**Fixer Upper**

**Week 2 – Answers and Questions**

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| **CONNECTION (ORIENTATION)** |

1. **INTRO**: At some point everything new becomes old. As things become old it is necessary to take an inventory of what needs to be fixed. Cars need to be fixed. Homes have all sorts of repairs that must be fixed. If you’re a parent, toys must be fixed. Businesses have old models and systems that need to be fixed. And then there’s you and me. If you’re a human being something needs fixed! All of us need to be fixed. Inside all of us are hidden struggles that can lead to bigger problems if we fail to address them. This series plans to address just that.
2. **RECAP**: Last week we learned that disappointment is inevitable. We learned that disappointment exists because an expectation wasn’t met or fulfilled. The challenge with disappointment is choosing how we deal with it. So we talked about 7 destructive behaviors that follow disappointment.

**Truths of disappointment-**

1. Disappointment can make us angry.
   1. Angry at others
   2. Angry at self
   3. Angry at God
   4. Angry enough to respond with spite. What do we give ourselves permission to do because of anger?
2. Disappointment can shake our confidence.
3. Disappointment can make us feel confused.
4. Disappointment can break our will.
5. Disappointment can slow down or shut down the plan. (God’s timing is not our time table.)
6. Disappointment will cause us to take God’s blessings for granted.
7. Disappointment will humble us.

We finished by learning through King David. We learned that disappointment will never truly disappear, but evaluating our expectations can save us from a lot of disappointment. When we miss the mark, evaluating why can bring clarity and healing to our disappointment. However, evaluation will always lead us to a sacrifice somewhere in life. Evaluation is what allows us to understand how to position our lives and that always requires some sort of sacrifice. God is willing to fix up what is broken inside of us as a result of disappointment, but evaluation is important. When we find disappointment, we need to go back and reevaluate some things in our life.

1. **TODAY**: So today we’re going to continue our series by picking up where evaluation will lead us, namely our broken answers.
2. **CONNECTION**: All of us would agree that life can be difficult. When facing a problem there is no greater feeling than when we find an answer. There’s no greater feeling than to know we have what it takes to move through a situation successfully.

***TRANSITION****: However, you don’t have to live life long to know that sometimes our answers are flawed. Sometimes we think we have the right answer to a problem when in fact we don’t. As a result something in life breaks.*

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| **TENSION (IDENTIFICATION)** |

1. **PERSONAL STORY**: From time to time I attempt to do my own home repairs to save some money. I don’t always know what I’m doing, but I’ve had enough experience here and there that I can fix a lot of things. About a year ago I decided I’d watch some youtube videos to learn how to change out the shower faucet. The old faucet was made of plastic and was breaking. We could barely turn the shower on and off. So I dove into it thinking I had all the answers to get the job done. I took the old handles off. The next step was to replace a valve behind the handles. Before you could replace the valve you are supposed to turn the water off to the house. There’s only a small amount of suction that holds this valve in place. If you attempt to remove the valve without turning the water off something amazing happens. **(SHOW THE PICTURE MICHAEL)** So what do you do when you’re about to flood your house? You take a picture… because this is a sight you don’t see everyday! Water begins shooting out and there’s no way to turn it off, except to find your water cut off and cut it off. Fortunately I knew where that was and we didn’t flood anything but the tub.
2. **GENERAL**: Maybe you had a similar experience in life. Maybe you’ve thought you had an answer to something that turned out to be only partially right or not right at all. Let’s be honest, all of us have come up with an answer that was wrong. We’ve had the wrong answer in business, relationships, with judgment calls and even spiritually.
3. **OUTSIDERS**: Some of our friends who are outsiders to our faith have a wrong understanding of who God is, what he thinks about humanity or how He wants us to live. Having the wrong answer concerning any situation is difficult, but it’s especially difficult when someone doesn’t understand a person, namely God. For this reason many of our friends and family struggle with their faith.
4. **INSIDERS**: As followers of Christ we too struggle with finding a right answer in life. It’s so easy to assume we know what God wants to do in or around our life. It’s so easy to think we know what God is doing only for the answer we thought we understood from God to be way off.
5. **CHALLENGE**: Here’s what I know is true for all of us. When we face difficult situations we’ve been taught to have an answer, rather than ask questions. Having the wrong answer breaks things. And while we all need an answer our means of coming to an answer is typically flawed. Most of the time we look at difficult situations and look for answers that benefit us personally. We don’t typically think critically about a situation as much as we tend to find an answer that makes us comfortable. Unfortunately, when that answer doesn’t work, something breaks and it can hurt. One of our greatest challenges we face when difficult situations arise is our willingness to ask healthy questions instead of jumping to an answer. Let’s be honest, when we do ask questions we tend to ask them that lead us to the answer we want. The more difficult the situation the deeper the questions we should ask.

