

## *God Loves Our Brokenness*

Whether it's our emotional, psychological selves, our insecurities, we all have dysfunctions, we're all dysfunctional in one way or another. God has something bigger and better in mind for those that are broken. Brokenness leads to dysfunction. A lot of brokenness comes from sin, our or that of others effecting us. Sometimes our own sin hurts us, or it is that of others. All this brokenness and subsequent dysfunctionality scars us emotionally. We are scarred by this.

**1. How Sin Effects Our Hearts, Minds and Conscience:** When we sin our consciences are seared, as it were, with a hot iron, leading to scarring. A choice to sin brings this on. Now this verse applies to a situation that the Holy Spirit said would develop within the Body of Christ. But it is a general principle of what happens within our minds, our consciences. **1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 4:1-2, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their consciences seared with a hot iron..."** The consciences of all people, believers and those in the world, within their and our minds, becomes scarred by making a choice to sin, choosing a lifestyle of sin and moving away from God and his Word. The world does this unknowingly, and we can too. This is described for us in **Titus 1:15-16, "Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."** The message that comes through from the passage in Romans 5 is basically **'Obey the laws of God so you don't sear your conscience.'** This is not a legalistic drum-pounding at the pulpit exhorting us to obey the Law of God, it is a gentle exhortation and explanation of what sin does in the mind, that it has brought on a dysfunctional world. **Romans 13:1-5, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers**

that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil. **Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.**” Verse 5, underlined there is the operative verse for us. Why should we obey even the carnal ordinances of man (as long as they don't go against God's laws, of course)? Because disobedience to laws of any form, laws of man or God, sears our consciences, sets up a wrong response within us to authority and law, which sears the mind. Such searing leads to having a criminal mind in some, we see it all the time in the world. There are far more criminals walking around that never get caught or end up in jail. Verse 5 is admonishing us to keep our consciences clean and clear, even with the laws of man, paying taxes, staying within the speed-limits and not running stop signs or red lights while driving, and such. Where does disobedience to God's laws lead? Paul describes this well in **Romans 1:28, “And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient...”** This verse describes God giving people in the world that persist in what's described in verses 18-32 over to something worse than what was there in their minds originally, a higher level of corruption and scarring. The full context of that verse is found in **verses 18-32, “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed *it* unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:”** (see <http://www.unityinchrist.com/Does/Does%20God%20Exist.html>) “because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imagination, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise,

**they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.” (verses 18-23)** When people in the world reach this level, God gives them over to, or lets them reach a new level of depravity. How? Since the world denies God’s existence through the process described in verses 18-23, they also deny the whole Word of God, one part of which shows in Genesis 1:27-28 that God created mankind “in his own image...male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply.” By denying that Scriptural passage because you’re a non-believer, atheist, and having through denying God absorbed the lifestyle of verses 18-23, verses 24-32 become a reality, a new deeper level of conscience-searing depravity. This is exactly what we have seen occurring in the world from the 1960s up to the present. But it also happened during Paul’s lifetime within the Roman Empire. This next set of verses describe what Paul was personally witnessing in the Roman society of his day. **“Verse 24-32, “Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves. Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.” (verses 24-27)** Now once this level has been reached, God allows their minds to come into a condition of being reprobate, a deeper level of searing and dysfunctionality. **Verses 28-32, “And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; being filled with all unrighteousness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things**

**are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.”**

David in the first half of Psalm 32 shows us as believers how can sin effect us emotionally. **Psalm 32:1-5, “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile. When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.”** David in Psalm 38 takes this description of the effects of sin in his mind a bit further. **Psalm 38:1-8, “O LORD, rebuke me not in thy wrath: neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure. For thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore. There is no soundness in my flesh because of my sin. For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me. My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness. I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long. For my loins are filled with a loathsome disease: and there is no soundness in my flesh. I am feeble and sore broken: I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart.”** These are pretty intense emotions David was feeling. Paul in Ephesians 4 describes what happens in their minds, **Ephesians 4:17-19, “This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.”** But Paul shows what believers, Christians are to do, pointing us toward renewal of our minds, **verses 20-32, “But ye have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: that ye put off concerning the former conversation [conduct, lifestyle] the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created**

**in righteousness and true holiness. Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice. And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."**

*Sin Leads To Hurt, For Ourselves Or Somebody Else.  
It's Not Always Your Fault*

