

Brokenness (Part 1) - The Principle

Charles Stanley

Introduction:

A. The most painful and difficult times of my life were times of brokenness.

1. I didn't like it but after brokenness comes fruitfulness.
2. Most Christians don't understand brokenness and try to avoid it.
3. We like healing and blessing.
4. But God gives his best only to those he breaks.
5. We need to be able to thank God for continuing the process of breaking us even though we don't like it.

B. Stay with these messages to understand more about suffering.

I. The underlying principle behind brokenness is death to self. (John 12:24-25)

A. A grain of seed by itself remains alone.

1. It produces no fruit.
2. If it dies it grows into a stalk and produces much fruit.
3. It reproduces itself and can be sewed into millions of fields.
4. This illustration applied to Jesus;
 - a. As long as he remained alive he remained alone.
 - b. When he died he made it possible for us to experience life.
5. He who loves his life will lose it but he who hates his own ambitions and dreams and goals will find life to the fullest.

B. Several ideas must get into our minds.

1. A great obstacle to the Christian life is thinking that we need to work for God.
2. The Christian life is more about being than working.
3. Fruitfulness is an overflow of a life of being united with Christ.
4. The Christian life is being, becoming, receiving the life of Christ himself.

5. It's not what I do but what I'm becoming by God's grace.

C. What is brokenness?

1. God removes all hindrances that stop us from depending on him alone.

2. If we trust in anything in us we refuse to be broken.

3. We have an inner desire to be independent of Christ.

4. We have a wall around a segment of our lives.

5. We offer 95% of our lives to God but God wants 100%.

6. We want to make some decisions but God wants us submitted to him.

7. There are areas of your life that God does not have control of.

a. We talk to God about it.

b. We rationalize about it saying that since we can't have victory we're going to relax in this private area.

c. The self life is an independent attitude that God wants to break.

d. I love roaming around out west away from everything and this requires riding horses.

1. Sometimes I have obedient horses.

2. Sometimes I get independent horses that have not been broken well.

3. Sometimes they get me in dangerous situations.

4. A truly broken horse gives instant obedience to the rider on his back.

5. A broken child of God does not lose his zest for living but learns to give instant obedience to God.

6. Often we act like an unbroken horse.

7. If we insist on having our way in spite of what God says we act independently of God.

8. We all have these areas and don't want to surrender.

9. God has targeted this area for brokenness.

10. He is after self-will and self-dependency.

11. God wants us to live in full dependence on him.

12. God has already surfaced this area of self-will to you.
13. This area that you have not submitted is hindering God's work in you.
14. We fear that if we surrender that God will not meet our needs.
15. Would God withhold good from you and stop you from reaching your potential?
16. God knows these areas of independence must be broken.
17. We admit that God knows best but we still desire independence.
18. Paul called himself a bond-slave of Christ.
19. God has targeted self-reliance.
20. He wants us resting in him and relying on him.
21. Christ in you is the Christian life.

D. He who loses his life will save it. (John 12:25)

1. I can lose the best by holding on to the self life.
2. He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me. (Matthew 10:37)
3. We must be willing to die to the self in me to experience God's best.
4. We must take up our cross and deny self to follow Christ. (Matthew 16: 24)
5. God must sanctify us body, soul, and spirit. (1 Thessalonians 5:23)
 - a. Our bodies relate to the environment by the five senses.
 - b. Our souls (emotions, mind, our conscience etc.) relate to self and others.
 - c. Our spirit is the inner man that relates to almighty God.
 1. Adam and Eve were perfect in body, soul, and spirit.
 2. When they disobeyed they died spiritually and no longer could relate to God.
 3. We also cannot relate to God in our unregenerate spirits.
 4. Only a believer is a whole person, capable of relating to God.
 5. Jesus mended our bodies, souls, and spirits.
 6. We are forgiven by the blood of Jesus.

7. We can relate to God in our spirits.
8. He can speak to us through his word because we've been born again.

6. The unbelieving world doesn't understand Christians.

- a. Unbelievers live by their five senses; appetites for beauty, sex, food, etc.
- b. After the fall man began to live this way.
- c. A spirit filled believer lives in relation with God.
- d. Believers that don't understand this act independently of God's leading.

1. We argue with God.
2. What has God targeted in your life that you are fearful of giving up?
3. What are you afraid of?
4. Are you unwilling to place full trust in God?
5. God says when you surrender to me things will turn out better.

7. The essence of brokenness allows the Holy Spirit to express the life of Christ through our human bodies.

- a. This only happens when we submit completely.
- b. We give instant obedience to the leading of the Holy Spirit.
- c. Only God can provide the best for us.
- d. Brokenness is usually a process.

8. What is breaking?

- a. We like to depend on past experiences or skills or relationships or their looks or position in society.
- b. What ever you place your dependence on God wants to shatter.
- c. God wants no competition.
- d. No one likes this; we like prosperity and healing.
- e. The Bible does not teach this.
- f. Jesus said fruitfulness comes only after death to self.
- g. Grape juice and bread come only after crushing; Christians become fruitful only after breaking.

