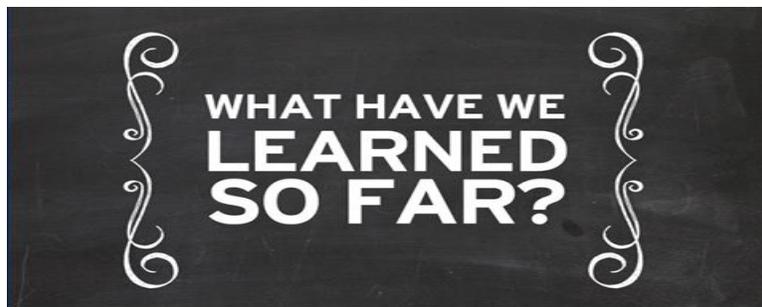
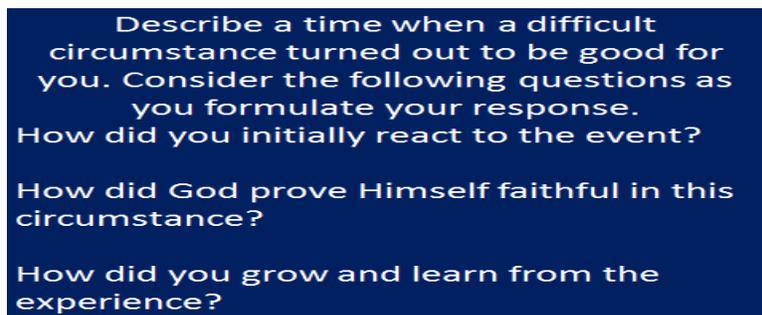




Welcome to group session 2 of OVERCOMER Bible Study. Begin by asking for responses to last week's personal study.



What stood out to you in last week's personal study? What truths or answers did God reveal?



Describe a time when a difficult circumstance turned out to be good for you. Consider the following questions as you formulate your response.

How did you initially react to the event?

How did God prove Himself faithful in this circumstance?

How did you grow and learn from the experience?

Unexpected change and difficult circumstances are routine occurrences in life.

When calamity comes, your responses can expose the real you. The way you react to adversity often reveals something about your nature, exposing layers of brokenness that previously lurked unnoticed.

This circumstance then becomes a great opportunity to grow. This week's study will highlight that truth. Pray together as you prepare to watch the film clip.

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#### MOVIE CLIP SUMMARY

Circumstances have a way of circumventing our best-laid plans. That's the case for John and Amy. As the ripple effect of the factory's closing continues to upset the Harrisons, the place where John has built his identity is revealed. Amy, his wife, knows it and has a less-than-gracious way of approaching the subject. John certainly needs accountability, but high stress is taking a toll on the marriage. During a moment of marital reproof, difficult words are exchanged, and brokenness in John's heart is exposed.

#### DISCUSS

1. Whose is the more difficult situation—John's or Amy's? The person going through the life-altering circumstance or the person watching the one he or she loves navigate those changes? Explain your response.

2. How do you think John felt when he heard those words from Amy?

3. Do you find it easier to be the person offering reproof, regardless of the tact, or the person receiving it?

Do we understand that Jesus shows up in a real world of difficult times, calling us to be more than we could ever be on our own.

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2. How do you think John felt when he heard those words from Amy?
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ENGAGE

Invite someone to briefly share the events of the Book of Jonah.

Here's a quick summary Runaway. The book starts with a typical minor prophet mission: God instructs **Jonah** go to Nineveh and speak out against its wickedness. Instead, he hitches a boat to the city in the other direction.

At God's command, a giant fish swallows **Jonah**, who stays in its gullet for three days and three nights.

Someone share the cliff notes overview of the Book of Jonah



## Movie Clip

### CHAPTER 3

1 Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, 2 "Arise, go to Nineveh the great city and proclaim to it the proclamation which I am going to tell you." 3 So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, a three days' walk. 4 Then Jonah began to go through the city one day's walk; and he cried out and said, "Yet forty days and Nineveh will be overthrown."

5 Then the people of Nineveh believed in God; and they called a fast and put on sackcloth from the greatest to the least of them. 6 When the word reached the king of Nineveh, he arose from his throne, laid aside his robe from him, covered himself with sackcloth and sat on the ashes. 7 He issued a proclamation and it said, "In Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles: Do not let man, beast, herd, or flock taste a thing. Do not let them eat or drink water. 8 "But both man and beast must be covered with sackcloth; and let men call on God earnestly that each may turn from his wicked way and from the violence which is in his hands. 9 "Who knows, God may turn and relent and withdraw His burning anger so that we will not perish."

