

1. As I have thought about today the one word that has bubbled to the surface the most is change.
2. Today at BFA is a day marked by **Change**.
3. This afternoon we will be electing a new Trustee. We will also be electing two new deacons who have never served in this capacity before.
4. Last week we said goodbye to Kaleb. This week we say goodbye to not only Sydnie, but to Kayllen as well.
5. And then in just a moment I am going to introduce two new staff members. So yeah. I would say that BFA is facing many changes today.
6. Now let me be clear before I move on. I don't like change. Change stretches me and takes me out of my comfort zone. And I think I've been around people enough that I think most of us feel that way.
7. But I can navigate change when I am sure that God is the one initiating that change. Because the bible tells me in numerous places that his plans for me are for my Good.
8. God's plans for BFA are good plans. So, if God is initiating the change, then ultimately it must be for our good.
9. I know I have had more time than you to process the changes taking place in our church, but no one has had more time to contemplate these changes than the Lord.
10. It's been several weeks ago that I got a message from Kaleb on a Friday (which is rare because Friday is my day off), and the message said I really need to talk to you about something important.
11. Almost immediately I knew what he was going to tell me. And when I arrived at my office my feeling was correct. Pastor, we feel God moving us toward a lead pastor role and there is an opportunity before us.
12. In my heart I am happy and proud for them, but in my mind all I can think about is all the challenges and changes we will have to navigate in the weeks to come.

13. And so, as I left that meeting, even before I got out of the parking lot, this peace came over me. A peace that was only possible because at the same time I sensed the Lord saying to me, I'm in this. This is me. Everything's going to be all right.
14. Transparently, my peace has ebbed and flowed over the past several weeks. But I can still stand here today knowing in my heart that the Lord is leading and guiding us as a church. And that brings me peace.
15. The serenity prayer keeps rushing over me as I think about these changes. Our CR ministry on Sunday nights repeats this prayer every week. The first part of that prayer says this.
16. God grant me the serenity  
 To accept the things I cannot change;  
 Courage to change the things I can;  
 And wisdom to know the difference.
17. Interestingly enough, one definition of the word serenity is being calm, peaceful, and untroubled.
18. According to this prayer, how can I be calm, peaceful, and untroubled in the midst of change? Partly when the Lord helps me to recognize which changes I can't control, and which changes I can control.
19. Here are some things that I can't control. I can't control all of the movement and strangeness of not only our world, but the movement and strangeness that we are facing as a church.
20. I can fight that all I want, but it's still going to happen.
21. I also know there are some things I won't change. As a church we are called to make disciples of children, youth, and adults. The emphasis on, the importance of, and the focus on these areas of disciple making will not and have not changed.
22. But what can change, and most assuredly will change constantly, is who does what and how we go about living out that calling to make disciples.
23. Who and how are always up for discussion and evaluation. So, when we face times of transition, especially as it relates to people we love and how and where they are used by the Lord. Change is ok.

24. Not that I like it mind you. But it can be ok, and I can be ok, and you can be ok.
25. So as the deacons and I evaluated our future needs for pastoral staff, we recognized that different is ok.
26. Meaning, for right now. For the short term. We don't have to find people to fill the exact same roles in the exact same way.
27. It's ok if it is different. So, as it relates to the three areas that Pastor Kaleb helped lead, youth, CR, and being an associate pastor to me, each of those three areas are still critical.
28. We are just going to fill them a little differently. We have wonderful leadership already in place to help guide CR. Michael Dale and Maryletha Manley.
29. We are choosing to purposefully focus youth ministry on Sunday morning **only** for the time being, and we have a wonderful team in place there as well made up of Bridget Yeager, and Alex & Martha Patterson.
30. And then to help fill the Associate Pastor role, Jeremy Cox has agreed to join our staff on a part-time basis. Have Jeremy come up. **Jeremy Cox Associate Pastor.**
31. Jeremy is a graduate of SAGU, and has a bachelor's degree in Church Leadership. He will still hold a full-time job, but be on staff part-time as well.
32. And as it relates to worship, worship is still a vital part of being God's church. And we have invited Teresa Reynolds to join our staff part-time as Worship Pastor. Have Teresa come up. **Teresa Reynolds Worship Pastor.**
33. Teresa is a Certified Minister with the AG, and is very near completing the requirements to be a licensed minister. She also has several years of worship experience. She too will still hold a full-time job, but be on staff part-time.
34. I believe that all of the leaders I have mentioned are right where God wants them to be, and I am excited to see what the Lord is going to do.

35. I have also been honest with each of these folks that as we progress in re-opening all our ministries from Covid-19, we will be re-evaluating what our staffing needs are and will make adjustments as they become necessary.
36. I believe the Lord is up to good things at BFA.
37. Give the Lord a clap offering of praise.
38. Jim Whitson one of our deacons is coming now.
39. Recognize Kayllen.

