

	<p>Session #1 Beautifully Broken People</p>
<p>Scripture Focus: Colossians 1:19-20</p>	<p>19 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.</p> <p>21 Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. 22 But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—</p>
<p>Key Small Group Activities for All Ages</p> <p>Materials:</p> <p>- Paper</p> <p>- Writing Utensils</p>	<p>1. ICE BREAKERS - <i>Ice-Breakers are an important part of your small group forming relationships and peer to peer bonds. Many of the youth in your group will not know one another – so assume that no one does.</i></p> <p>A. Snow Ball Fight – (all ages) This is a great fun get to know you game. It works well as an ice breaker game and is really quick to play. Also works for both big groups and small groups.</p> <p>Hand out a piece of paper and a pen to each person playing. They then need to write down three facts about themselves - they can be simple and straightforward, or more obscure. Once they have finished, get them to scrunch up the piece of paper into a "snowball".</p> <p>The next stage of the game is the snowball fight. Kids can throw the paper balls at each other from across the room. This can go on for as long or as short as you'd like.</p> <p>Once you're ready, call out "stop" and get each kid to pick up the nearest piece of paper to them. They then need to un-scrunch it and read the three interesting facts then go around the room trying to find the person the facts match up to. It can be done as a race (ie. first person to find their person wins) or just as a general mixer. An optional extra could be to ask the kids what the most interesting facts were.</p> <p>(10-15 minutes)</p> <p>B. Unique and Shared – (all ages) Unique and Shared is a get-to-know-you game as well as a team-building activity. The game helps people see that they have more in common with their peers than they might initially realize, while highlighting their own individual strengths that they can contribute to the group.</p> <p>Participants will split into groups of about five people, so this activity works fine with medium, large, and even some extra large groups. Each group of five needs paper and a pen. This activity is for all ages.</p> <p>Instructions for Unique and Shared</p> <p>Ask participants to form groups of five people with the people around them. Pass out sheets of paper and writing utensils. The first half of the activity is the Shared part. Instruct a note taker for each group to create a list of many common traits or qualities that members of the group have in common. Avoid writing things that are immediately obvious (e.g. don't write down something like "everyone has hair" or "we are all wearing clothes"). The goal is for everyone to dig deeper than the superficial. Allow about five or six minutes and then have a spokesperson from each subgroup read their list. If there are too many groups, ask for a few volunteers to read their list.</p>

The second half is the Unique part. Keep the same groups or, optionally, you can ask everyone to rearrange themselves into new groups. On a second sheet of paper have them record Unique traits and qualities; that is, items that only apply to one person in the group. Instruct the group to find at least two unique qualities and strengths per person. Again, strive for qualities and strengths beyond the superficial and past the obvious things anyone can readily see. Allow another five or six minutes. When time is up, share the unique qualities in one of the following ways: (1) each person can share one of their unique qualities themselves; (2) have each person read the qualities of the person to their right; or (3) have a spokesperson read a quality one at a time, and have the others guess who it was.

2. **REFLECTION** - Sit with the participants as part of their circle. Ask them:

- What did we learn from that activity?
- Do you feel like you know each other more now?
- Were you surprised to see how many things you had in common?
- Did other people's answers surprise you?
- Did you make assumptions? Were you surprised by some people's interesting facts?

Wrap it Up – (Say) It's not always easy to guess who people are, where they come from, or even interesting facts about one another. Sometimes we have a lot of things in common, sometimes it seems like we have nothing in common, but we are all on our life journey and we all have a story to tell.

Transition: In exploring our stories, sometimes we have things that aren't always easy to admit. Sometimes we have troubles that can leave us feeling broken and unworthy but through Christ we know our worth. God loves us so much, that God sent Jesus to die so that we can live. We recognize that Christ makes us whole despite our brokenness. Regardless of what interesting or unfortunate things have happened in our life, scripture promises us that ALL things are working together for our good. During this next exercise we will name and claim some things that can often leave us feeling broken and alone. But through Christ's death on the cross, we are reconciled to God and can leave whole and healthy lives.

3. **Reconciled in Christ: Through the cross, our brokenness is made whole**

You will need colored construction paper, sharpies, old cd-roms mod podge, gloves. Additional crafts like glitter and string may be helpful but will also lead to more clean up afterwards. Let each person pick a colored piece of construction paper and a blank CD.