- h. Brokenness is God's way of dealing with the self life.
- i. Paul said his outer man was decaying yet his inner man was being renewed day by day by momentary light affliction producing eternal blessings. (2 Corinthians 4:16)
- j. The people God has the most difficult time breaking are the most gifted and determined.
- k. They appear to be getting through life but they miss what God could do through them; out of fear of losing the best they lose it.
- l. You can never lose by giving away your life.
- m. God wants instantaneous obedience from us.
- n. We are the temples of the living God and he wants to express his life through us so we are living expressions of the life of Christ.
- o. We are to be trophies of the grace of God to remind the angels of the grace of God.
- p. This life is a school for entering eternity.
- q. We are on the potter's wheel and God reworks us when he sees independence, breaking us again and again until Christ is formed in us.
- r. When we become saddle busted we belong to Christ completely.
- s. We argue with God because we refuse to surrender.
- t. Brokenness is God's method of dealing with independence in our lives.

8. Is God working on you to break you of self-dependency?

- a. Do you want God's best for your life, becoming what God predetermined for you?
- b. Are you willing to surrender all to him so he can make of you what he wants?
- c. Are you willing to submit to breaking?
- d. Either I surrender, letting God have his way and discover what God can do, or I'm going to ignorantly hold on to my little bit and miss God's great blessing?
- e. What am I holding on to that will cause me to miss God's best?
- f. This is foolish.
- g. Nothing is so valuable that you should miss God's best.

h. Revival follows brokenness.

i. Are you willing to say “All to Jesus I surrender, all to Him I freely give?”

j. I’ve been broken, smashed and chiseled on and didn’t like it one bit, but I can look back on it now and thank God for every moment of breaking.

k. One day we’re going to stand before God and realize how foolish it is to hold on to self when God has his best for us.

l. If you will surrender God is willing to give you more than you could ever attain by your self effort.

II. Prayer.

Father, we stand in your presence. Only you know what our potential is. Help us to die to our selfish independent spirits. I pray for a renewed commitment to repent of self. I pray for the unsaved that they would confess their sins and commit their lives to you. I pray in Jesus’ name that many would surrender all to Jesus, giving all to him, living every day in the presence of Christ. Lord God, move into the saddle of our lives today, in Jesus’ name.

Brokenness (Part 2) - The Purpose

Charles Stanley

Introduction:

A. Brokenness is God's way of dealing with the self life.

1. Self needs to become submitted to God for us to be fruitful.
2. We can't be controlled by self and obey God effectively.
3. Our mind, emotions, and body must come into submission to God.

B. This is the second message in the series on brokenness.

1. Why does God break us?
2. There are two reasons.

I. God breaks us to bring us to spiritual maturity. (Exodus 2:11-15 and 3:1-4)

A. Maturity involves three things.

1. Change; we cannot hold on to old ideas about God and grow in our understanding of him.
2. Growth.
 - a. We must move toward a full understanding of God.
 - b. Our bodies, will, and emotion must pursue God.
3. Brokenness.
 - a. Our bodies, soul, and will must come into submission to God.
 - b. This does not happen easily.

B. Joseph and Moses are examples of one brought to spiritual maturity.

1. Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers.
 - a. He was falsely accused and sent to prison.
 - b. In time he was exalted and vindicated.
 - c. God used Joseph to provide for his family in Egypt during famine.
 - d. After Joseph died a new Pharaoh arose that didn't know Joseph.

2. Moses was born in this time when Israel is enslaved by this new Pharaoh.
 - a. Moses' mother sent Moses into the Nile to escape death.
 - b. As an adult Moses killed an Egyptian that was beating a Hebrew slave.
 - c. Pharaoh discovers Moses' action and attempts to kill him.
 - d. Moses flees to the back side of the desert shepherding sheep.
3. What is God's process of breaking leaders through whom he can work?
 - a. Moses seemed to have all the skills and position needed to accomplish the task of delivering Israel yet he failed in his own strength.
 - b. God worked in Moses' life the same way he works in our lives.
 - c. He prepared Moses by breaking him of everything he depended on except God.
 - d. God breaks us for his purpose.
 1. He wanted to demonstrate his love to Israel.
 2. He wanted to deliver Israel from Egyptian idolatry.
 3. He wanted to call Israel to himself.
4. Moses had already been convinced that Israel needed deliverance.
 - a. Moses set out to deliver in his own way.
 - b. This way is not God's way and is doomed to failure.
 - c. God began the process of preparing Moses by spiritually maturing him.
 1. This is not great power and wealth and prominence.
 2. This is depending only on God.
 - d. God drove Moses out of Egypt where he lost everything.
 - e. God stripped Moses of all he had.
 - f. God changed Moses' work, his home, his attitude, and his focus.
 - h. Moses had to realize his ways are not God's ways.
 - i. All of our reliance on self is a hindrance to doing God's work.
 - j. Moses became a nobody to become a somebody in God's sight.

