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

**Message Big Idea**: “Turn the Page” by helping to restore God’s dream for the world.

**Scripture**: Isaiah 61, Luke 4:16-21

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**Introduction: Kids Ruin Stuff!**

*(Series Graphic)* How many of you have at least one kid in your life? Might be your own kid. Might be a niece or nephew. Maybe a grandkid? Maybe a neighbor kid? *(raise your hand)*

*(Kids)* I think we can all agree that little kids are cute. So cute!

So cute, yes – but also soooo dangerous! These cute miniature people are brilliant at ruining stuff! Here are just a few real life examples of how kids ruin stuff…[[1]](#endnote-1)

Family room couch – ruined by kids!



Ford minivan – ruined by kids!



Christmas card pictures – ruined by kids!



Pet cat - ruined! Although, 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 ones who have to repair and fix it! Except for the cat – we’ll just leave the cat as is.

**“Turn The Page” – The Prophets**

*(Series Graphic)* Hold onto this idea of ruining stuff because I think it will actually help as we turn the page to the next big section of the Bible. We are in week 7 of our “Turn the Page” journey through Bible and today we’re coming to a section of the Scriptures known as *(Graphic)* “The Prophets.”

The prophets were people in the Old Testament who had names like Jeremiah, Obadiah, Micah, Nahum, and Zephaniah. Maybe you’re thinking to yourself, “I know nothing about any of those people!” Here is a little secret about the prophets – *most* people don’t know much of anything about them! The prophets are probably the least read, least understood, and least taught books of the Bible. And here is a personal confession: many pastors avoid the prophets, too! Why? Well, because the prophets *are* hard to read, hard to understand, and hard to teach.

It kind of reminds me of 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!

So, if you’re 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. Instead, let’s keep the forest in mind. Let me explain.

A prophet is a person who acted as a representative of God. The prophet would speak to a group of people, most often the people of God, at a particular point in their history when they were far from who God created them to be. There are a ton of details in the prophets, but we can summarize the basic message of the prophets in these three phrases:

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

First, **God made it!** The prophets came to remind people that in the beginning God created everything. He created our world and all who live in it – and it was perfect! The world worked perfectly and every relationship worked perfectly. And when God was finished with creation, he declared that it was very good. That’s how God made it!

But, the prophets were not afraid to remind people, **You ruined it!** The prophets were truth-tellers! They would warn the people about their disobedience and remind people of God’s coming judgment against sin. In so many words they would say, “God made it, and you ruined it!”

But the prophets didn’t leave people without hope. After telling them the truth, they would encourage people with the promise that **God will restore it!** One day this world will be restored back to the way he dreamed it would be!

To help this stick in your head and your heart, say this after me:

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

So keep those three phrases 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, remember after the reigns of Saul, David, and Solomon, *(map)* the kingdom of Israel was split in two. The Northern Kingdom was called “Israel” and the Southern Kingdom was “Judah.” Both kingdoms would eventually fall to foreign conquerors. And the prophet Isaiah lived in Judah before and during its destruction.

Through much of the book of Isaiah, Isaiah warns the people of Judah saying, “You are the people of God; chosen and set apart for a special relationship with him. That is how God made you! But you’ve ruined it! You’ve rebelled and refused to follow God’s commands.”

And now, the people of Judah are watching their world fall apart. They are being driven from their homes, they are watching their beloved city, Jerusalem, destroyed, and those who survive are about to be carried off into exile in Babylon.

“God made it, and you ruined it!” Isaiah declares. And yet, even though a difficult road lay ahead of them, Isaiah does not leave them without hope. As we turn the page to Isaiah 61, he pens these powerful words:

**“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**

“God will restore it!” Isaiah declares. In the middle of all the destruction, there is still hope.

And it’s this hope the prophets pointed to that makes their message not only important to their own day, but to our day as well. You see, even though the prophets were speaking to a group people at a particular time, their words were pointing to a greater reality that would be for all times.

**Jesus, the Fulfillment of Prophecy**

If we fast forward hundreds of years and turn the pages from Isaiah to the book of Luke in the New Testament, Jesus walks into a synogogue in his hometown of Nazareth. Someone hands Jesus a scroll, and it happens to be the scroll containing the prophetic words of Isaiah. He opens the scroll, searches for a specific passage, and then begins to read these words aloud to the people gathered:

**“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.” –Luke 4:18-19**

Do you recognize those words? Jesus is reading from the passage we just read in Isaiah 61. And…

**“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 4:20-21**

When the prophet Isaiah said one was coming who would rebuild, renew, and restore – he was talking about Jesus!