Today we are going to shatter the things that leave us feeling broken and disconnected from God and from other people. We are going to shatter these feelings of brokenness, because they have no power over us. In Christ we are made whole.

Take time to reflect on things in our lives that leave us feeling broken or disconnected from God. What are the things that block us from seeing ourselves as beautifully and wonderfully made? Using the sharpies, write some of these concerns on your CD. **Be sure to invite participants to spread out in the space and take 1-2 minutes to silently reflect upon the activity before beginning. Then either play music or invite them to silently take ample time (15-20 min) to reflect and write.**

Here are some examples of things that can leave us feeling broken:

- *Low self esteem*
- *Relationship breakups*
- *Problems with weight*
- *Bullying*
- *Family problems*
- *Struggle with sins*

Materials:

- Paper
- Tacky Glue
- Colored Construction paper
- Blank CD-Roms
- Sharpies
- scissors
- modge pod
- glitter, strings, etc. (optional)
- gloves

- *No friends*
- *Health concerns*
- *Depression*
- *Having trouble in school*

Adult Leaders should be sure to write down their own reflections too. This will help with sharing later.

Often times, this brokenness runs deep. There are things that we have been struggling with for years or feel like we have no control over. They show up in different aspects of our lives and can really affect who we are and how we see ourselves in the world. But God loves us in spite of our brokenness. In Christ we are made whole and given the promise that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.

When All Students are finished (15-20 minutes) invite them to take their CDs and cut them into pieces. We are literally shattering the lies that leave us feeling like broken and unworthy of God's love.

** It is suggested to use scissors or wear gloves, to avoid getting scratched by the CD.

God takes the shards and broken pieces of our lives, and makes something beautiful out of them. Despite our brokenness and shortcomings, we are loved by God. So much so that God sent Jesus to die for us, reconnecting us with God. God takes all the things that make us feel broken and worthy, and loves us unconditionally anyway. God takes all the things that leave us feeling disconnected from God and from other people, and uses them to create beautiful things in our lives. Despite our brokenness, we are whole in Christ through the cross.

Redemption:

Now using the chards of the CD's invite each participant to make a beautiful mosaic of a cross.

God takes all the things that leave us feeling broken, and redeems us. We get to do the same thing by using these broken pieces to create a mosaic cross. The cross is strong enough to transform our lives and free us from believing that we are broken. Use strong tacky glue to ensure the pieces stick to the paper. Then use mod podge to cover the cross.

This activity is more about self-reflection and personal time with God, than sharing with others. Invite students to share, but don't force it.

Reflection Questions

Reflect on the Mosaic Cross illusion and how God makes us whole despite our brokenness.

- Was it hard to name things that leave you feeling broken?
- Why do you think we believe the lies that tell us we are broken and unworthy of God's redeeming love?
- Where does the feeling of brokenness come from?
- How can we resist the temptation to believe the lies about our brokenness?
- How do we break free from the feeling of brokenness?

4. **Alternate Activity: (Junior High)**
 Ask youth to create a list. On one side of the list write the lies that we often believe on the other side of the list write truth that sets us free.

Here are some examples of lies we believe:

God doesn't love me

God has forgotten about me

I'm not beautiful

I'm not smart

Other people don't like me

I deserve to be bullied

I'm broken and can't be fixed

The truth is;

God loves us so much that God was willing to die for us

God walks with us even in the most difficult times and never leaves us

Each of us have talents and gifts

The right friends and the right people will come into my life

Bullies are just hurt people that want to hurt people

We are whole in Christ

Once the list is done, invite youth to pick the lies that they believe the most and write them on the CD.

When they're done, shatter the cd by cutting it up into large chunks. If safety is a concern for middle schoolers, you can also use thick construction paper instead and have them cut the paper up into pieces. After cutting up the lies, use the pieces to make a cross, representing that in spite of the brokenness we may feel, God loves us and makes us whole.

Feel free to share the final product with one another!

TOTAL TIME: 35-45 Minutes

Digging Deeper
 with Bible Back
 up for all ages

Materials:

Review the discussion from the Large Group Session, discuss the theme of being beautifully healed from brokenness through Christ.

The Hem of His Garment: Drawing near to Christ
 For this discussion we will look at the story of the woman with the problem of blood.

