledge our own sinfulness, repent of our sin, and accept Jesus died for us and is still working on our behalf. The prayers of a righteous person are simply prayers offered by a person who is trading the pursuit of more for a life worth pursuing in Jesus Christ.

Confession, prayer, and healing are intricately connected components in the process of restoration. Confessing sins to one another and praying collectively create an environment for healing. As we repent and pray, we contribute to the transformation of brokenness from a solitary struggle to a shared journey toward redemption. In our shared journey of healing through prayer, we become a community that actively participates in each other's restoration, recognizing that the

Questions for personal reflection:

1. In the context of James 5:13-16, how does the idea of confessing sins to one another and praying for each other contribute to the healing process within a community of believers?

2. James speaks of the “prayer of faith” and its effectiveness in healing the sick. What does a prayer of faith look like, and what practices will you undertake to deepen your trust in God’s power as you intercede for those who are physically or emotionally unwell?

3. Reflecting on James 5:16, how will you create an environment within your Christian community where sincere and fervent prayer becomes a regular practice?

Day 3 | Week 3
**We Are Burdened with the Yoke of
Compassion**

By: Dr. John Freeland

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

(Matthew 11:28-30, NIV)

Day 3 | Week 3

We Are Burdened with the Yoke of Compassion

“Come to Me”

When Jesus says, “Come to me,” He offers a deep and abiding rest for the weary soul. The weariness that Jesus addressed goes beyond simple physical fatigue to encompass the emotional, spiritual, and psychological exhaustion that is found in a broken world. As Christians, we are called not only to find rest in Christ but bring others into this rest. Our compassion is rooted in the recognition that every person, regardless of their background or struggle, is invited to find rest in the arms of a loving Savior.

In the Christian life, the invitation to take on the yoke of Christ is a profound call to share in His ministry. The yoke, often associated with labor and burden, is redefined by Jesus as a symbol of compassionate discipleship. Jesus not only offers rest but calls us to take on His yoke and learn from Him. This yoke is not a heavy burden but a transformative journey of compassion and service. Jesus, being gentle and humble in heart, exemplifies a yoke that is easy and a burden that is light.

Our response to this invitation is not just to receive rest but to actively participate in extending this rest to others.

The essence of Christian compassion lies in its universal invitation. The call to “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened,” is not limited by background, struggles, or circumstances. It extends to every person, regardless of their brokenness or the complexity of their challenges. This universal invitation is a testament to the inclusivity of Christ’s love and the accessibility of His rest. As we take on the yoke of compassion, we embody this invitation, recognizing that our compassionate outreach is not restricted by society or culture. In the yoke of compassion, we find a common ground where all are invited to experience the restful grace of Christ. Compassion challenges us to break down barriers, reach across divides, and extend the rest we have found in Christ to every corner of a broken and burdened world.

The Yoke of Compassion

In a world marked by identity crises and selfish ambition, the concept of a yoke often evokes images of burdens and constraint. However, Jesus's yoke is not one of oppression but of compassion. The yoke of compassion involves actively bearing the burdens of others, walking alongside them in their pain, and providing the support needed for healing. His is a yoke that compels us forward rather than holding us back. The yoke of compassion is a yoke of freedom because being yoked with Jesus means nothing is impossible (Luke 1:37; Philippians 4:13).

We are called to embody the gentleness and humility taught by Christ by acknowledging our own brokenness and recognizing that true healing comes from the Divine Physician. Being disciples of Jesus means adopting His posture of humility and actively listening to the stories of the hurting and lost. It means setting aside preconceived notions and allowing ourselves to be transformed by the Holy Spirit. In humility, we discover that compassion is not one-size-fits-all but a dynamic response tailored to the unique needs of each individual.

The yoke of compassion is marked by genuine love and a desire for the well-being of others. The Christian's yoke of compassion is easy to bear and the burden light. It's an invitation into a community where acceptance, love, and support flow freely. The light burden associated with the

yoke of compassion contrasts sharply with the heavy load of a broken world. The light burden of Christian compassion becomes a tangible expression of Christ's promise of rest, providing a sanctuary where the weary can find respite and the broken can experience the gentleness of Christ's love.

