

Living in denial, blaming others, and making light of the pain you've caused others is not the way toward freedom. By the same token, harboring hurt, keeping a record of wrong, and living with bitterness is also not the way to freedom. Breaking free means submitting to Christ, working at forgiveness, and honoring the Lord by trusting Him. Give these issues or these people to Christ! He knows how to help you and them. The Lord wants you to start strong, stay strong, and finish strong. If you have veered off-path, ask the Lord to help you recalculate your trajectory. Be willing to admit your sin and your need for Christ's forgiveness. Surround yourself with like-minded brothers and sisters in Christ. Pray. Honor the Lord in all areas of your life. Saturate yourself in the truth of His Word. It's time to be about breaking free!

breaking free

Text: 2 Chronicles 14: 1-7

The Plain Truth

_____ turns our mistakes
into mentoring moments.

Reasons Why We Make Mistakes

1. We _____
 - a) For lack of _____
 - b) For lack of _____

2. Lack of _____

3. Lack of _____

4. Being full of _____

One Year Bible Reading

Oct. 19: Jeremiah 33:1-34:22, 1 Timothy 4:1-16, Psalm 89:1-13, Prov. 25:23-24
Oct. 20: Jeremiah 35:1-36:32, 1 Timothy 5:1-25, Psalm 89:14-37, Prov. 25:25-27
Oct. 21: Jeremiah 37:1-38:28, 1 Timothy 6:1-21, Psalm 89:38-52, Proverbs 25:28
Oct. 22: Jeremiah 39:1-41:18, 2 Timothy 1:1-18, Psalm 90:1-91:16, Prov. 26:1-2
Oct. 23: Jeremiah 42:1-44:23, 2 Timothy 2:1-21, Psalm 92:1-93:5, Proverbs 26:3-5
Oct. 24: Jeremiah 44:24-47:7, 2 Timothy 2:22-3:17, Psalm 94:1-23, Prov. 26:6-8
Oct. 25: Jeremiah 48:1-49:22, 2 Timothy 4:1-22, Psalm 95:1-96:13, Prov. 26:9-12

October 18 & 19, 2014

Breaking Free

Turning... Mistakes into Mentoring Moments

Life Group Lesson • Week of October 19

King Asa was Solomon's great-grandson and he began his reign over Judah doing "what was pleasing and good in the sight of the LORD his God" (2 Chronicles 14:2). Though the kingdom of Israel and Judah divided under the rule of his grandfather, Rehoboam, King Asa had a heart for the things of God during the younger years of his reign. He destroyed the pagan altars, removed the detestable idols from the land of Judah, and called the people to enter "into a covenant to seek the LORD, the God of their ancestors, with all their heart and soul" (2 Chronicles 15:12). As a result "the LORD gave them rest from their enemies on every side" (2 Chronicles 15:15b).

But something happened in the latter years of his life. Asa began to rely on man instead of God. When King Baasha of Israel invaded Judah (Israel and Judah were enemies at this point), King Asa foolishly made a treaty with the king of Aram (another enemy of Judah) instead of conquering him. Instead of relying upon the Lord to deliver Judah as God had so many times in the past, Asa took all the silver and gold from the Lord's treasuries and gave it to the king of Aram. King Ben-hadad of Aram agreed to help Judah, but Asa's move toward outside alliance revealed what had become of his heart—he no longer trusted the Lord (see 2 Chronicles 16:1-6).

Read 2 Chronicles 14:1-7

Read 2 Chronicles 16:7-14

(View Teaching on Internet or DVD)

When we trust the Lord and are obedient to His purposes, the Lord protects us in ways we may never know. We can actually bring honor to the Lord by trusting Him. And when we trust Him above everything else and everyone else, He has our back!

1. Have you seen this to be true in your life? Briefly share your experience.

If I begin to drift like Asa and begin believing that man holds the answer to my problems instead of God, my disobedience will gradually lead me away from God's love and protection altogether. Then I may find myself blaming God for my troubles, when I am the one who has been unfaithful. God is always faithful.

2. When have you seen this to be true in your life or someone you know?

A NASA engineer was asked how far an astronaut would miss the moon if he somehow miscalculated and missed the trajectory by a mere 2% as he left Earth. The answer? He would miss the moon by 196,000 miles! And once he missed the moon, he would keep going deeper and deeper into space. Listen, we can't afford to miscalculate. Our ultimate target is God! For some reason Asa's heart grew cold toward God as he grew older, and so he drifted away. Instead of finishing strong, King Asa foolishly placed his trust in a foreign power for protection—a power that God had intended for Asa to destroy instead of embrace (see 2 Chronicles 16:7).

3. How can a young person start strong and stay strong according to Ecclesiastes 12:1-7?

No one is exempt from death (Enoch and Elijah may be exceptions). One day when I draw my last breath, my "spirit will return to God who gave it." My spirit is eternal. I'll either share eternity with the One who gave me life, or I'll spend eternity apart from the One who gave His life for me—the One who gave His life for the world.

4. With this in mind, why is it important to think about our eternal existence in light of God's gift of salvation—our birth, life (our time on earth), and death?

We all make mistakes, but being willing to humble ourselves and turn from our sin makes all the difference in the world. Confessing and repenting are steps to breaking free and can actually become opportunities to mentor others. We can't afford to live in denial. Denial is when you and I are either unaware or unwilling to admit our reality—that there is definitely a problem. It's important we don't project onto others what we are responsible for. Projection is realizing there's a problem, yes, but it's someone else's fault. Another trap is minimalizing the situation—we understand there's a problem, even own our part of the blame, but then we say with our words and actions: "But it's not that big-a-deal"—when it is.

5. Take some time to think about times in your life when you have been in denial regarding an addictive behavior or unhealthy issue. What helped you finally face reality?

Think about times you have been unwilling to own your responsibility—you played the victim card and blamed someone or something else for your issue. How has this mindset of "projection" affected where you are today?

Perhaps there's been a time you minimalized a very deep and sore issue. Looking back what caused you to disregard the seriousness of the problem, and how is your view on the situation changing today?