5. We are not Moses but we do need to undergo the same breaking that he did.
 - a. We are nothing and God is everything.
 - b. God may give you wealth and prominence but we cannot rely on these.
 - c. When we rely on these God targets them.
6. The task Moses was called to do was monumental.
 - a. Self-dependence would only hinder God.
 - b. It took God 40 years because all resentment, anger, and hostility must go.
 - c. Dependence on God alone is not natural for human beings.
 - d. To return to Egypt in anger and self-confidence would be disastrous.
 - e. Only obedience to God can accomplish God's work.
 - f. God does not often fit into our plans and schedules; we must fit into his.
 - g. Tending sheep Moses learned dependence on God alone.
 - h. We like to set goals and go after them in our own strength.
 - i. This will never work in spiritual undertakings.
 - j. We must depend on God alone.
 - k. God has predestined us to be conformed to the likeness of his son.
 - l. A soul is converted in a moment of time but a saint is made over a lifetime.
 - m. God does not want to break your spirit but only your will.
8. The Christian life is ridding ourselves of all that God puts his finger on.

II. A second purpose for brokenness is supernatural ministry.

A. Even homemakers need the supernatural power of God.

1. Moses' mother worked something in to Moses' life he never forgot.
2. Not many of us know her name but she was important.
3. Whatever our purpose in life is we need God's supernatural power.
4. All ministry is supernatural because it is God's work.

- a. A godly business.
 - b. Singing in the choir.
 - c. Preaching the Gospel.
5. Moses' calling was spectacular.
- a. Deliver Israel from Egypt.
 - b. The obstacles were insurmountable.
 - c. When Moses heard God's task he complained that God had the wrong man.
 - d. Going from Egypt across the Red Sea into Sinai into the Promised Land.
 - e. The Law would separate Israel from the surrounding nations.
 - 1. They were not to intermarry.
 - 2. They were not to worship idols.
 - f. Moses' calling would exalt Jehovah above all the other gods.
 - g. Israel would also bring forth the Messiah.
6. God could only accomplish his goals by stripping Moses of all self-confidence.
- a. Moses needed to rely on God the great I am.
 - b. When God calls a person to a task he doesn't give all the details at once.
 - 1. He didn't tell Moses about the ten plagues.
 - 2. He didn't tell him about the parting of the Red Sea.
 - 3. Moses only needed to know that God would be with him.
 - 4. He had only a shepherd's staff and the promise of God.
 - 5. Moses succeeded with God's help.
 - i. Moses didn't deliver Israel.
 - ii. Moses only followed the commands of God.
 - iii. God assumes full responsibility for those who fully obey him.
7. Moses' calling was sacrificial in its demands.
- a. He had to organize a multitude of people.

- b. He had to obey God no matter what.
- c. He had to deal with disobedient people.
- d. Some in the multitude probably never even saw Moses, yet they needed to follow him.
- e. Some even wanted to return to Egypt.
- f. We can weasel out of God's calling and we will either give up or God will set us on the shelf.
- g. Some people would rather be pretty than useful.
- h. We must be willing to be broken in order to succeed in God's calling.
- i. We like God answering our prayers and making things sweet and comfortable but that's not reality.
- j. When the plagues began Moses' faith expanded.
- k. When the Red Sea parted Moses' faith expanded.
- l. God kept them warm in the night and gave them direction in the day.
- m. As Moses walked through the trying circumstances his faith soared.
- n. 2.5 million Hebrews experienced deliverance from slavery as Moses learned dependence on God.
- o. God promises us the same divine power that he promised to Moses.
- p. God will do supernatural things in our lives when we submit to brokenness and learn dependence on God.
- q. Our usefulness to God will be determined by the degree of brokenness in our lives.
- r. Would you like to discover what God has in mind for your life?
- s. It doesn't matter how old we are; Moses was 80 when God called him.
- t. God can use anyone who is broken.
 - 1. He takes the weak and demonstrates his power.
 - 2. What are you holding on to that hinders God from breaking you?
 - 3. What is your area of self-will that hinders God's work in your life?
 - 4. Is it worth missing out on God's work in your life?

5. New vision and power to serve God begins with brokenness.
6. Are you willing to surrender to God's breaking work in your life?
7. Are you willing to say mold me, make me, break me?
8. If we are not willing to surrender why aren't we?
9. Moses learned a great lesson by brokenness.
10. God and God alone can accomplish his work.
11. Rest in God and let him break you.
12. Tell God you want him to break you so the rest of you life

III. Prayer.

Father hover over this fellowship and over all who are listening. It is serious to surrender to you of resist. I pray for those who need to be saved. I pray for those who need to be broken. Help them give up what they're holding on to so that your best can be released in their lives. Let submission and yieldedness prevail. Let God have his way.

Brokenness (Part 3) - The Process

Charles Stanley

Introduction:

A. Brokenness is the process God uses to break the self life so we are dependent on God.

1. He does not work haphazardly but in a methodical way.

2. Brokenness is for our good though it seems to not be good when we experience it.

B. Today we will use the apostle Peter as our example.

I. Peter learned a lesson at Jesus' trial. (Luke 22:54-62)

A. Peter was gifted in many ways.

1. He was named above the other apostles many times.

2. Peter, James, and John were in the inner circle with Jesus.

3. Jesus changed his name to Rock.

4. God chose him for the same reason he chooses anyone, for his own purposes.

5. In preparing Peter for God's work Peter needed to be broken.

B. This message has four points regarding God bringing our body, soul, and spirits into submission to the Holy Spirit.

1. God targets the area in life where we need to be broken.

a. We are vulnerable in our strengths because we let our guard down there.

b. Our weaknesses we guard.

c. This could be a habit or an attitude or relationship.

d. God operates by seeing what is the most valuable to us.

e. He requires us to surrender this because it's a hindrance.

f. We may not know what this area is but God knows.

g. Whatever I am depending on God wants to remove so we depend only on him.

h. What we cherish God removes.

i. This brings us to a place of neutrality.

j. Even now the Holy Spirit has surfaced this area in your life, the thing you keep dealing with, that keeps disrupting the peace in your life.

k. I wish I could ask you questions and have you respond.

l. Can you identify the area in Peter's life that needed to be broken?