Rest for Your Souls

Christians are called to be agents of soul-restoration by ministering healing for the wounds rooted in the recesses of the soul. As we engage with the hurting and the lost, our mission is not just to alleviate temporary suffering but to point to the eternal life found in a relationship with Christ. It's a life that transcends circumstances, providing a profound sense of peace and rest in the midst of life's storms.

The call for Christians to be agents of soul-restoration emphasizes the transformative nature of their mission. The hurting and lost often carry burdens that extend far beyond the physical. As we engage in ministry to the broken we must recognize the multidimensional aspects of human suffering. Engaging with those in pain means we must seek healing for the emotional, spiritual, and psychological needs of others by showing them true restoration comes only through faith in Jesus.

The mission to point others to eternal life in a relationship with Christ underscores that the Christian response to suffering is not limited

to temporary relief but extends to a profound and enduring sense of peace found in a deep and eternal relationship with Christ. This rest, anchored in the unchanging character of God, becomes a source of strength and comfort in the midst of life's storms. As we minister to the internal wounds of the soul, we offer more than momentary reprieve; we provide a pathway to lasting transformation by guiding others toward the eternal life promised by Christ. In doing so, we become conduits of God's restoration through wholeness and peace that transcends the temporal challenges of life.

It Is A Transformation Revolution

Christian compassion is nothing short of a radical revolutionary paradigm that transforms our approach to ministries that heal the broken. In embracing the yoke of compassion, we acknowledge that our ministry is not merely a duty but a call to engage with others. Ministry to the broken is an invitation to join Christ in a compassionate revolution, where love is the driving force and healing others is our shared mission. As Christians, we are called to embody this compassion in every interaction, creating spaces where the hurting and lost encounter a love that transcends this world.

The nature of Christian compassion beckons us to a transformative ministry that extends beyond duty. It is a call to bring healing, participate in ministry to the soul, and create communities where the

yoke is easy and the burden is light. As we embrace this revolutionary compassion, may we become agents of change, embodying the love and grace of Christ in a broken world desperate for the transformation that only the compassion of Christ can bring.

Questions for personal reflection:

1. In what areas of your life are you burning the candle at both ends putting you in great need of rest?
2. What changes do you need to make in your life to bring radical rest for you and for those around you?
3. Jesus said, "Come to Me." The first step of finding rest is to take a step toward Jesus. Think about the people you are often around. What things can you do to help them take a step toward Jesus?

Day 4 | Week 3
**We Are Sent on a Mission that Heals
the Broken**

By: Dr. John Freeland

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God."

(2 Corinthians 1:3-4, NIV)

Day 4 | Week 3

We Are Sent on a Mission that Heals the Broken

Do Not Be Dismayed

Within the fabric of selfless service, we encounter a profound call to action – the ministry of comfort. God is not merely an observer of our afflictions; He is the active source of comfort in the midst of our trials. The recognition of God as the “Father of compassion and the God of all comfort” is foundational to understanding our role in ministry that heals the broken. Living the Christian life within the brokenness around us, we must ground ourselves in the truth that our capacity to bring comfort flows from the inexhaustible grace, mercy, and power of God. Someone once said, “Healing doesn’t mean the damage never existed. It means the damage no longer controls our lives.”

In the sacred tapestry of selfless service, we are summoned to a profound mission—the ministry of comfort. In 2 Corinthians 1:3-4, we are introduced to the God who is not a distant observer of our afflictions but the very source of active comfort in the throes of our trials.

This divine comfort is not merely a sentiment; it’s a transformative force that upholds us in times of trouble. Isaiah 41:10 says:

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

In our moments of fear and dismay, God stands with us, providing strength and support with His righteous right hand. Healing the broken invites us to draw from this wellspring of divine compassion, understanding that our ability to comfort others is an extension of the comfort we ourselves have received from God.

Recognizing God as the “Father of compassion and the God of all comfort” is foundational to healing the broken. Our role as Christians within the brokenness around us is deeply intertwined with God’s character of boundless grace, mercy, and healing. Grounded in this truth, we are compelled to engage with a hurting world with the same compassion and comfort that flow ceaselessly from God. Our mission of comfort becomes an authentic

expression of God's love, reflecting His unwavering commitment to strengthen and uphold His people in times of distress.