Read 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 24, David's numbering of Israel caused the death of 70,000 Israelites, imagine the pain and sorrow within those families. It wasn't their fault. In 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 12, David's sin of adultery with Bathsheba and murder of her husband Uriah to cover it up, caused immense pain and sorrow within David's family, and brought on a near civil war, as Absalom attempted to overthrow David as king of Israel. The people caught up in the consequences of David's sin suffered, in spite of it not being their fault. Sin of others, or just the general sin within society can cause brokenness and dysfunctionality in people and families, they're caught up in the consequences, even though it may not be their fault. One of my adoptive daughters remarked to me over lunch one day that the whole world is broken, there's not a family out there that isn't dysfunctional in one way or another. It all started in Genesis 3, and humanity suffers from Adam and Eve's sin, which gave Satan defacto control of the world and human society on this planet. Righteous Abel did nothing wrong, but Cain made a bad choice, and Abel suffered. It is also possible to wound someone else's conscience. **1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 8:12, "But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ."** This statement

by Paul was made in context with 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 8:1-13. Be careful not to do this.

**2. God the Father and Jesus Christ Show A Special Love For Those Who Are Broken:** Let's look at the example of Jesus in John chapter 11, at Lazarus' death. **John 11:28-35, "And when she had so said, she went her way and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee. As soon as she heard *that*, she arose quickly, and came unto him. Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him. The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there. Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brothers had not died. When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, and said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept."** Jesus groaned and felt for her emotional pain. He was crying for Mary and Martha. This shows how he reacted to the emotional pain they were feeling. God knows we're broken and loves us anyway. He loves us in our brokenness.

***Jesus Spent Most Of His time With The Outcasts Of Society***

**Luke 4:16-22, "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, and to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." (verse 16-19)** [Comment: Many that are in the category of being bruised are battered women, held in captivity via the Stockholm Syndrome to the

abuser, usually an abusing husband or mate. So this verse reflects a reality of understanding within the Scripture that goes far deeper than most realize. God understands and is reaching out in genuine love to those in this category of being broken. I personally know people in this category, they're in my adoptive family. Jesus and God the Father love them deeply. These are the people, the category of people God wants us fishing for as "fisher's of men and women." Now let's continue the verses.] **"And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?"** (verses 20-22) Jesus quoted as far as Isaiah 61:1-2. His mission on earth was to heal, but not everything, **Isaiah 61:1-3, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified."** This is what is coming in the future as well as for now in our lives. The Body of Christ, we in the Churches of God, should be reaching out as Jesus did to the lost, broken and hurting in this world, those in the category of Luke 4:18. That's the fishing-ground he designated for the Church to fish in as "fisher's of men" (see <http://www.unityinchrist.com/wwcofg/wearesalt.htm>). Talking of Jesus at his 1<sup>st</sup> coming, **Isaiah 53:4-5**, prophesied, **"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. 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 for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with**

**his stripes we are healed.”** God provides comfort and healing for our brokenness.

**3. Are We Being Vulnerable With God?** We need closeness and vulnerability between us and God. Lay out your hurts and sins before God, and ask him for healing. **Psalm 32:1-5, “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile. When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah. I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.”** This is part 1 of this Psalm. How are we to be vulnerable to God? This Psalm was penned after the Bathsheba incident, when David became vulnerable with God, accepting of his correction and guidance. **Psalm 32:6-11, “For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him. Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah.”** (verses 6-7) **“I will instruct thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with a bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee. Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about. Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.”** (verses 8-11) verses 8-11 is God speaking to David. David had become vulnerable to God’s instruction again, just as he repeated God’s instruction to him in verses 8-9.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:14-18, “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh,**

yet not henceforth know we *him* no more. Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation...”

Ephesians 4:17-24, “This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.” (verses 17-19) Verses 17-19 is written about those in the world. The second half of these verses is instruction for us, from **verses 20-24**, “**But ye have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: that ye put off concerning the former conversation [conduct, lifestyle] the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.**”

**1<sup>st</sup> Peter 5:6-7**, “**Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.**” Cast your cares upon him, he’ll react to your brokenness. God is making us clean but not perfect. We look forward to the perfect heart he’ll place within us in the resurrection to immortality. **1<sup>st</sup> John 3:1-2**, “**Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now we are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.**” This is what we’re looking for. [This text is based on the notes taken from a sermon given by Matt Bates in the Worcester congregation of the United Church of God, meeting in the First Congregational Church, 116 Pleasant Street, Worcester, Massachusetts (see <http://www.ucg.org/congregation/worcester-ma> for more information)]

related links:

To see where Jesus said our fishing grounds are to be located at, see:

<http://www.unityinchrist.com/wwcofg/wearesalt.htm>

and,

<http://www.unityinchrist.com/wwcofg/Questions.htm>

recommended reading:

***“Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption”*** by Laura Hillenbrand