

RESTORED

INTRODUCTION

Remember when Jesus took fives loaves of bread and three fish and fed over 5,000 people? After the people had eaten, Jesus said, "...*Gather up now the fragments (the broken pieces that are left over) so that nothing may be lost and wasted.*" (John 6:12 AMP). In God's hands, nothing is wasted. God is a great restorer!

Perhaps you are struggling with one of these situations:

- Your relationship with the Lord seems broken, it's just a fragment of what it was before.
- Have you seen the relationships in your life crumble and disintegrate? Does it look like the hurts run so deep that they can never be healed?
- Have you lost a job or suffered a bad investment and your finances are in disarray? Perhaps you feel that you will never recover what you lost.
- Have you possibly lost your joy?

Today is the day to declare, "No more wasted time. No more stolen years, relationships, health or resources in my life." If your life is filled with broken fragments, gather them up and lay them before God. He will restore and rebuild the broken areas of your life. God cares about the fragments and pieces. In God's hands, nothing is wasted.

MESSAGE

Restoration – beauty out of disaster:

J. Stuart Holden tells of an old Scottish mansion close to where he had his little summer home. The walls of one room were filled with sketches made by distinguished artists. The practice began after a pitcher of soda water was accidentally spilled on a freshly decorated wall and left an unsightly stain. At the time, a noted artist, Lord Landseer, was a guest in the house. With a few masterful strokes of a piece of charcoal, that ugly spot became the outline of a beautiful waterfall, bordered by trees and wildlife. He turned that disfigured wall into one of his most successful depictions of Highland life.

In another account, a lady once showed an artist a costly handkerchief on which a blot of ink had been dropped. The handkerchief, she complained, was ruined, nothing was left but to throw it away. The artist said nothing, but took the handkerchief away with him. Shortly afterwards the lady received it back, but so changed that she could hardly believe that it was the original. Using the blot as the basis, he had worked round it a beautiful and artistic design, changing what was valueless and ruined into a thing of beauty and of joy.

The prodigal son in Luke 15 wasted his time, his resources, his relationships and his health. But when he brought the fragments and pieces of his life back to his father, his father completely restored what had been wasted.

- That's what God is like! He wants to bless us and restore us.
- Our heavenly Father wants to do the same and more in our lives.
- When it looks like things are too broken, too wasted, too far gone – we must not give up! Instead, we must give it all to God. God will restore and will even bring increase.

GOD'S MASTERPIECE

Ephesians 2:10 (NLT) For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

God wants to take our mess and turn it into His masterpiece!

The enemy comes to rob, kill and destroy and he will do anything to break us down and bring us to that place where our lives are like the broken, left over pieces of bread, but in Christ, we don't only have restoration, but life and that life is the abundant life!

COMPLETE RESTORATION!

Isaiah 61:1-2 The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is upon me, for the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to comfort the brokenhearted and to proclaim that captives will be released and prisoners will be freed. 2 He has sent me to tell those who mourn that the time of the Lord's favor has come, and with it, the day of God's anger against their enemies. 3 To all who mourn in Israel, he will give a crown of beauty for ashes, a joyous blessing instead of mourning, festive praise instead of despair. In their righteousness, they will be like great oaks that the Lord has planted for his own glory.

4 They will rebuild the ancient ruins, repairing cities destroyed long ago. They will revive them, though they have been deserted for many generations.

7 Instead of shame and dishonor, you will enjoy a double share of honor. You will possess a double portion of prosperity in your land, and everlasting joy will be yours.

- **This speaks of restoration at every level!**
- **This speaks of restored blessings!**

THE POTTER'S HOUSE

But for restoration to take place, we need to be willing to go to the potter's house:

Jeremiah 18:1-4 (NLT) The Lord gave another message to Jeremiah. He said, 2 "Go down to the potter's shop, and I will speak to you there." 3 So I

did as he told me and found the potter working at his wheel. 4 But the jar he was making did not turn out as he had hoped, so he crushed it into a lump of clay again and started over.

We are like the clay in the potter's hand – did you notice that the clay was still in his hand when it didn't come out as he had hoped?

- Our lives may not have come out the way we expected.
- They man not even have come out the way God expected...
- **But they are still in the Potter's hand!**
- With God nothing is impossible – He can fix what seems unfixable!

Jeremiah 18:5-6 (NLT) Then the Lord gave me this message: 6 "O Israel, can I not do to you as this potter has done to his clay? As the clay is in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand.

- He can take our shattered and broken lives and put them back together again! He can form us into the beautiful and useful vessel that He always wanted us to be!

Today we can trust God to restore us, let's come to the Great Potter and trust Him to put our lives back together again.

CONCLUSION

In closure, **Isaiah 58:12** (NKJV) says, "*Those from among you shall build the old waste places; You shall raise up the foundations of many generations; And you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Streets to Dwell In.*"

This speaks of restoration!. Don't ever think you're too far gone, or your situation is too bad, or that you've wasted too much or your life. God is never done with you. God will never give up on you, He is the God of Restoration. God will take the pieces and fragments of your life and do a work of restoration – if you'll let Him – because in God's hands, **nothing is wasted!**