***TRANSITION****: If anyone could relate to looking for answers while surrounded by chaos and crisis, the disciples could relate. After Jesus’ life and death so many of their assumed answers for Jesus’ life and purpose were not as they expected. They experienced a breaking like no other. Fear, disappointment and doubt surrounded their thoughts.*

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| **TRUTH (ILLUMINATION)** |

1. **CONTEXT**: Two gospels will help us see the disciple’s response. The gospel of Luke and John were written to prove Jesus was the Messiah. As we read this its remarkable to see the challenging chaos they faced and the truth they learned.
2. **STORYLINE**: Through this account I’ve picked up 7 questions we can learn to ask as we face brokenness. Our story picks up with the resurrection of Jesus. Mary went to the tomb to show respect to Jesus and as she arrives, he’s not there. She sees an angel and the angel tells her Jesus is risen and to go tell the others. The chaos of this situation creates a reaction. Everyone had an answer about Jesus that had changed at his death and this news was too much to handle.

**Luke 24:11-12**

**11But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense. 12Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. Bending over, he saw the strips of linen lying by themselves, and he went away, wondering to himself what had happened.**

* After seeing Jesus’ death the disciples believed about Jesus what everyone believed about Jesus. They believed Jesus was dead. Now, their belief about who Jesus was had shifted from Messiah to a good man and maybe even a prophet. Hearing the news of Jesus’ resurrection was not a situation they ever thought would happen. This created a problem for them and their first response wasn’t to believe what they were told. Their first response was that the words of the women were nonsense. Even after hearing the women’s words and seeing an empty tomb Peter refused to believe the words of the women.
* When we find ourselves in a difficult situation there are people who can help us. Sometimes people reach out to help us and we can learn from others if we’ll ask a simple question…
* Question #1- **Where are we being prideful**? When we face difficult situations the last thing we want to do is give up control. However, working through difficult situations alone is not healthy. Pride is one of the most difficult things to see in our selves. Pride will cause us to think that someone else’s views are non-sense when in reality we need to take their words into consideration. There are people who can give us insight and share truth with us that we need to hear. My experience and your experience is not the only way life is experienced.
* So a few of the disciples heard the account of Peter and the women and they don’t know what to believe. They decided to travel to Emmaus and something happens. Jesus appears to them, but they didn’t recognize him. These disciples listened to Jesus, not knowing it was him and they marveled at his teaching. They invited him to stay with them in Emmaus and as they were eating something takes place.

**Luke 24:30-32**

**30When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. 31Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. 32They asked each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?”**

* When we face difficult situations it’s hard to know what to do, where to go and which way is up. It’s hard to know how to respond. This leads us to our second question.
* Question #2- **Where are we not recognizing Jesus/others in our midst right now**? When it comes to facing problems we have a temptation to look to blame others or sit in frustration. However, a health question is to ask, is Jesus the one orchestrating these events? Not everything we face is orchestrated by Jesus, but I promise if you’ll look for Him that you will see him at work in your deepest and darkest moments in life. If he’s not orchestrating it, he’s not absent. Don’t get caught up in the situation yourself, ask Jesus where He is and look for him. He may be at work right in front of your eyes and your too busy complaining to realize his presence!
* After a couple of events, the disciples finally decide to listen to the women’s instructions from the angel and they meet up. As they meet up in a locked house (fearing their lives) Jesus shows up.

**John 20:21-23**

**21Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” 22And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. 23If you forgive anyone’s sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”**

* They meet as a group and two unique things happens. He empowers them with the Holy Spirit and then addresses the need to forgive. The disciples need forgiveness themselves and Jesus is reminding them of this fact.
* Question #3- **Who do you need to forgive?** When people are stressed and hurting they over-react, say things they wish they hadn’t said, cheat, lie and so much more. Pain causes people to do a lot of ungodly things. Yet, people need to be forgiven. Some problems we face won’t be resolved until we learn to forgive someone whose hurt you. Your challenge could be prolonged by unforgiveness. Fortunately the Holy Spirit has been sent to convict. This is why Jesus gave them the spirit first. After receiving the spirit they would be convicted by their sins and unforgiveness. You may be able to power through some situations, but you won’t ever come out healthy if you don’t learn to forgive someone in the process.
* Now, sometime before this particular meeting Thomas had a hard time believing what the other disciples were coming around to believe. And while the group is assembled Jesus turns to Thomas to address his doubts.