## Message

1. As we get into the message this morning, I want to ask you to turn with me in your bibles to the Old Testament book of Joshua chapter 22.
2. I am going to read just a few verses this morning. I am going to give you the book ends of a story if you will. the beginning and the ending, and then I'm going to fill in the middle as our message today.
3. Keep in mind that the people we will see in this story have been very close to one another. They are countrymen. They have fought together against their enemies. They have celebrated together. They have experienced many victories and God has done amazing things through them.
4. But as is the case with any close relationship, there arose an opportunity for them to be at odds with one another.
5. The title of the message today is...

### TITLE: **From Broken to Beautiful.**

1. So let me first read the broken part of the story. **Joshua 22:11-12** And when the Israelites heard that they had built the altar on the border of Canaan at Geliloth near the Jordan on the Israelite side, **12** the whole assembly of Israel gathered at Shiloh to go to war against them.
2. So, the broken part goes like this. We have a problem, and the only thing we know to do is march down there and kill them. That sounds pretty broken to me.
3. Now skip down to verses 32-33. **Joshua 22:32-33** Then Phinehas son of Eleazar, the priest, and the leaders returned to Canaan from their meeting with the Reubenites and Gadites in Gilead and reported to the Israelites. **33** They were glad to hear the report and praised God. And they talked no more about going to war against them to devastate the country where the Reubenites and the Gadites lived.

4. Now that's what I call beautiful. They have gone from wanting to kill them to rejoicing that now they don't have to.
5. So, let's fill in the blanks.
6. The story begins many years before when the 12 tribes (pause) of Israel start the process of conquering the land God had promised them.
7. And the border they had to cross to get into that Promised Land was the Jordan river.
8. However, prior to all of them crossing the Jordan River, 2 ½ tribes asked for permission to make their home on the East side because they had herds of animals and the land was much better suited for raising them there.
9. So, Moses gives them permission with the following conditions.
10. Yes, you can leave your families and animals on this side of the river, but you have to go up with your brothers into this promised land and fight side by side with them until they have conquered all God has for them.
11. The 2 ½ tribes gladly agree, and for several years, they keep their word and fight and help conquer the land.
12. When they have fulfilled their promise, Joshua the leader of the nation says, I bless you and I release you. Go back to your land and live your lives.
13. Now, on the way back there arose this discussion between the men. The tabernacle, the place of worship, had been set up on the west side of the Jordan river where the 9 ½ tribes would live.
14. And because there was this natural barrier, the Jordan river between them, they worried that somewhere down the line future generations would say well you don't belong with us because you live over there.
15. So, they built an altar. More than likely, an altar almost identical to the one at the tabernacle. And their purpose for building the altar was to be a reminder that the two lands are connected by their love for and their worship of God.

16. They build it, and then they cross the Jordan to live happy lives, or so they thought.
17. When word reaches the 9 ½ tribes on the west side they are furious. They thought the purpose of the altar was to signify, hey you people over there, we don't need you anymore. We will worship God ourselves, however we want.
18. And their response was captured in verse 11-12. Gather up the troops boys. We're going to have to go to war with them and wipe them out.
19. At that point, the relationship was severely broken. But praise God, the relationship wouldn't stay broken for very long.
20. Because a short time later there was joy and celebration that the relationship had been restored.
21. Here is the basis for my message today. **Sometimes in our lives, relationships become broken.** And broken relationships hurt. Broken relationships are messy.
22. **But what was broken can be made beautiful again, if we will obey the Lords plan for restoration.**
23. You see God has a plan for restoring broken relationships. And as long as both parties are willing to obey the Lord, there is a pretty good chance that God can make something beautiful come out of that brokenness.
24. What is the Lord's plan? It's found in Matthew chapter 18. They are the words of Jesus himself. There are 6 verses in this passage, but for time's sake we will only look at one verse.
25. **Matthew 18:15 "If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over."**
26. I want to sum up God's plan for restoring broken relationships with three words. Essentially, what Jesus says is, if your brother sins against you, go and show.
27. **Everybody say that with me. Go and show.**
28. Go and show them their fault. The pathway for restoring broken relationships always begins with go and show.
29. The problem is, often times the last thing we want to do is go and show, and the first thing that comes to mind is fight and flight.

30. Everybody say that with me. **Fight and flight.**
31. Our natural tendency is to want to get upset and consider the relationship lost. Might as well move on.
32. And that's exactly what the Israelites gravitated toward.