Luke 8:43-48 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

43 Now there was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years; and though she had spent all she had on physicians, [a] no one could cure her. 44 She came up behind him and touched the fringe

<p>- Paper</p> <p>- Colored Paper</p> <p>- Art Supplies</p> <p>- Pens and Highlighters</p>	<p><i>of his clothes, and immediately her hemorrhage stopped. 45 Then Jesus asked, "Who touched me?" When all denied it, Peter[b] said, "Master, the crowds surround you and press in on you." 46 But Jesus said, "Someone touched me; for I noticed that power had gone out from me." 47 When the woman saw that she could not remain hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before him, she declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed. 48 He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace."</i></p> <p>Instructions (for all ages): (say) After reading through the scripture, encourage youth to highlight what parts stuck out to them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What do they think the story means - Was there any part that really stuck out to them? - Why do you think Jesus asked who touched him? - What did you learn from the story?. <p>Discussion: Throughout the Gospels, there are many stories about Jesus’s healing power. While Jesus healed many, this story is more popular than many because of the woman’s persistence. It was not a pretty sight, can you imagine someone bleeding profusely pushing through the crowd to get to him? This woman was likely very weak, and fatigued, and probably used the last amount of strength she had to make it through the crowd. But Jesus declares “Daughter, your faith has made you well!” Not only does he heal her, but he claims her. He calls her daughter, he welcomes her into his family as one of his very own. Despite the things that may leave us feeling broken and weak and helpless we can always run to Christ. Regardless if we have tried a billion other things to fix the problem (the woman spent all her money on doctors) we know that through Christ, any feeling of brokenness can be healed. Take some art supplies and create a representation of this story or how you feel about this story. Give youth time to read over the Bible verses and talk about them in small groups with 2-3 people around them. Youth can move about the room and work together if they would like, or they could work independently. When everyone is finished, gather them back in a circle and talk about the verse and their artistic representation of it and what it all means.</p> <p>Closing for both age groups: (say) God doesn’t promise to heal all of the problems that we may face in our lives. This story is just an example of what happens when we give our concerns to God and stop relying on our own power. When we share with God our problems and concerns, God promises to be there with us. Through Christ, we are a part of God’s family and therefore we never have to go through obstacles alone.</p>
<p>Closing Reflection</p>	<p>What does this mean for us today? God’s steadfast love, endures forever</p> <p>READ – Psalm 136</p> <p>Psalm 136</p> <p>God’s Work in Creation and in History</p> <p>1 O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever.</p> <p>2 O give thanks to the God of gods, for his steadfast love endures forever.</p> <p>3 O give thanks to the Lord of lords, for his steadfast love endures forever;</p>

4 who alone does great wonders,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

5 who by understanding made the heavens,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

6 who spread out the earth on the waters,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

7 who made the great lights,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

8 the sun to rule over the day,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

9 the moon and stars to rule over the night,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

10 who struck Egypt through their firstborn,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

11 and brought Israel out from among them,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

12 with a strong hand and an outstretched arm,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

13 who divided the Red Sea[a] in two,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

14 and made Israel pass through the midst of it,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

15 but overthrew Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea,[b]
for his steadfast love endures forever;

16 who led his people through the wilderness,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

17 who struck down great kings,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

**18 and killed famous kings,
for his steadfast love endures forever;**

**19 Sihon, king of the Amorites,
for his steadfast love endures forever;**

**20 and Og, king of Bashan,
for his steadfast love endures forever;**

**21 and gave their land as a heritage,
for his steadfast love endures forever;**

**22 a heritage to his servant Israel,
for his steadfast love endures forever.**

**23 It is he who remembered us in our low estate,
for his steadfast love endures forever;**

**24 and rescued us from our foes,
for his steadfast love endures forever;**

**25 who gives food to all flesh,
for his steadfast love endures forever.**

**26 O give thanks to the God of heaven,
for his steadfast love endures forever.**

Closing

End with this or a similar prayer –

Prayer

Good and Gracious God, thank you for providing wholeness through Christ. Despite my feelings of being unworthy, despite my feelings of feeling broken, you still offer your everlasting love. Through Christ's death on the cross, you make us whole Thank you for your promises in Christ, thank you for your relationship through Christ, thank you for reconciling us into right relationship with you.

Amen