



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Healing and Hope

Galations 5:1

1. As we enter a new year, it can be good to take some time to reflect. Take a moment to think back over 2021 and write here some of your successes, some things that call you to celebrate. You could include any success at work or school, places you have grown spiritually, and successes you have seen in significant relationships.

2. As you reflect you will no doubt come across some areas where you would like to improve. Take a moment to note some of these here. This may include areas like personal health, better financial management, and overcoming personal struggles.

3. This week we began our study of the Core Values of our Church. We began with the value of healing and wholeness. This value stresses that God's plan for us is wholeness, that he wants to redeem us from the brokenness of the world and the brokenness in our own lives. Brokenness is experienced as pain, think a broken bone or a broken heart. One of the places we can observe the brokenness of the world is in how people treat each other. Instead of giving respect and kindness we see anger and rage across the globe. One of the places we see brokenness in ourselves is our inability to control ourselves, giving into temptations and doing things we know are unhealthy and sinful. Another place is in our emotions, fear, anxiety, hopelessness and rage are all examples of our experience of brokenness. The sermon on this core value began with three bold statements: Humanity is broken, the brokenness affects you, and at some level you are broken. Do you agree with these statements? Elaborate please.

Can you identify any scripture that would substantiate the ideas presented about brokenness?

4. God intervened in our brokenness by sending his Son to pay the price for our redemption. Jesus invites us, calls us to find peace, freedom, and wholeness in a relationship with him. **Ephesians 1:7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace.** Let's focus on this word freedom. We recognize that we are becoming whole in Christ as we begin to experience the freedom to say no to our temptations and unhealthy desires. This freedom comes as we find healing from our brokenness. In the book of James, we find that healing may come through a spiritual discipline that we rarely practice, confession. **James 5:16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.** Confession calls us away from hiding our brokenness and darkest secrets and calls us to present them to God and others with the goal of forgiveness and restoration. About confession John Ortberg says "We need to confess in order to heal and change. If we confess well, two things happen. The first is we are liberated from guilt. The second is we are less likely to sin in the same way again. Confession makes sin less attractive."

What are your thoughts on the practice or spiritual discipline of confession? Ever confessed a significant sin to someone else? What was that like?

Do you see a downside to confession?

Would you take a step toward healing and confess to God and a spiritually mature friend or your community group something you have been hiding?

5. Understanding that humanity is broken and believing that God sent his Son for our redemption, salvation and healing from brokenness leads us to our next core value, authentic worship. We are drawn to worship as we see who God is and what he has done for us. Worship is an attitude of the heart that puts God first. Acts of worship are the way we express to God that he is first in our lives. Acts of worship are things like singing praise, prayer, presenting an offering, and loving your actual neighbor. We use the word authentic because anyone can fake an act of worship. Authentic Worship is first and foremost an attitude of the heart. Authentic Worship is both a core value and a spiritual discipline. Something we value and practice. How do you, when necessary, adjust the attitude of your heart?

We practice this discipline through acts of worship. Which acts of worship are you most drawn to? Which do you find difficult? How might you improve your practicing of this discipline?