1. Peter once walked on water to go to Jesus. (Matthew 14:29)

2. Once Peter rebuked Jesus for talking of his death. (Matthew 16:22)

3. Peter thought he understood forgiveness but needed to be instructed. (Matthew 18:21)

4. Peter needed to be instructed regarding service by Jesus' example of washing the disciples' feet. (John 13:5)

5. Peter vowed to never forsake Jesus yet Jesus predicted his betrayal. (Matthew 26:31)

6. Peter cut off a slave's ear when Jesus was being arrested. (Luke 22:49)

7. Peter was compulsive and prideful and Jesus saw this as a hindrance to his ministry.

m. Is there a hindrance in your life that is just as pronounced as pride was for Peter?

n. What is in your life that must go before you can become the person God wants you to be?

2. God arranges the circumstances in which we need to be broken.

a. Sometimes God arranges these circumstances actively.

b. Sometimes God allows us to dig our own holes.

c. When Peter asked to come to Jesus on the water Jesus could have spared Peter the failure.

d. The rest of the apostles must have seen the pride in Peter.

e. When Jesus spoke of his death Peter rebuked him.

f. If your employer told you that you act like the devil how would you feel?

g. When Peter refused to allow Jesus to wash his feet Jesus said then Peter would have no part in his ministry.

h. When the people accused Peter of knowing the arrested Jesus he denied it and finally realized his pride and fear.

- i. Jesus took advantage of every opportunity to humble Peter.
- j. God had to chisel away at Peter.
- k. Is there something going on in your life that you don't like, and you're wondering what God is up to?
- l. What we hold on to will crumble if we resist God's breaking.
- m. God sets up circumstances until we submit.

3. God chooses the tools with which to break us.

- a. We don't like it but God knows what is best.
- b. These tools are beyond our control.
- c. God's tools are pointed and sharp, painful.
- d. We can't tell God what to use.
- e. God can use his word but he uses others also.
- f. In Peter's life Jesus used words.
 - a. You're acting like the devil.
 - b. You're going to deny me.
- g. I'm not saying God kills people to get someone's attention.
- h. Sometimes God uses tools precious to us to break us.
- i. We cannot be broken privately.
- j. God does not cause kids to rebel but he uses their rebellion.
- k. God doesn't cause businesses to fail but he can use failure to get attention.
- l. God deals with what is precious to us, using a pruning knife on it.
- m. God knows your potential and brokenness is the only way to break us.
- n. God prunes looks, possessions, etc. whatever we love that has seductively become an idol in our lives.
- o. God sometimes uses our enemies to break us.
- p. We wonder why things are happening to us and he knows it is good for us.
- q. Our enemies may be wrong in what they do but they might be right to break us.

4. God controls the pressure to bring brokenness.
 - a. He breaks our stubborn wills, not our spirits.
 - b. My resistance can prolong the process.
 - c. Stubbornness is dangerous.
 - d. Peter didn't want to surrender control when he tried to stop God's plan of redemption, for example.
 - e. We all want to retain control.
 - f. The right attitude is what would Jesus have me do in this situation?
 - g. Money and position is irrelevant.
 - h. When our decision making works along any other line of thought God will target it for brokenness.
 - i. Stubbornness causes more grief.
 - j. Some resist God until God sets them on the shelf.
 - k. God sees our potential when he breaks us.
 - l. Peter was broken when he denied he knew Christ. (Luke 22:49)
 1. Jesus looked at him and Peter remembered the saying of the Lord.
 2. Peter realized his boasting was prideful.
 3. Shame and sorrow took over him.
 4. Jesus took three years to break him.
 5. Peter cried out for forgiveness.
 6. He needed to realize that he couldn't live the Christian life himself.
 7. He failed to support Jesus during his hour of need.
 - m. Peter is the man who wrote of humility later in life. (1 Peter 5:5-6)
 1. Now he is transformed.
 2. Now he was exalted at Pentecost.
 3. Now his strength could be harnessed for use by God.

C. When God wants to drill and skill a man he first breaks him, ruthlessly perfecting those he royally elects in ways only God understands. He bends but never breaks those he uses.

1. God knows what he is about.
2. We don't know but God does.
3. Following humiliation God exalts us at the proper time.

II. Prayer.

Father we praise you for loving us. You've given us truth in the Scriptures. Thank you for not giving up on us. I pray for the non-saved who don't understand the pain in life. Help them understand your desire to break reliance on anything but Jesus. I pray for believers that they would not blame the hand that holds the knife. Help us understand your love. Help us surrender our self-reliance and trust you completely. Root this message into our hearts that we might be able to praise you in the midst of pain. We humble ourselves before you and ask that you exalt us in due time. We pray in Jesus' name.