Living out the Christian life in a fallen world requires a deep conviction that our capacity to bring comfort is intricately linked to the inexhaustible well of mercy and comfort found in God. As we comfort others, we extend the transformative power of God's righteous right hand, enabling individuals to move beyond the dismay of their afflictions. Our ministry, rooted in the profound assurance of God's promises, brings healing, liberation, and restoration in a world yearning for hope.

Comfort in Affliction

The reality of affliction is an undeniable thread in the human experience. Each of us, at various points in our lives, encounter pain, sorrow, and hardship. God comforts us in all our affliction with an all-encompassing solace that God provides in every circumstance. Ministries that heal the broken begins with the acknowledgment that we, too, are recipients of God's comfort in our afflictions. This shared experience of comfort becomes the platform from which we extend the same to others who are in the throes of their own afflictions.

The ministry of comfort, grounded in the comforting presence of God, invites us to a shared journey where our own experiences become the catalyst for extending compassion to others.

The comfort we receive from God breeds empathy and a deep understanding of the pain that others bear. In a ministry that heals the broken, we are called to break the cycle of isolation that often accompanies affliction. Instead of withdrawing into our own comfort, we are sent to extend a compassionate hand to others. Comfort is often found in the practice of presence. In times of grief or distress, the assurance that someone is there, willing to share the burden, can bring profound comfort. Christians engaged in ministry that heals the broken must cultivate a presence that reflects the comforting presence of God – gentle, steadfast, and unwavering.

Limitless

The brokenness around us, as overwhelming as it may be, is not an insurmountable challenge but an opportunity to extend the healing we have received from God. A ministry that heals the broken is not a lofty ideal but a practical expression of the Father of mercies working through His people. This divine exchange becomes the heartbeat of our mission, transforming comfort into a practical and transformative expression of God's love.

Ministry that heals the broken is a deeply personal and tangible manifestation of the Father of mercies working through His people. As we engage in this mission, we find ourselves standing on the sacred ground of shared experiences—both

our own encounters with God and the shared afflictions of those we seek to help. It is within this sacred intersection that the bonds of empathy are forged, and the ministry of comfort transcends mere words, becoming a lived reality in the lives of the broken.

Our mission of comfort is an invitation to step into the pain of others, and actively participate in their healing journey. It is a call to break the cycle of isolation and provide sanctuaries where individuals feel safe to express their pain. By cultivating a presence that mirrors the comforting nature of God—gentle, steadfast, and unwavering—we create spaces where afflictions are met with understanding, compassion, and the transformative power of divine comfort. In the brokenness around us, we discover not only the depth of human suffering but also the limitless capacity of God’s comfort to bring solace, hope, and restoration.

Questions for personal reflection:

1. In what ways does recognizing God’s nature as the “Father of compassion” influence your understanding of the mission to heal the broken?

2. In what practical ways can you extend the healing you have received from God to those around you who are in need?

3. In what ways can the mission that heals the broken be an expression of your gratitude for the healing you have found in Christ?

Day 5 | Week 3
We Are Instilling Hope
By: Dr. John Freeland

*“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him,
so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”*

(Romans 15:13, NIV)

Day 5 | Week 3

We Are Instilling Hope

A Gift to be Shared

In a ministry that heals the broken, one element emerges as a steady anchor – hope. A ministry that heals the broken requires instilling hope in the lives of the hurting and the lost. Ministry that heals the broken begins with anchoring ourselves in the assurance that God is a God of hope – a wellspring of unshakeable confidence in the midst of life’s challenges. Through the Prophet Jeremiah, God assured His people, “‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the LORD, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future’” (Jeremiah 29:11). Those who minister healing to the broken venture into the lives of those burdened by brokenness to give hope that is not rooted in wishful thinking, or even strategic planning, but in the character of a God who is intimately acquainted with, and intensely invested in His people.

The ministry of instilling hope is not a passive exercise but an intentional act of reaching into the depths of despair to offer a lifeline of expectation. Hope, in this context, is not a superficial optimism but a profound assurance in the

sovereign, loving hand of God. It is an acknowledgment that the brokenness we encounter is not the final chapter of the story; rather, it is an invitation to witness the power of hope in the hands of a God who specializes in turning despair into joy, ashes into beauty, and mourning into dancing.

