**Turn The Page – Week 7 – From Ruined To Restored**

**Introduction: Kids ruin stuff!**

How many of you have at least one kid in your life? Might be your own kid. Might be a niece or nephew. Might be a grandkid. Might be a neighbor kid. How many of you have a kid in your life? (raise your hand) Ok, I think we can all agree that little kids are cute. (pic of very cute kids) So cute!

So cute, yes – but also soooo dangerous! These cute miniatures people are brilliant at ruining stuff! Here are just a few real life examples of how kids ruin stuff… (<https://www.babble.com/kid/stuff-kids-have-ruined/> <https://www.facebook.com/ShitMyKidsRuined> <https://www.parenting.com/gallery/shit-my-kids-ruined?page=10>)



Family room couch – ruined by kids!



Ford minivan – ruined by kids!



Christmas card pictures – ruined by kids!



Pet cat - ruined! I think I’m ok with that one!

My wife would say this about our kids, “God made’m cute, so we don’t kill’em!” And they are cute! But they are also brilliant at ruining stuff! And what stinks about ruined stuff is now that we are the adults; we are the one’s who have to repair it and fix it!

* We have go buy new stuffing and repair the couch pillows.
* We have to see if we can get the permanent red marker off the mini-van.
* We have to hang in there and bribe the kids with a trip to Chucky Cheese to get them to smile for the Christmas card pic.
* And the cat – we just leave cat as it is!

**“Turn The Page” - Prophets**

Hold onto this idea of kids ruining stuff because I think it will actually help us as we continue to “Turn The Page” through the Bible. The next big section of scripture is known as “the prophets.” Now, when I refer to the prophets, you might be thinking, “What prophets? I only know this Profit!” Not the prophets that I’m talking about. I’m talking about people in the Old Testament who have names like Too many names. Find some humor in here. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel. Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.  Maybe you are thinking, “I know nothing about any of those people!”

Here is a dirty little secret about the prophets in the Bible – most people don’t know anything about them either! The prophets are probably the least read, the least understood, and least often taught section of the Bible. And the reason for that is that we can read the words of the prophets, but understanding them is something entirely different. It kind of reminds me of reading an algebra problem. I see numbers and I see the symbols and I can read the equation -- but it might as well be in a different language! I have no idea what it all means or how to solve it!

And here is a personal confession: many pastors will avoid the prophets too! Why? Cause they are hard to read, hard to understand and hard to teach. So, if you are thinking, “I know nothing about the prophets;” It’s ok, I understand!

Now, given how challenging it is to understand the prophets, it’s helpful when approaching this part of the Bible to not get stuck in the trees, but instead keep the forest in mind. So, let me explain. A prophet is a person who acted as a representative of God who would enter into history – to announce that things of God are ruined – they are not the way God intended. And the prophets would boldly remind God’s children that he made the world perfect; they ruined it and one day he was going to restore the world back to the way he always intended for it to be. There are a ton of details in the prophets, but like I said, we can summarize the basic message of the prophets in three phrases:

* God made it!
* You ruined it!
* God will restore it!

And to help this stick in your head and your heart, say it after me:

* “God made it!” (God made it!)
* “You ruined it!” (You ruined it!)
* “God will restore it!” (God will restore it!)

Let me briefly break down these three phrases. Cause you understand these three phrases you will be able to understand the major themes of prophets in the Old Testament as we continue to turn the pages of the Bible.

**Screen God made it**

God made it! The prophets came to remind people that in the beginning God created everything. He created our world and all that lives in it – and it was perfect! The world worked perfectly and every relationship worked perfectly. And after God was finished with creation it says, “God saw all that he made and it was very good.” (Genesis 1:31) That’s how God made it!

**Screen You ruined it!**

You ruined it! The prophets were not afraid to tell it the way it is. What distinguishes them is that they are truth-tellers! They would warn the people about what they had done and remind them of God’s coming judgment against their sin. In so many words they would say, “God made it. You ruined it!”

**Screen God will restore it!**

God will restore it! The prophets would not leave people without hope. After telling them the truth, they would encourage people with the reminder that God would one day restore this world back to the way he dreamed it would be! He will restore it!

So keep those three phrases (God made it. You ruined it. God will restore it) in mind as we take a look at one of the most important passages from the prophet Isaiah.

**Word: Isaiah 61:1-4**

To set the scene for this passage in Isaiah 61, remember after the reigns of Saul, David, and Solomon the kingdom of Israel was split in two. The Northern Kingdom was called “Israel” and the Southern Kingdom was “Judah.” Both kingdoms would fall to foreign conquerors, first Israel and then Judah. Isaiah lived in Judah both before and during its destruction. So he’s writing to people who are watching their world fall apart; driven from their cities that have been decimated.

“The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners,to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise  
instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor. They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations.” Isaiah 61:1-4 (NIV)

The prophet Isaiah looks at all that is going on and says, “You are God’s children; chosen and set apart for a special relationship. That is how God made you! But you’ve ruined it by rebelling and failing to follow God’s commands. So now you are poor, both spiritually and economically; you are facing adverse circumstances, but are helpless and at the mercy of a powerful enemy. You are prisoners about to be carried off into exile in a foreign land.” In the prophet Isaiah’s words you can hear the echo of “God made it! You ruined it!” And yet, Isaiah steps into the circumstances and speaks of one who will bring good news to the poor, freedom for the captives, and release for the prisoners. He leaves them with a picture of hope. He’s proclaiming, “God will restore it!”