Brokenness (Part 4) - The Protest

Charles Stanley

Introduction:

- A. There is always a price to pay in rebelling against God.
 - 1. God targets areas in our lives that need to be broken.
 - 2. He arranges the circumstances that bring us to brokenness.
 - 3. He chooses the tools needed to break us.
 - 4. He controls the pressure.
 - 5. He determines the time necessary.
- B. An independent spirit needs to be broken
 - 1. We don't lose our zest for living.
 - 2. We lose our independent spirits.
 - 3. Sometimes we don't like it.
 - 4. We sometimes resent God.

I. Jonah is an example of one who resisted God's breaking. (Jonah 1:1-3)

- A. Jonah heard God's call but ran the other way.
 - 1. We cannot run from God.
 - 2. Running from God is like running from your own heart.
- B. God's call was to preach against Nineveh so that people might be saved.
 - 1. Nineveh was known for beauty and grander, but also for warlike atrocities.
 - 2. Johan knew Israel would be threatened by Nineveh in this time 760 B.C.
 - 3. Jonah's attitude was negative. (Jonah 4:1)
 - a. He feared that God would save Nineveh.
 - b. He wanted to see them punished.
 - c. Therefore he fled to Tarsus, away from the presence of the Lord.
 - 4. Has God required something of you that you are not doing?

C. How did God pursue Jonah?

1. Jonah was angry enough to disobey God.
 - a. He'd rather die than obey God.
 - b. God targeted Jonah's prejudice.
2. Jonah went to sleep on the ship bound for Tarsus.
 - a. God sent a storm on the sea.
 - b. The sailors identified Jonah as the problem by lot.
 - c. Jonah confessed his sin and the men threw him overboard.
 - d. A great fish swallowed Jonah.
 - e. This experience motivated Jonah to obey God.
 - d. Jonah preached in Nineveh and the people repented.
 - e. Jonah refused to rejoice and remained angry with God.
 - f. He knew that God was gracious.
 - g. He desired to die rather than see this revival in Nineveh.
 - h. God provided a plant to shade Jonah and he rejoiced over the plant.
 - i. God sent a worm to attack the plant and it died.
 - j. The sun beat down on Jonah's head and he desired to die.
 - k. He remained stubborn in his desire to die.
3. God calls all people in three ways.
 - a. To believe in Jesus as our savior.
 - b. To sanctification so that sin no longer reigns in our lives.
 - c. To service in the home, the business world, in church, or in missions.
4. How many of us have rebelled against God's call.
 - a. If God calls you to preach the Gospel going into business is not right.
 - b. When God calls we cannot rationalize disobedience.
 - c. We do not have better ways than God has.

- d. Our stubborn wills reveal our need for brokenness.
- e. I've met some people who have had experiences equal to that of Jonah.

D. How do we resist God?

1. We have rebellious spirits.
 - a. Jonah refused to go to Nineveh.
 - b. Once God has spoken on something that settles it.
 - c. God doesn't ask us what we think about his call.
2. We are prideful.
 - a. When we disobey we tell God we have found a better way - we cannot.
3. We fear obeying God.
 - a. Jonah may have had fear that God would save Nineveh.
 - b. He may have feared the reaction of the people of Nineveh.

E. Why do we resist God's breaking process in our lives?

1. God targets the areas.
2. God chooses the tools.
3. God controls the intensity and the time.
4. We have habits, attitudes, and desires that resist God.
5. We think we are free but we will never be free until we surrender to God.
6. Some people are strong with a forceful will and they resist God.
 - a. They have enough self-determination to resist God.
 - b. They can weasel out of God's breaking process in their life.
 - c. They refuse to stop and ask God what he is doing.
 - d. If we draw a circle around an area of life and refuse to obey God it won't work.
 1. Marriage.
 2. Business.
 3. Changing career.

7. Some people fail to see God's pressure in their lives.
 - a. We blame others for our problems.
 - b. We blame circumstances.
 - c. We blame our childhood environments.
 - d. We blame our enemies.
 - e. We don't realize that we are running from God's chastisement that is designed to bring us into God's best for our lives.
8. Some people have an unhealthy self love.
 - a. We want things our way.
 - b. Big "I" is in control.
 - c. God targets the self-will rather than the will of God to bring our wills under his direction.
 - d. There is always a price to pay in resisting God.

F. What is the result of resisting God?

1. God does not give up but keeps increasing the pressure.
2. Jonah never broke but resisted to the point of danger.
 - a. The sailors lost their cargo and nearly died with him on board.
 - b. Jonah went down to Joppa, down to the ship, down in the sea.
 - c. We always go down when we resist God.
 - d. Jonah was separated his family.
 - e. His conscience became guilty and he became estranged from God.
 - f. He lost money in paying the fare for the ship.
 - g. He finally prayed from the belly of the fish, calling out in despair.
 - h. He came to the point of death.
 - i. He remembered the Lord as he was fainting away.
 - j. He made a promise to God to pay what he had vowed.