* *(Isaiah 7:14)* The prophet Isaiah said one was coming who would be born of a virgin, who would be called Immanuel, meaning God with us! Now Jesus was here!
* *(Isaiah 35:5)* The prophet Isaiah said one was coming who would do miracles. The blind would see! The deaf would hear! Now Jesus was here!
* *(Isaiah 11:10)* The prophet Isaiah said one was coming who would draw people from every nation to himself. Now Jesus was here!

*(Luke 4:18-21)* And the prophet Isaiah said one was coming who would renew, rebuild, and restore all that was ruined. And Jesus declared, *(highlight)* **“Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”** I am here!

**Our Ruins**

There is a lot in this world that is ruined. And God didn’t ruin it. We did! 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!

*(add)***Physical Ruins**

* We are also living in a time of physical ruins where addictions are epidemic. I can say personally, I never want to do another 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.[[2]](#endnote-2) Every headline is a reminder to me that a part of our world is ruined!

*(add)***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.[[3]](#endnote-3) We are living in a time of emotional ruins.

*(add)***Financial Ruins**

* The vast majority of Americans are in debt. We are held captive by it. In fact, the average American dies with $62,000 in debt.[[4]](#endnote-4) Our financial lives are in ruins!

*(add)***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!

*(Luke 4:18-19)* And, yet, it is into the middle of this broken and ruined world that 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 also true that God **is** restoring it. Jesus wants to restore us – relationally, physically, emotionally, financially, and spiritually. Jesus has come to restore God’s dream!

**Erin Story**

Ok, so how does Jesus bring restoration? Let me explain with a story. The other day I (Dave F) only had a few minutes for lunch so I ran over to Buffalo Wild Wings. 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. Her name is Erin 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! 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 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, 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.’”

“Now I know you are the Lead Pastor,” Erin told me, “but 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 because I needed to stop drinking. Leanna prayed, and after she prayed 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.’ In that moment, I knew God was doing something big. I met Dave. I got in his 12-step group, and I’ve been sober ever since!” With tears in her eyes Erin said, “Thank you so much for COMMUNITY.”

The same Jesus who came to bring restoration to the people of God back in the first century is the same Jesus who is bringing restoration to Erin today. And he is the same Jesus who can bring restoration to…

* Your relationships.
* Your physical or emotional health.
* Your finances.
* Your relationship with God.

Any part of your life that is ruined, Jesus can restore!

**Gift Mart Challenge**

And here is something very exciting… Jesus invites us to be a part of his mission to restore all things back to how he meant them to be! In John 20:21, Jesus says:

**“As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” –John 20:21**

He wants to use us by sending us out those doors to a world that is relationally, physically, emotionally, financially, and spiritually ruined. He wants us to join him in bringing restoration!

Now there are a lot of ways we can join Jesus in this work. 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 every one of us to get involved and support our Community 4:12 Giftmart. If you’re not familiar with the amazing Giftmart we do every year, this will help explain:

**Video: Giftmart Story**

*(Giftmart Slide)* Today is the first toy collection week for our Giftmart. For those of you who brought a gift, I just want to say thank you for your generosity. Every single gift gets us closer to the 11,000 gift goal 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 you’re 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.

We've actually set up a [Giftmart wish list](https://www.amazon.com/registry/wishlist/IXZZALS2GI4P/ref=cm_sw_r_sms_awwl_xs_5dYOBb65S5X5E--) on Amazon. Just take out your cell phone and text **Giftmart** to 313131. Go ahead... you can do it right now. In just a few seconds, you'll receive a text back with the link to 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.

**Conclusion**

I love in *(Just this phrase)* Luke 4:19 when Jesus says, **“I have come to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” –Luke 4:19** because Jesus knows that restoration of all the ruins is now coming!

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

If we find out someone is going without this Christmas 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 offers us God’s favor and the restoration of all ruined things. And as Christ followers we are to offer God’s favor and join him in his making sure all things ruined are restored.

**Overview Video: The Prophets** (Recommended post-message)

**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, Isaiah 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 us comes today with ruined parts of our lives. Parts that are not as good as they once were or parts that are not good and never were. They are ruined. What we 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 invite the Spirit to come to life inside of us as we receive the Communion.

1. <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> [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. <http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/naperville-sun/crime/ct-nvs-dupage-county-opioid-2017-statistics-st-0126-20180125-story.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/2017/05/03/mental-health-month-united-states-stats-on-mental-illness/101238906/> [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. https://www.cbsnews.com/news/americans-are-dying-with-an-average-of-62k-of-debt/ [↑](#endnote-ref-4)