### **Fight and flight.**

1. Joshua 22:11-12 And when the Israelites heard that they had built the altar on the border of Canaan at Geliloth near the Jordan on the Israelite side, **12 the whole assembly of Israel gathered at Shiloh to go to war against them.**
2. Upon hearing what their brothers on the other side of the river had done, notice the response of the crowd. Let's go kill them. That's all there is to do.
3. Now. I hope that none of us are going around committing murder, but I have to tell you, even still we tend to do something very similar some 3,000 years later.
4. We may not physically kill them, but if not careful we can immediately jump to conclusions that kill the relationship.
5. If we do what the Israelites did and...
  - Assume we know what the other person intended.
  - Assume that what they did was intentionally meant to harm us.
  - Assume there is no use in trying to clarify the truth.
6. Then generally what we will do is write the relationship off as broken, and if not extremely disciplined, which most of us are not, with our mouth, this tongue that the bible says does damage like a sword, we start talking bad about them and if the relationship wasn't dead before, it certainly is now.
7. Fight and flight. Fight and flight doesn't restore, rather fight and flight takes what was broken and grinds it up into such small pieces that it can never be made beautiful again.
8. What's God's plan for restoration?

### **Go and show.**

1. Thankfully, before the armies mobilized and marched out to war, someone came to their senses and said not so fast. Let's do something else first.

2. Joshua 22:13-15 So the Israelites sent Phinehas son of Eleazar, the priest, to the land of Gilead--to Reuben, Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh. 14 With him they sent ten of the chief men, one from each of the tribes of Israel, each the head of a family division among the Israelite clans. 15 When they went to Gilead--to Reuben, Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh--they said to them:
  3. Allow me to paraphrase what happened next. They send a delegation of leaders and this is what they say. How could you do this to us.
  4. And upon hearing what their brothers had to say, they responded, oh, that's not what we meant at all.
  5. This is what we meant, and this is why we did it that way.
  6. And after a little bit the delegation, who knew if they didn't get word back soon would be in the middle of a war said. Oh. Ok. In that case. No problem. We can solve that.
  7. And in a short time, out of the brokenness came something beautiful.
 

Joshua 22:33 They were glad to hear the report and praised God. And they talked no more about going to war against them to devastate the country where the Reubenites and the Gadites lived.
  8. Doing it the Lord's way, which is what going to them and showing them the problem was, opened up the door for God to do a miracle.
  9. But all fight and flight does is give the enemy an opportunity to create an even bigger mess than we had in the first place.
  10. God can do some pretty amazing things when we trust that his way is best, and we obey his command to go and show.
  11. Broken can turn into beautiful.

#### Conclusion:

1. Normally, this is the part of the message where Sydnie knows the signal and she comes up to lead one more time. This morning she is going to come for a different reason.
2. I'm guessing that no one but our immediate families knows that every Sunday, you have been witnessing and absolute miracle.
3. Without knowing it, you have seen the Lord miraculously take something that was broken, and make it into something beautiful.
4. For the last two and a half years. Probably the two most visible people at BFA, at least on Sunday's has been Sydnie and me.



5. And nothing would make the enemy happier than to be able to destroy that relationship. And he almost did.
6. It was a Tuesday. I was meeting with Sydnie as I did every week, but little did I know that this meeting would take her, and nearly us to the breaking point.
7. All of the sudden I saw this hurt and emotion well up in her in response to something I had been doing that was hurting her.
8. Granted, I didn't know I was hurting her, but I was. And when she left the room that day, I thought our relationship was over. Right then and there.
9. Sydnie, would you describe what I was doing and how it made you feel?
10. Now. this is not a defense. I was wrong. But I didn't know I was wrong until she pointed out my wrong.
11. And when the full weight of what I had been doing hit me, it broke me. I have to tell you I cried for a couple of days. I was heartbroken. Because I loved her dearly and would never hurt her on purpose.
12. But as she began to honestly share with me how she felt about how I was relating to her, healing started to take place. And in fact, the Lord began to show both of us things about ourselves.
13. Sydnie. What did the Lord start showing you?
14. And the Lord began to show me that when I felt things were out of control, my tendency was to grab on with both hands and try to wrestle everything back under control, and that the result was that often times I hurt the people closest to me.
15. And as we talked over the next few days, the Lord began to do miracles in our relationship. The greatest of which is that he was able to use us together on the same stage to lead people to Jesus.
16. Sydnie, what is something that you saw the Lord do through this healing process.
17. I am convinced God can take brokenness and make it into something beautiful, if we will let him.
18. Do you have a relationship that is broken that you desire to be restored into something beautiful?

19. Sydnie lead. Pray together than God will restore relationships.
20. Sydnie lead. Pray that the Holy Spirit will give us the courage to go and show rather than fight and flight.
21. Lord, clear up misunderstandings. Bring healing.