Our mandate to instill hope to the broken stems from a recognition that hope is not a commodity to be dispensed but a divine gift to be shared. As we trust in the God of hope, allowing His joy and peace to fill us, we become vessels through which hope overflows by the power of the Holy Spirit. The ministry of healing is, at its core, an invitation to be instruments of divine hope, ushering in a future that transcends present struggles and testifying to the redemptive nature of God’s plans. Today, we will explore the multifaceted aspects of instilling hope—how it influences our words, actions, and the very essence of our presence in the lives of the broken.

The Power of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit empowers believers in every area of life, and this especially applies to ministry that heals the broken. The Holy Spirit enables us to navigate the complexities of life with resilience and hope. We must recognize our dependence on Him, because it is through the Spirit's guidance and power that we can effectively share hope with others. This means continually relying on the Spirit's discernment, wisdom, and compassion as we engage with diverse people and challenging situations.

Ministry that heals the broken, like all other Christian ministries, is dependent upon two things: the Holy Spirit working in and through us and us letting the Holy Spirit work in and through us. Martin Luther King Jr. said, "Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase." Apart from the Holy Spirit, Christians are not capable of taking the first step of faith. The Holy Spirit does not help us heal the broken. It is our privilege to be part of the work God's Holy Spirit is doing to heal the broken. The ministry is His. We are simply "anointed to proclaim good news to the poor, sent to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, and to set the oppressed free" (Luke 4:18).

The Holy Spirit is not there to help us; rather, He is the driving force behind any ministry that heals the broken. It is our privilege to participate in the ministry of the Holy Spirit who

empowers us to proclaim good news, bring freedom for prisoners, recovery of sight for the blind, and liberation to the oppressed (Luke 4:18). The Holy Spirit, as the driving force behind healing ministries, guides and empowers believers to embody the transformative work of Christ in the lives of the broken. When we yield to the Holy Spirit's leading, we become vessels through which God's love and healing power flow to those in need.

The ministry of healing is not a solo endeavor; it is a collaborative work where believers, empowered by the Holy Spirit, join together to become conduits of God's transformative healing in the lives of the broken. As we yield to the Holy Spirit, allowing His guidance and power to flow through us, we become instruments of hope and restoration, fulfilling the divine mandate to bring good news, freedom, and healing to a world in desperate need.

Abounding in Hope

Abounding in hope is not a passive state but an active overflowing assurance that transcends circumstances. It is a hope that persists in the face of adversity. It is a steadfast confidence that God's redemptive work is at play even in the midst of brokenness. Margaret Thatcher said, "You may have to fight a battle more than once to win it." In this case, hope becomes very important, not only to the broken, but to the one engaged in ministry that heals the broken. As we engage in ministries that heal the

broken, abounding in hope becomes a transformative force. It means radiating optimism and confidence in God's ability to bring restoration. This hope is not naively optimistic but grounded in the understanding that God's purposes are at work, even when we cannot see or understand what God is doing at the time.

Ministry that heals the broken requires believers to embody this abounding hope as they step into the brokenness of the world. It means becoming agents of optimism, recognizing that hope is not a distant promise but a present reality in the midst of pain. When we engage in a ministry that heals the broken, it is an opportunity to witness God's redemptive plan of healing. In the words of Martin Luther King Jr., "We must accept finite disappointment, but we must never lose infinite hope." Abounding in hope empowers believers to face disappointment and despair, again and again, with the assurance that God's infinite hope transcends the finite challenges of the broken world.

As Christians abounding in hope, our role is to infuse the lives of the broken with this transformative assurance. It involves actively sharing the source of our hope and pointing others to the unchanging character of God, even in the midst of change and chaos. In the ministry of healing, abounding in hope becomes a compelling testimony that the unceasing redemptive work of God welcomes the broken into the transformative embrace of His unfailing love.

