

## Sermon: Living Like Jesus in a Broken World

Text: 2 Corinthians 4

### Discussion Questions:

There are two key components in this sermon—and study guide. The first is living like Jesus—which we will explore soon. The second is the fact that we live in a broken world—which I think we would all agree is true.

It helps, though, to clarify what we mean when thinking about what it means for our world to be broken. Looking at the definition, if something to be broken means that it is:

***“Fractured or damaged and no longer in one piece or in working order.”***

Take some time to talk/think about how this is true for our world.

- What are some things that are causing fractures, or divisions, in our world?
- Is this a new problem? From what you know about world history, has there ever been a time when the world was “in one piece and working order”?
- The “Time Person of the Year” for 2019 was a 16-year-old girl named Greta Thunberg. What brought this about? What is it about her—or her message—that led to her receiving this distinction? How does she view the brokenness of earth?

One of President John F. Kennedy’s famous quotes is:

*“The Chinese use two brush strokes to write the word ‘crisis.’ One brush stroke stands for danger; the other for opportunity. In a crisis, be aware of the danger—but recognize the opportunity.”*

- What do you think he meant by this? How is it that “crisis is opportunity”?
- How might this be true for us—today—living in what we would agree is a “broken world”?
  - Think about your own life. When you were experiencing a time of brokenness or crisis, were you more open to the work of God in your life?
  - Have there been times or situations when you have been able to minister the love of God to someone who was going through a time of crisis or brokenness? What did that look like?
  - Talk about your own conversion to Christ. Were you experiencing a time of crisis that led you to open your heart to God?

### Examination:

- Read **2 Corinthians 4:1-6:**
  - Paul begins this chapter by declaring that he won’t “lose heart.” That’s a powerful statement—and something we do well to pay attention to. The only reason Paul would say this is because losing heart was a very real possibility for him. He wouldn’t say “I won’t lose heart!” if this wasn’t something he was making sure didn’t happen.
    - Are you ever in danger of losing heart?
    - What causes you to lose heart?
    - In our “broken world”—how do many people cope with their struggles?

- In verses 3 & 4, Paul gets to the root of our world’s brokenness. It hasn’t happened by accident, nor is it random. There is an underlying CAUSE behind the brokenness of this world. What is that cause?
- In verse 6, Paul takes us all the way back to the day of creation—when God spoke and created light in the darkness. Here, though, the darkness Paul describes is in our hearts, and the light that God creates is our hearts being awakened to the glory of Jesus Christ! This “creation” of light isn’t a one-time event. It happens every day in the life of a believer. What are ways that God continually creates light in our dark hearts, opening our eyes to the glory of Jesus?
- **Read 2 Corinthians 4:7-15**
  - In verse 7, Paul refers to a “treasure.” This treasure is what Paul just talked about in verse 6—which is the creation of light and life in our dark and dead hearts when we look to Jesus. It’s nothing short of a miracle—when we take our eyes off of whatever worldly thing we are consumed by, and fix our eyes on the glory of Jesus! Think for a moment about whatever temptation you find yourself giving in to on a regular basis. How difficult is it, in the midst of that temptation, to take your eyes off of that sin—and allow yourself to be captured by the glory of God in the face of Christ? Where does the “power” to do this come from?
  - According to verses 8-10, is there ever a time when we find ourselves in a situation that is so dark—that God can’t break through? In other words—are we ever hopeless?
  - Verse 10 describes the resurrection of Jesus. How does His resurrection “happen” in our lives—or how is His life revealed in our body? (see v. 11)
  - What role does faith play in our ability to experience this miraculous creation of life—and light—in our lives? (vv. 13-14)
  - According to verse 15, is the Kingdom of Life and Light expanding or shrinking? What two things does Paul describe as happening as the Kingdom of God expands—as more and more people are reached?
- **Read 2 Corinthians 4:16-18:**
  - Paul returns in verse 16 to where he began up in verse 1. What theme does he return to?
  - What does Paul say about our physical bodies in verse 16?
  - How are we to view the various trials and troubles that we experience in this broken world?
  - How long will we experience the glories that are in store for every child of God?
  - Talk about ways that you have found helpful in keeping your eyes fixed upon Jesus—as opposed to continually focusing on the difficulties of this life?

### **Application:**

All of this is much easier said than done. The fact of the matter is that however often we hear sermons that remind us to not worry—and to keep our trust and hope in Christ—we nearly always go back to our old patterns of sin, worry, shame, guilt, etc. The application as we enter a new year is to “Fall Forward.” This means that we don’t merely accept our sinful patterns as simply “who we are.” Rather, our sin breaks our hearts. And we confess and repent. And we invite Christ to impart His resurrection power to us IN THE MIDST of our temptations and struggle.