- k. Imagine his emotional turmoil as he watched Nineveh repent of their sins, which he didn't want to see.
- l. He nearly had sunstroke and wanted to die.
- m. Some of you have rebelled against God, leaving church and making a mess of your lives.
- n. Your emptiness and loneliness and bleak future are a result of rebellion.
- o. Nothing will satisfy the emptiness in your heart until you come into relationship with God through Jesus Christ.
- p. You can't resist God without hurting other people, usually those we love.
- q. Husbands and wives hurt each other when they resist God.
- r. Children hurt parents when they resist God.
- s. People drink to escape the pressure of God's chastisement.

G. Who is hurting because of your resisting God?

- 1. Who is anxious because you're running from God?
 - a. Maybe your small children.
 - b. You think it will work out, but you don't realize the problem will work into your children.
- 2. Who is hurting because of your rebellion?

H. When we resist God we delay his blessing.

- 1. Some will resist until it is eternally too late.
- 2. Some will run until God puts you on the shelf.
- 3. Jonah did what God told him to do finally, but Jonah missed the blessing.
 - a. He could have had a joyous testimony.
 - b. Instead he wanted to die.
- 4. Some of you will go through life doing what God wants but you'll have no joy.
 - a. If you can't surrender all to Jesus you miss out.
 - b. What are you putting value on that leads you to resisting God?
 - c. When you stand in the judgment you will realize our plans are but dust.

d. Wise is the man or woman that surrenders to God's will.

e. Foolish is the man or women who resists God.

II. Prayer.

This is a sacred moment. Your word has penetrated the hearts of each hearer. Give each heart the grace to ask, "What do you want me to do?" Unbelievers need to come to faith. Believers need to submit to Christ's lordship. Thank you for what you're about to do. We thank you in Jesus' name.

Brokenness (Part 5) - The Promise

Charles Stanley

Introduction:

A. Brokenness is God's method of dealing with the self-life that hinders God's purposes.

1. He arranges circumstances.
2. He chooses the tools.
3. He controls the pressure.

B. This is painful because he deals with us on a deep emotional level.

1. He is after what we don't want to give up.
2. He is after control of our lives.

I. The apostle Paul is our example for this message. (2 Corinthians 11-12)

A. Because of the great revelations given to Paul the Lord gave him a thorn in the flesh to keep him from exalting himself.

1. Paul was Saul of Tarsus when he persecuted Christians.
2. God spoke to him on the Damascus road.
3. Paul was strong in his will and personality.
4. When Jesus saved him he had a jewel in the rough and the Lord had to break him.
5. Paul spent time in the desert before beginning to minister. (Galatians 1)
6. He thought he knew God and the Law yet he opposed God.
7. Paul came to know Jesus like no other.
8. Paul was harassed through his whole ministry, beaten and jailed, and shipwrecked often.
9. Judaisers followed him to harass him everywhere he went.
10. Why would Jesus allow Paul to be so harassed in his ministry?
11. Even the other apostles doubted his conversion at first.
12. God had to break Paul in two areas.

a. Paul had to be convinced that he could not live the Christian life in his own strength. (Romans 7:15)

1. He had to surrender his own determination.

2. He had to see his failure to live for Christ.

b. Paul had to be kept from exalting himself. (2 Corinthians 12:7-10)

1. Paul had to learn on rely on Christ in his weakness.

2. In Paul's weakness Christ was strong.

B. Every Christian needs to learn that human strength is incapable of living the Christian life.

1. As Paul cried out in desperation so each Christian needs to cry out.

2. We must depend on nothing but Christ.

C. God has two objectives:

1. To shatter the self-life that we might know Him intimately.

2. That we might serve Him effectively.

II. How does God break a man or women?

A. God only breaks us in love.

1. God did not break Paul because of his sin what was forgiven the day he believed in Christ.

2. God broke Paul so that he could know Christ and serve Christ.

3. Our work needs to be effective and our lives need to be holy.

4. Brokenness is God's discipline in the believer in which he is dealing with attitudes that he must change so that our future service is effective.

a. Chastisement causes immediate change for holiness now.

b. Brokenness has future service in mind.

c. Punishment is not for believers but for unbelievers who reject Christ the sin bearer.

1. Though the outer man is decaying the inner man is producing an eternal weight of glory. (2 Corinthians 4:16-18)

2. When God takes us through a breaking process we should not focus on now but ask what God is up to for future service.

B. God sets limitations on our periods of brokenness.

1. God limits the time.
2. God limits the intensity of the pain and hurt in a believer's experience.
3. God's process of breaking believers ceases when we surrender the will.
4. God will never break the spirit so that a believer loses his or her zest for life.
5. God only breaks the will so that we can surrender to him.
6. God will not damage his purpose for your life.
7. God targets the area, arranges the circumstances and the tools and limits the time necessary to break a believer.
 - a. Paul was beaten with rods.
 - b. Paul was stoned and thrown in jail.
 - c. Paul was shipwrecked at sea.
 - d. Paul was harassed by opponents.
 - e. In all these experiences God limited the intensity.
 - f. In our weakest periods we experience God's strength.