A Resilient Force

Our God is a God of hope. We are called to embody and share this hope with the hurting and the lost. Hope is not a passive wish but an active assurance anchored in the character of God. As Christians anointed and empowered by the Holy Spirit, our journey in ministry that heals the broken involves sharing this hope with those who need it most. May our actions, empowered by the Holy Spirit, communicate a hope that transcends circumstances and point to the redemptive power of our God of hope.

Anointed and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we are uniquely positioned to instill hope in the lives of the hurting and the lost. This hope is not a mere sentiment; it's a resilient force that transcends circumstances and points to the redemptive power of our God. As we engage in ministries that heal the broken, our actions and words become channels through which the Holy Spirit communicates a hope that is unshaken by the storms of life. It's a hope that extends beyond the temporal to the eternal, promising restoration and renewal in the face of brokenness.

We are invited to become agents of transformation in a world longing for assurance. Our encounters with brokenness become opportunities to share the unwavering hope we have ourselves received from God.

As we close this week of reflection and devotion, let us carry forward the charge to instill hope, recognizing that our actions, fueled by the Holy Spirit, have the power to illuminate the path to restoration and redemption for the broken. May the hope we share be a beacon that guides others into the transformative embrace of God's boundless love and grace.

Questions for personal reflection:

1. In what ways can the God of hope fill you with joy and peace as you trust in Him, as mentioned in Romans 15:13?
2. Reflecting on the concept of "overflowing with hope," how can you cultivate a mindset that embraces the abundance of hope provided by God in a way that influences your interactions with those around you, especially those in need of healing?
3. In what practical ways can you strengthen your faith to deepen your connection with the God of hope and empower your ministry that heals the broken?

Conclusion:

The multifaceted nature of brokenness extends far beyond the physical realm, encompassing emotional, spiritual, and societal dimensions. Brokenness is not a one-size-fits-all experience; it manifests uniquely in the lives of individuals, leaving scars and wounds that often remain hidden from the world. The brokenhearted are not confined to specific demographics; they are our neighbors, colleagues, and friends.

The Holy Spirit is not a distant observer but the near and active agent in the healing process. This nearness is a dynamic engagement with the brokenhearted. It's a nearness that saves, uplifts, and transforms the crushed in spirit. We are called to be conduits of the redemptive power of God. Our actions become tangible expressions of God's nearness, providing comfort, hope, and restoration to those navigating the complexities of brokenness.

The understanding of God's nearness translates into practical outcomes in ministries that heal the broken. Throughout this devotional, we've explored various themes that encapsulate the essence of Christian engagement with the broken:

We are on a mission to heal: The nearness of God calls us to be present in the lives of the broken. This presence is marked by genuine compassion, a willingness to sit with others in their pain, and an acknowledgment that we do not have all the answers.

We are equipped with the healing power of prayer: True healing is the work of Jesus on the cross (2Peter 2:24). James 5 calls for the healing power of prayer in times of brokenness. The prayer of faith offered by believers is a transformative force that not only comforts the afflicted but seeks divine intervention for restoration.

We are burdened with the Yoke of Compassion: This involves tangible acts of kindness to address immediate needs by providing food for the hungry, shelter for the homeless, and support for the disadvantaged. Practical compassion acknowledges the dignity of individuals in the midst of their struggles and provides an unequivocal witness of the love God has for the broken.

We are sent on a mission of Comfort: In acknowledging God as the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort (2 Corinthians 1:3-4), Christians are called to engage in the ministry of comfort by acknowledging pain, validating emotions, and offering a steady presence in times of distress.

We are instilling Hope: The work of healing is incomplete without the infusion of hope. Christians are called to be agents of hope, sharing the transformative assurance that God is at work even in the darkest moments. Hope is not wishful thinking; it's a confident expectation rooted in the character of a God who saves the crushed in spirit (Romans 15:13).

The brokenness around us is vast, but our God is near, and His nearness compels us to be active participants in the redemptive work unfolding in the lives of others. This is not a call to sporadic acts of kindness but a sustained commitment to being agents of God's presence. It involves cultivating a posture of openness, continually seeking to understand the diverse ways in which brokenness is experienced, and responding with compassion, grace, and practical support.



OUR MISSION

To lead people to trade the pursuit of more
for a life worth pursuing in Jesus Christ.



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