**Jesus, the Fulfillment of Prophecy**

If you fast forward hundreds of years from Isaiah’s time Jesus walks into the synagogue. It’s the regular not this word church meeting that they have every Sabbath. Someone hands Jesus the scroll for him to read. The scroll contains the prophetic words of Isaiah. He opens the scroll and looks for a specific passage from the prophet; once he finds it, he then looks at the people gathered in the synagogue and he begins to read these words:

Somewhere in here, mention that this is the same passage…

“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, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” (Luke 4:18-21 NIV)

When the prophet Isaiah said one was coming that would rebuild, renew and restore – he was talking about Jesus! And so Jesus intentionally read from the prophet Isaiah and then prophetically declare that, “God made it. You ruined it. And today I have come today to rebuild, renew and restore it!”

Verses on screen?

* The prophet Isaiah had said one would come born of a virgin, who we will call Immanuel, meaning God with us! (Isaiah 7:14) Now Jesus was here!
* The prophet Isaiah had said one was coming who would do miracles. (Isaiah 35:5,6) Now Jesus was here!
* The prophet Isaiah had said one was coming who would pour out his Spirit on others. (Isaiah 44:3) Now Jesus was here!
* The prophet Isaiah had said that one was coming who would draw people from every nation to him. (Isaiah 11:10) Now Jesus was here!
* And the prophet of Isaiah said someone is coming who would renew, rebuild and restore all that was ruined. And Jesus declared, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” I am here!

There is a lot in this world that is ruined. And God didn’t ruin it. We did! And Jesus came all the way from Heaven to restore this world back to the way that God meant for it to be! Just think about all that is ruined in our world today:

Relational ruins…

* If I asked for a show of hands of the people who know someone close to them (family, friends or you personally) who have gone through or are going through a divorce – every hand in this room would be raised! And if I asked how many of us have families that feel cold and distant when God meant for them to be place of warmth and grace – far too many hands would be raised again. We are living in a time of great relational ruins!

Physical ruins…

* We are also living in a time of physical ruins where addictions are epidemic. I can just say personally, I don’t ever again want to do a funeral for a young person who died of opioid-related addiction. Never! But last year the number of opioid-related deaths in DuPage County almost doubled compared to what it was 3 years ago. Every headline is a reminder to me that a part of our world is ruined! (<http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/naperville-sun/crime/ct-nvs-dupage-county-opioid-2017-statistics-st-0126-20180125-story.html>)

Emotional ruins…

* Anxiety and tension seem to be rampant. 1 in every 5 adults in the U.S. today experience some symptoms of mential illness. (<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/2017/05/03/mental-health-month-united-states-stats-on-mental-illness/101238906/>) We are living in a time of emotional ruins.

Vocational ruins… Change focus of this… unemployed or underemployed. Or **Finaincial ruins.**

* While unemployment is down, the average person is not finding fulfillment in the workplace. Surveys tell us that more and more people are just punching the clock either literally or metaphorically because they are not whole-heartedly engaged in their work. (<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/why-so-many-americans-hate-their-jobs/>) Our work lives are in ruins!

Spiritual ruins…

* A greater total number and percentage of people in the U.S. will not be in church this weekend than ever before in our lifetime! So many of our friends and family are living out each day in spiritual ruins!

And in the middle of a broken and ruined world Jesus comes and says, “I have come to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” You see it’s still true that God made it. It’s still true that we ruin it. Yet it is now true that God **is** restoring it. Let me restore you – relationally, physically, emotionally, vocationally and spiritually. I have come to restore God’s dream!”

**Erin Story Make sure we have permission**

Ok, so how does Jesus bring restoration? Let me explain with a story. The other day I only had a few minutes at noon for a meal so I ran over to Buffalo Wild Wings to get a quick lunch. When I sat down the server stopped by my table, took my drink order and then said, “Hey aren’t you Dave Ferguson?” I said, “Yes I am.” A big smile came across her face and she said, “I go to your church.” Then she added, “I absolutely love it. And ever since I started going my lfe has been changed…for the better!” she interoduced herself to me as Erin. And I told her, “Erin, I just love it when I hear about how our church is making a difference, thanks!”

A couple minutes later after she brought me a diet Coke, then she paused at my table and asked, “You got a minute for a story?” I said, “Sure!” So Erin, who is about 25 started telling me her story. She said, “I grew up occassionally going to the church that my parents went to. It was very traditional and didn’t connect with me, so by the time I was in high school I quit going altogether. But over the last few years I started drinking…and drinking too much…drinking so much that I felt my life slipping out of control.” She didn’t say it this way, but she would agree that her life was in ruins and needed to be restored!