C. God will deepen our understanding in three directions.

1. We get a different perspective on who God is.
 - a. His ways are higher than our ways.
 - b. His thoughts are higher than ours.
 - c. We learn the ways of God.
 - d. We begin to understand God's patience and love for us.
2. We begin to understand ourselves.
 - a. We trace our thought patterns.
 - b. Our parents and teachers and friends formed us in some unhealthy ways.
 - c. We see why we are intense in some areas yet negligent in others.
 - d. We become more intimate with God.

- e. We marvel at the love and patience of God who loves us as we are.
3. We begin to see other people differently.
- a. Our critical spirit fades away.
 - b. We become more compassionate.
 - c. We understand other's faults.
 - d. Instead of being critical we express the love of God.
 - e. We see how upbringing shapes us, and we express compassion toward others.
 - f. The power of sin begins to break in our lives.
 - g. God breaks, shatters, sifts, prunes and we come out better.
4. God never deserts us in our seasons of brokenness.
- a. We might feel abandoned by God but he is still there. (Hebrews 13:5)
 - b. In our minds we hold on to the truth yet in our emotions we feel abandoned.
 - c. All of us are attached to things and people so God removes those props from us so that we depend only on God.
 - d. This scares us and we feel alone and fearful yet God is up to something good.
 - e. When we can't depend on anything except God we must draw near to him.
 - f. God wants us to live in intimacy with him so that everyone else and everything else will take a second place to him.
 - g. Only in this way can these other relationships be healthy.
 - 1. We can't get our needs met in other people.
 - 2. We can only get our needs met in God.
 - 3. We become free to love others in a healthy way.
 - 4. When we have been dependent on others for years and God begins to break us away from others we hurt, wondering what God is up to.
 - 5. A marriage is good only when two people are emotionally free.
 - 6. Are you willing to get free?

5. God is patient with us.

- a. He knows how long we have been thinking wrongly.
- b. He sees the future, however, and keeps putting the pressure on us to surrender.
- c. Paul had to surrender to the thorn in his flesh.
- d. We need to surrender to God's breaking process in our lives.

D. How long will it take for God to break us?

- 1. It depends on how long we have been thinking erroneously.
- 2. It depends on how willing we are to be broken.
- 3. God is willing to wait upon you but God will eventually set you on the shelf if you refuse to submit to his breaking process.
- 4. God put awesome pressure on Paul because the greater the potential the greater the pressure required.
- 5. God will lead you to victory through brokenness if you are willing to submit to his will.
 - a. When we rebel we delay God's blessings.
 - b. There is always a price to pay in resisting God.
 - c. God's brokenness is an expression of love. (Philippians 1:6)
 - d. Paul got his victory in Christ. (Romans 7:24-25)
 - e. Paul became content with weaknesses. (2 Corinthians 12:10)
 - f. Do you want your Christian life to be characterized by intimacy with Christ in love and blessing, with effective service?
 - g. Brokenness is God's way to make this a reality.
 - h. Is your desire to walk with God and to serve him strong enough to pray this prayer:

“Lord more than anything in life I want to know you and be used of you effectively. Therefore, Lord Jesus, would you target the area of sin my life that needs to be broken that oneness and service might be pleasing to you.”
 - i. Whatever God does he only does in love.

After Brokenness (Part 6) - What Then?

Charles Stanley

Introduction:

A. Our greatest enemy is not without, but within.

1. The self-life will hinder our relationship with God.
2. Unless self-life is broken we will not know God well.
 - a. We will be insensitive.
 - b. We will delay God's purpose for us.
 - c. We will be ineffective in ministry.
 - d. Satan will have a foothold in our lives.
 - e. We need to be broken of self independence.
 - f. We need to surrender our lives to God.
 - g. We need to let go of the self-life.

B. The principle of brokenness is death to self. (John 12:24)

1. One grain of wheat by itself remains alone.
2. When it is planted it dies and brings forth much fruit.
3. You could get a hundred million bushels of grain from one seed if it keeps reproducing.
4. God breaks us in order to bring us to spiritual maturity and supernatural ministry.
5. He targets areas.
6. He arranges circumstances.
7. He chooses the tools.
8. He applies pressure to get us to yield.
9. If we refuse to yield God will place us on the shelf.
10. If we do yield what then?

I. Three principles apply to those who yield to God.

A. You get a new view of God's purpose for your life.

1. Most people think God exists for us.

- a. He answers our prayers.
- b. He heals us.
- c. He helps us on our jobs.
- d. He is a divine errand boy.
- e. We call God sovereign but we act as if he exists for us.
- f. We remain at the center of our lives.
- g. This is worldly thinking that affects many Christians.
- h. Most of the theology we listen to is self-centered all about our prosperity and healing.
- i. God is really at the center of the universe and we move around him.
- j. God needs nothing and does not need to do as we say.
- k. The Bible calls this idolatry.
- l. We don't like to hear this but many of you are living in idolatry.
- m. What matters in life is how I feel and how I am affected by things.
- n. When you are broken what God desires is more important than what pleases me.
- o. We want to glorify God, not ourselves.
- p. Once we are broken our will becomes submissive to God.
- q. Who is God in your life?
- r. If you spend most of your time thinking about yourself and pray mostly about your needs then you are god in your life.

2. When God breaks us he becomes first in life.

- a. When opportunities come our way we ask him about what he thinks.
- b. We exist to glorify God because we are his purchased possessions.