10 When God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them. And He did not do it.

### CHAPTER 4

1 But it greatly displeased Jonah and he became angry. 2 He prayed to the LORD and said, "Please LORD, was not this what I said while I was still in my own country? Therefore in order to forestall this I fled to Tarshish, for I knew that You are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, and one who relents concerning calamity. 3 "Therefore now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for death is better to me than life." 4 The LORD said, "Do you have good reason to be angry?" 5 Then Jonah went out from the city and sat east of it. There he made a shelter for himself and sat under it in the shade until he could see what would happen in the city. 6 So the LORD God appointed a plant and it grew up over Jonah to be a shade over his head to deliver him from his discomfort. And Jonah was extremely happy about the plant. 7 But God appointed a worm when dawn came the next day and it attacked the plant and it withered. 8 When the sun came up God appointed a scorching east wind, and the sun beat down on Jonah's head so that he became faint and begged with all his soul to die, saying, "Death is better to me than life." 9 Then God said to Jonah, "Do you have good reason to be angry about the plant?" And he said, "I have good reason to be angry, even to death." 10 Then the LORD said, "You had compassion on the plant for which you did not work and which you did not cause to grow, which came up overnight and perished overnight. 11 "Should I not have compassion on Nineveh, the great city in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know the difference between their right and left hand, as well as many animals?"

What's your gut reaction when God does or allows what you don't like or expect?

What does your response reveal about your character and identity?

The Ninevites' brokenness was overtly displayed in expressions of sin and rebellion. Jonah's brokenness was hidden inside a calloused part of his heart

To you, is one more dangerous than the other? If so, which one? Why?

Read aloud Jeremiah 2:1-13. Discuss similarities between this period in Jeremiah's ministry and the Jonah narrative. Do you notice any differences?

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Today we might call the Ninevites of Jonah's ministry an unreached people group. They were faraway, foreign enemies of God who needed a missionary to come, identify sin, and explain the path to salvation. The sinful Judeans described in Jeremiah 2 were a people of God who should have known better. In a time of comfort, they built an identity outside the promise of being God's children, and sin crept in. Elevating anything above God's place is idolatry. God's people were guilty, and Jeremiah's job was to let them know.

#### Jerimiah CHAPTER 2 (Judah's Apostasy)

1 Now the word of the LORD came to me saying, 2 "Go and proclaim in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, 'Thus says the LORD, "I remember concerning you the devotion of your youth, The love of your betrothals, Your following after Me in the wilderness, Through a land not sown. 3 "Israel was holy to the LORD, The first of His harvest. All who ate of it became guilty; Evil came upon them," declares the LORD.' "

4 Hear the word of the LORD, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel. 5 Thus says the LORD, "What injustice did your fathers find in Me, That they went far from Me And walked after emptiness and became empty? 6 "They did not say, 'Where is the LORD Who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, Who led us through the wilderness, Through a land of deserts and of pits, Through a land of drought and of deep darkness, Through a land that no one crossed And where no man dwelt?' 7 "I brought you into the fruitful land To eat its fruit and its good things. But you came and defiled My land, And My inheritance you made an abomination.

8 "The priests did not say, 'Where is the LORD?' And those who handle the law did not know Me; The rulers also transgressed against Me, And the prophets prophesied by Baal And walked after things that did not profit.

9 "Therefore I will yet contend with you," declares the LORD, "And with your sons' sons I will contend. 10 "For cross to the coastlands of Kittim and see, And send to Kedar and observe closely And see if there has been such a thing as this! 11 "Has a nation changed gods When they were not gods? But My people have changed their glory For that which does not profit. 12 "Be appalled, O heavens, at this, And shudder, be very desolate," declares the LORD. 13 "For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, The fountain of living waters, To hew for themselves cisterns, Broken cisterns That can hold no water.

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Why is it good when our brokenness or idolatrous identity is revealed?

