



BROKEN: SHOCK

SESSION ONE | SEPTEMBER 27 & 28

Welcome to the first session of Broken Small Groups (that is, Small Groups for broken people, not broken small groups).

In each session we will help you guide a discussion that introduces elements from both the book and the weekend sermon. The questions are meant to launch a conversation not restrict it. If one or two questions moves the group into a meaningful conversation about the topic, do not cut that off in order to "finish all the questions."

We want your small groups to help people, go deeper and honor God. Consider this humorous video: www.youtube.com/watch?v=NMyTMTmJU6E

Before diving into the questions, take some time to invite the group to share a bit. Consider asking everyone to share their name and to tell the group about AN OBJECT that has broken recently. (Not deep: something like a vase, a washing machine, a car...)



QUESTIONS | BOOK 1

Ecclesiastes 9:12 states, "Moreover, no man knows when his hour will come: As fish are caught in a cruel net, or birds are taken in a snare, so men are trapped by evil times that fall unexpectedly upon them."

As we begin this study on brokenness, one of the driving motivations is to help people recognize that sooner or later we will all face major challenges.

1. "North Americans are the worst sufferers in the world." (Woodruff, Bk 1, pg.7) Do you agree with this statement? If so, why? What prepares people for suffering? How prepared are you?

2. What is your experience with pain and suffering? In what ways are these experiences negative? In what ways has pain led to growth? What do you think determines whether a struggle leads to growth and hope or to disappointment and despair?

3. Do you struggle with questions about God's goodness or his power to bring help when you encounter suffering? Why might God allow pain in the lives of those that love him, even those closest to him? (consider further pp.61 and following) Do any of those reasons help you while thinking about God in your life?

Consider reading the article or watching the brief CNN interview done with Rick and Kay Warren after they lost their son to suicide: <http://religion.blogs.cnn.com/2013/09/17/rick-warren-speaks-out-on-sons-suicide/>



APPLYING THE SERMON

During the sermon, Pastor Mike shared about the shock that Old Testament figures like Job, David, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Isaiah faced. Ezekiel said, "[I am] shocked at what had happened to me." Isaiah described, "I'm in shock, my head is spinning. I'm numb."

Consider David's words in Psalm 143. This is a prayer in response to desperately difficult circumstances. He writes, "I'm in total darkness, as someone long dead. My heart is heavy and I feel numb all over." When we see people like this, we have an opportunity to share God's love and to walk with those in pain. "Do not withhold good from those who deserve it, when it is in your power to act." (Proverbs 3:27)

1. Is there someone in your life who is facing challenges that you could come alongside and support? What is a specific way you could show care?

2. Mike said that one of the things we are called to is to "model weakness." What does that expression mean to you? Why might this kind of "modeling" be good to do in a place like the North Shore or Christ Church?

3. Is there an area in your life where you are praying that God might work to bring change? If God could do or change anything, where would you like to see God's love more in your life?

Take some time as a small group to share prayer requests and begin praying for and encouraging each other.