B. After brokenness we gain a new freedom in our spirits.

1. Many of you are bound up with fear, anxiety, and anger.

- a. If somebody told you that you are rebellious how would you respond?
- b. I asked what you're holding on to and I ask again what are you holding on to?
- c. If you need to have something your way that is rebellion.
- d. After brokenness we sense a new harmony in our spirits.
- e. Man is composed of mind, will, and spirit.
- f. Before brokenness our desires are in conflict and our desires get out of control.
- g. After brokenness our desires are brought into submission to God.
- h. God controls our mind, will, and spirits.
- i. The war within ends as Paul says because sin no longer reigns over us.
(Romans 6)
- j. When we were saved sin's power was broken but we still try to deal with the inner desires ourselves.
- k. But after brokenness and our will, desires, and dreams are surrendered to God, we give up the fight and God orders our lives.
- l. Those who are surrendered to God have a greater potential for good health than those who live in rebellion.
- m. When body, soul, and spirit function in harmony there is a good physiological response.

2. We also begin to experience an inner quietness and peace.

- a. We no longer have demands on God.
- b. To not surrender to God is costly.
- c. Peace cannot be found in drinking and sex and experiences, but peace is inside.
- d. Inner peace comes only after surrendering to God.

3. We gain a spirit of meekness.

- a. We become open and transparent.
- b. We become teachable and humble.

- c. We stop defending ourselves.
 - d. We begin to bear much fruit by God's Spirit.
 - e. Greed and idolatry ends because we're no longer in competition with others.
 - f. We begin living for Jesus.
 - g. When we surrender to God we win.
 - h. A man told me to shut up when I preached this because he didn't want to hear about surrender.
 - i. We need to realize that we have no rights and realize that only God can satisfy our needs in his way.
 - j. God breaks us to preserve us and to accomplish his purpose in our lives.
4. We gain a greater ability to forgive those that hurt us.
- a. What others do just passes right on by us because what they do to us they really do to Christ.
 - b. The things that used to irritate us no longer bother us.
 - c. We have no spirit of antagonism.
 - d. We are in submission to Christ who makes our decisions for us.
 - e. We don't hold grudges.
 - f. But we must be broken, yielding our selves to God.
5. We gain a freedom in our spirits to relate well to others.
- a. When a person is broken they begin working in harmony with others, not draining from others what they think they need.
 - b. We are confident that we have what we need in Christ.
 - c. Jesus came to make men whole not only physically but emotionally and spiritually.
 - d. Some people are so needy they look for someone to fill them up but only God can do this.
 - e. Only God can meet all your needs.
 - f. As long as I'm rebellious I am in the flesh in rebellion and I throw rocks and sand into my relationships.

- g. As long as we play God our lives will not work well.
- h. Jesus needs to heal us of the need to take control of our lives.
- i. Many people are miserable in their marriages and in their jobs.
- j. This is not idealism but truth.
- k. Something happens on the inside when you surrender to God.
- l. Our relationships grow stronger and more fulfilling.
- m. Married people become two, complete, whole people satisfying each other.

6. After brokenness we gain a new sense of joy.

- a. Some people sing with no emotion.
- b. Some people sing with genuine joy out of freedom from sin.

7. After brokenness we gain a new sense of completeness.

- a. What belongs to God becomes ours.
- b. What we hold on to does not compare with what Jesus is to us.
- c. According to the way you spend your time and thoughts is Jesus at the center of your life?
 - a. We're going to lose all our self made dreams.

C. After brokenness we gain a new freedom and power in our service to God.

- 1. God can now release through us his supernatural power.
- 2. As long as we hold onto things God wants us to give up, we hinder God from working powerfully through us.
- 3. When we yield to him the Spirit of God begins to flow through us.
- 4. We say the same words but they weigh more.
- 5. We expend the same work but it is more effective.
- 6. The Christian life is not us living for Jesus but Jesus living through us.
- 7. This only works when we submit to him.
- 8. Now we can be trusted with greater opportunities.
- 9. Eloquence and esteem do not make us ministers.

10. Some people are talented enough to escape submitting, but God does not operate through them.
11. Have you been playing god in your life so long that you can't distinguish between self and god any longer?
 - a. People think highly of you but you are idolatrous.
 - b. Are you willing to tell God today that you're laying your life down so he can do anything he wants to do in you?
 - c. Are you holding onto something that will rob God's best out of your life?
 - d. You can turn me off but you will lose God's best.
 - e. God has targeted your rebellious spirit.
 - f. Are you willing to give up whatever God identifies in your life?
 - g. Are you willing to be broken so that God can produce fruit through you?
12. I love you all and desire the best for you.
13. If you make a decision to submit God will bring you to the end of yourself.
14. I can't do more than ask what you're holding onto that is going to cost you a life of peace and joy.
15. God hates idolatry while he loves the idolater.
16. As long as you resist you're fighting God.
17. You have no idea what God can do in your life if you surrender.
18. It will be painful but it will be worth it.
19. What have you been struggling over as you listen to this message?
20. If you play god you will mess up your life.
21. Are you willing to tell God you're getting off the throne of your life?
22. Give him whatever he wants to break in your life.
23. We don't break ourselves but we can shorten the time it takes God to break us.