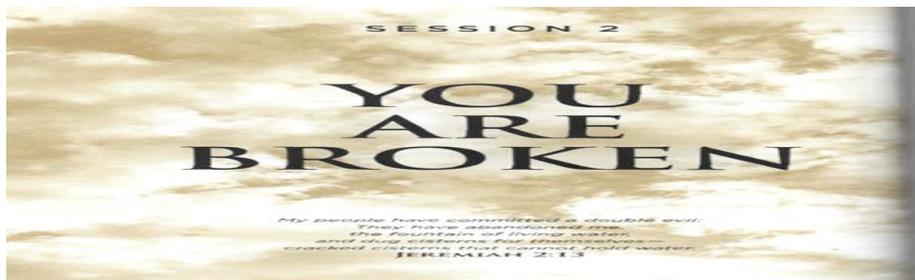
Who you are starts with where you came from, includes where you've been, and indicates where you're going.

It's also best displayed when you face trials or, as in Jonah's case, don't get your way. Although exposing and exploring brokenness is difficult, Scripture points out that it's ultimately good for us.

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Let's review your homework



## DAY1

### WE'RE BROKEN BECAUSE THE WHOLE WORLD IS

Ninevites are everywhere. Scrolling through Twitter or watching world news indicates that wickedness abounds. Pause to consider the state of the world today. Don't linger too long, though. It's difficult and depressing.

It's easy to spot examples of sin in false religions, pagan countries, and developing nations. The proverbial "they" is a readily available target. Here at home it's easy to put blinders on and hide behind the assumption that we live in a Christian nation. Our country, however, is equally and collectively **just as broken** and in need of repentance as foreign ones. We have individually and collectively moved far from God.

**Read Jeremiah 2:1-13.**

#### Judah's Apostasy

1 Now the word of the LORD came to me saying,

2 "Go and proclaim in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, 'Thus says the LORD, "I remember concerning you the devotion of your youth, The love of your betrothals, Your following after Me in the wilderness, Through a land not sown.

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4 Hear the word of the LORD, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel.

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6 "They did not say, 'where is the LORD who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, who led us through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and of pits, through a land of drought and of deep darkness, through a land that no one crossed and where no man dwelt?'

7 "I brought you into the fruitful land to eat its fruit and its good things. But you came and defiled My land, and My inheritance you made an abomination.

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Examine each verse and identify specific ways God's message to Jerusalem applies to your life. For example, have you ever felt like the description in verses 2-3? Describe it.

Review verses 5-9. Have you been or are you currently walking in a season like the one depicted, when you stopped seeking God and turned in another direction? Describe it.

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Reminder... 2 "Go and proclaim in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, 'Thus says the LORD, "I remember concerning you the devotion of your youth, The love of your betrothals, Your following after Me in the wilderness, Through a land not sown.

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Rewrite verse 13 in your own words.

Record the broken wells in which you've placed your trust and found your identity. As you do, utter a prayer of confession about each one.

Read the following verse.

*Woe is me for I am ruined because I am a man of unclean lips and live among a people of unclean lips, and because my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of Armies. ISALAH 6:5*

Our individual brokenness is a microcosm of what's wrong with the entire world. Trading the goodness of God's plan for our own individual desires is sin. Furthermore, it never leads to the abundance God desires for us.

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Record the broader context of Isaiah 13. For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, The fountain of living waters, To hew for themselves cisterns, Broken cisterns That can hold no water.

Read the following passage.

Woe is me for I am ruined because I am a man of unclean lips and live among a people of unclean lips, and because my eyes have seen the King, the lord of Armies. Here is the way I'd rewrite this verse.... My people have multiple sins, deciding that they can live life without Me, they substitute their broken ideas and live defeated.

Our individual sin is a broken idea of the world. Having the goodness of God's plan for our own individual desires is sin. Furthermore, it never leads to the abundance God desires for us.

Underline the portion of Isaiah's confession in which he recognized his individual sin. Circle the portion in which he announced the broader sin of his whole people group. Which sin came first? **Individual sin**

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Although it's often easier to recognize brokenness everywhere else, it's better to start with ourselves. These facts of individual and universal sin aren't mutually exclusive. They operate in close conjunction. People are broken because the world is broken. The world is broken because each individual has embraced **sin by choice and by nature**. That broken nature becomes evident when we place our hope, our faith, or our identity in any well other than God's. Acknowledging that truth about ourselves is a step toward healing. Thank God for using the brokenness in your life to reveal your need for Jesus. Ask Him to heal the brokenness in the world and in your life.