Erin went on to explain, “So, at the inviation of a friend I stated coming to COMMUNITY. And I loved it. Every part of it! Each week I would sit in theose chairs and pray, ‘God, you got to help me get control of this drinking problem; you got to help me God!’ Then one Sunday, while I was praying, ‘God, you got to help me!’ I heard an inner voice say to me, ‘You need to go find Dave.’ It sounds strange, but it was just clear as I’m talking, ‘You need to go find Dave.’” Erin told me, “Now I know you were the Lead Pastor, but I didn’t really know you and had never met you so, I didn’t think it meant you. But before I Ieft church that Sunday I went and found my friend Leanna who was on the prayer team and told her that I wanted her to pray for me and that I needed to stop drinking. I was bad. Leanna prayed and after she finished praying she said, ‘Hey I want you to meet someone.’ I said, ‘Who?’ And she said, ‘Dave. I want you to meet Dave who leads our 12-step group here.’ In that moment I knew God was doing something big. I met Dave. I got in his 12-step group. I’ve been sober ever since!” With tears in her eyes she said, “Thank you so much for COMMUNITY.” Find out if she got baptized. Then she told me she also has plans to get baptized very soon!

~~Think about my new friend, Erin…~~

* ~~God made her life!~~
* ~~She ruined her life.~~
* ~~Now God in Jesus is restoring her life!~~

The same Jesus who came to bring restoration to God’s people back in the first century is the same Jesus who brought restoration to Erin today and is the same Jesus that can bring restoration to any part of your life that is ruined!

* You got relationships that are ruined – Jesus can restore it.
* You feeling like your body is betraying you an physically you feel ruined – he can restore it.
* Never want to go to work again because it brings you no fulfillment – Jesus can restore it.
* Feeling far from God, but now sure how to find him – Jesus can restore that relationship!

**Jesus Invites Us To Join Him In His Work Of Restoration**

And here is something very exciting… Jesus invites us to be a part of his mission to restore all things back to how meant them to be! In John 20:21 he says, “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” He wants to use you and me by sending us out those doors in to a world that is relationally, physically, emotionally, vocationally and spiritually ruined – and bring restoration!

**Gift Mart Challenge**

Now there are a lot of ways we can join Jesus in this work. And I am praying that as I’m talking that some of those ideas are coming to mind. But there is one very practical way we can all come together as a community to help restore some of the ruined stuff of this time of year. With Christmas season right around the corner, I want to challenge each of you to get involved and support our Gift Mart. If you are not familiar with the amazing Gift Mart we do every year, this video will explain more…

**(Gift Mart video) Is there a video?**

Today is the first toy collection week for our GiftMart. For those of you who brought a gift today, I just want to say thank you for your generosity. Every single gift gets us closer to the 11,000 gift goal we need to fully stock the GiftMart shelves. If you forgot your donation at home, not to worry, we'll be collecting toys again next weekend. But, if your'e more like me and haven't found the time to pick up any Christmas gifts yet, we wanted to make participating this year as easy as possible so... we've set up a Giftmart wish list on Amazon. Just take out your cell phone and text Giftmart to XXXX (use the text in church app). Go ahead... you can do it right now. In just a few seconds, you'll receive a text with the amazon registry link. There's plenty of toys to choose from, everything from lego sets to baby dolls, barbies to matchbox cars. The only hitch is this. If you want Amazon to deliver your donation, you need to complete your purchase today so the toys will arrive in time. Here's the link: <https://www.amazon.com/registry/wishlist/IXZZALS2GI4P/ref=cm_sw_r_sms_awwl_xs_5dYOBb65S5X5E-->

**Conclusion**

I love it in Luke 4:19 when Jesus says,“I have come to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” Because jesus knows that restoration for all the ruins things is now coming!

And a followers of Jesus I think we should make that our proclmation too. When someone comes into our community whose life is in ruins ~~like Erin~~, we should proclaim, “We have come to proclaim on you the favor of the Lord.” Because we know restoration is coming!

When we find out some people are going without this Chirstmas and it could ruin their holidays - we should proclaim, “We are here to offer you the favor of the Lord!” Because we are coming to bring restoration!

Let’s all leave this place knowing that Jesus is offering us God’s favor and the restoration of all ruined things. And as Christ followers we are to offer God’s favor and help in his making sure all things ruined are restored.

**Communion Idea**

What always precedes restoration is impartation. Before there is restoration of ruined things; there is the impartation of God’s Spirit.

In Isaiah 61:1, before proclaiming any hope of restoration for a ruined world, he says, “The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me…” And very similar in Luke 4:18 before announce the favor of the lord and how he has come to restore all things, Jesus says, “The Spirit of the Lord is on me…”

Each of you come today with ruined parts of our life. Parts that are not as good as they once were or parts that are not good and never were. They are ruined. And what you need is restoration.

What always precedes restoration is impartation. Ask the Spirit of the Lord to come to life inside you.

* The bread is a reminder of the body of Christ; as you eat that bread and take it in physically, ask the Spirit of the Lord to enter inside you heart and mind spiritually.
* The cup is a reminder of the blood of Christ; as you drink that cup and take it in physically, ask the Spirit of the Lord to enter inside you heart and mind spiritually.

Let’s pray…