**John 20:24-25**

**24Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. 25So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord!” But he said to them, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.”**

* When facing adversity Thomas was a known doubter. To overcome a challenge Thomas created a condition that God must meet. And this wasn’t healthy.
* Question #4- **What conditions are you putting on God/others when you face adversity?** Thomas put a condition on his faith and it kept him from moving forward in his faith. Placing a condition on someone else before you’ll participate with them can ruin a relationship. I realize there are boundaries you may need to create to keep from tempting situations. That’s not what I’m talking about. I’m talking about refusing to work with someone until they give you what you want. Difficult situations aren’t going to get easier when you force every relationship to jump through every hoop you create. Further, God isn’t going to be manipulated by your conditions. God desires to work through you and in your difficult situations, but putting conditions on God and your faith only hurt you. Learning to trust God is where you find your greatest freedoms.
* Jesus leaves their meal and some time later the guys go fishing. While they’re out their they hear a guy tell them to cast their nets on the other side of the boat. After failing at catching a load, they listened to the stranger and they catch a huge school of fish. Recognizing who this stranger must have been John responds…

**John 21:7**

**7Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, “It is the Lord,” he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the water.**

* When we face broken conditions in life, the result is a loss of passion. Constantly working with something that is broken can cause us to lose our patience and give up.
* Question #5- **Where do we need to rebuild our passionate pursuit?** As Jesus died, the disciples lost hope. As they see Jesus alive it reignites a passion they had lost. What broken parts of your life has caused you to lose passion that you need to pursue again? More specifically, where do you need to rebuild your passion in Christ? Have you stopped praying, studying, giving, sharing your faith or caring? Don’t let life stop you from having a passionate relationship with Jesus!
* Now back on shore the guys sit down and Jesus invites them to eat breakfast with him. Jesus asks Peter to go get some fish.

**John 21:11**

**11So Simon Peter climbed back into the boat and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish, 153, but even with so many the net was not torn.**

* Just moments before swimming to a stranger, Peter believed to be Jesus, his crew caught an amazing catch of fish. Too many times when we see something broken in life our temptation is to focus on what’s broken when we need to take an inventory of what we’re doing right.
* Question #6- **Where are we winning (Supernaturally)?** This question is an important question to ask because recalling our blessings, our success, our wins and our strengths we can gain confidence to move forward. Peter was able to celebrate with Jesus, though life had changed drastically simply because Jesus was still present in his life. You may very well be facing a difficult set of circumstances, but that doesn’t mean God isn’t blessing you or helping you succeed. Don’t focus on your problems without also focusing on your blessings.
* So the disciples enjoy their breakfast with Jesus and they begin to talk. Just as things look like it may get back to normal, Jesus throws them another curve ball. And it’s not at all what Peter is expecting. Jesus begins to tell the disciples about more hardship that is on it’s way and specifically how Peter would suffer greatly.

**John 20:21-23**

**19Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, “Follow me!” 20Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. (This was the one who had leaned back against Jesus at the supper and had said, “Lord, who is going to betray you?”) 21When Peter saw him, he asked, “Lord, what about him?” 22Jesus answered, “If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me.”**

* Another temptation we struggle with is when we experience disappointment or something difficult we end up comparing our lives to others. Too many times we compare where others are or aren’t when we’re in the spot light. After all, it’s much easier to receive hard news when others have to hear the same hard word. However, this is never healthy. God’s blessings are great, but you won’t receive everything someone else has, nor will you suffer everything that others may suffer. So when you find yourself in a difficult situation there’s a great question to ask.
* Question #7- **Where do I need to stop comparing?** In life we tend to compare our failures to those who have failed worse and we compare our accomplishments to those who haven’t accomplished as much. This creates an unhealthy manner by which we overinflate our ego or give up too soon because of a small problem.

*SUMMARY: When we face broken areas in life we need to learn to ask some healthy questions.*

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| **APPLICATION** |

**TRANSITION**: Here’s what this means in greater detail.

1. **IN GENERAL**: God doesn’t want us to have an answer for everything up front, but rather to have a question that will lead us to trust Him. Some answers come best as we gain experience. Be thankful for broken areas in life, because it empowers you in the long run.
2. **OUTSIDERS**: Our friends and family do well to lean into the questions and doubts we have in our faith. The reason, they can lead us to an undeniable experience with Christ! Like everything else in life, solid answers require deep questions. God isn’t intimidated by our questions. He’s not intimidated by our doubts. I will say, it amazes me the number of people who have spiritual questions and turn to people who oppose Christianity. Think about it… I’m not going to ask the poachers about the necessity for saving an elephants tusks. They’re going to give me every reason not to. Asking the right people the right questions about faith is extremely important. And encouraging our friends and family who don’t know Christ is important.
3. **INSIDERS**: As followers of Christ its extremely important that we stop assuming we know what God wants and come back to asking God questions concerning our lives. Its important that we open our lives for God to work in even if it doesn’t always benefit us personally.

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| **LANDING (INSPIRATION)** |

Think about what life would be like if…

**Response: Prayer, Communion, Etc.**

Fixer Upper

Week 3- In the meantime

Week 4- Soul Care