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DAY 2  
WE'RE BROKEN BECAUSE WE CHOOSE TO BE

You know that person in your life whose faith through difficulty both inspire you and scares you? You stand in awe of them, wondering how they could remain so strong when their particular trials seem far too heavy. You also shudder in fear, confessing you can't imagine being that strong. Perhaps you've even thought, / don't think I could walk through that experience and still trust God.

Whoever that person is, their trial is so grueling that most people would be inclined to give them an automatic pass from faith-filled living due to the severity of their circumstance. Maybe you perceive John and Amy Harrison's predicament through that lens. His anger and frustration are certainly understandable. Brought to that point, many of us would respond similarly. However, understandable doesn't equate with permissible or beneficial for followers of Jesus.

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Calamity reveals where we place our hope and the foundation on which we've built our identity. The way we respond to trouble indicates who we are and in whom we trust. People are broken not only because the world is but also because we choose broken systems and broken paths in our lives.

Read the 11 verses of Jonah 4. Summarize what God offered Jonah as well as Jonah's response to God.  
God's offer:

Jonah 4:1 But it greatly displeased Jonah and he became angry. 2 He prayed to the LORD and said, "Please LORD, was not this what I said while I was still in my own country? Therefore in order to forestall this I fled to Tarshish, for I knew that You are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, and one who relents concerning calamity. 3 "Therefore now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for death is better to me than life." 4 The LORD said, "Do you have good reason to be angry?" 5 Then Jonah went out from the city and sat east of it. There he made a shelter for himself and sat under it in the shade until he could see what would happen in the city. 6 So the LORD God appointed a plant and it grew up over Jonah to be a shade over his head to deliver him from his discomfort. And Jonah was extremely happy about the plant. 7 But God appointed a worm when dawn came the next day and it attacked the plant and it withered. 8 When the sun came up God appointed a scorching east wind, and the sun beat down on Jonah's head so that he became faint and begged with all his soul to die, saying, "Death is better to me than life." 9 Then God said to Jonah, "Do you have good reason to be angry about the plant?" And he said, "I have good reason to be angry, even to death." 10 Then the LORD said, "You had compassion on the plant for which you did not work and which you did not cause to grow, which came up overnight and perished overnight. 11 "Should I not have compassion on Nineveh, the great city in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know the difference between their right and left hand, as well as many animals?"

Jonah's response:

God extended grace to Jonah, only to be rejected. God appointed the prophet Jeremiah to bring His word of warning to wayward Judah. The nation's collective response was similar to Jonah's individual one.

Read Jeremiah 18:1-12.

Have you ever consciously or subconsciously chosen to remain broken, wallowing in pity and declaring your right to do so? Describe that season in your life.

Read Deuteronomy 30:15-20.

1 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD saying, 2 "Arise and go down to the potter's house, and there I will announce My words to you." 3 Then I went down to the potter's house, and there he was, making something on the wheel. 4 But the vessel that he was making of clay was spoiled in the hand of the potter; so he remade it into another vessel, as it pleased the potter to make. 5 Then the word of the LORD came to me saying, 6 "Can I not, O house of Israel, deal with you as this potter does?" declares the LORD. "Behold, like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel. 7 "At one moment I might speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom to uproot, to pull down, or to destroy it; 8 if that nation against which I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent concerning the calamity I planned to bring on it. 9 "Or at another moment I might speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom to build up or to plant it; 10 if it does evil in My sight by not obeying My voice, then I will think better of the good with which I had promised to bless it. 11 "So now then, speak to the men of Judah and against the inhabitants of Jerusalem saying, "Thus says the LORD, "Behold, I am fashioning calamity against you and devising a plan against you. Oh turn back, each of you from his evil way, and reform your ways and your deeds." 12 "But they will say, 'It's hopeless! For we are going to follow our own plans, and each of us will act according to the stubbornness of his evil heart.'

1 Deut 30:15 "See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and  
th death and adversity; 16 in that I command you today to love the  
th LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments  
v and His statutes and His judgments, that you may live and multiply,  
it and that the LORD your God may bless you in the land where you  
w are entering to possess it. 17 "But if your heart turns away and you  
h will not obey, but are drawn away and worship other gods and serve  
c them, 18 I declare to you today that you shall surely perish. You will  
8 not prolong your days in the land where you are crossing the Jordan  
th to enter and possess it. 19 "I call heaven and earth to witness  
c against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the  
ir blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you  
h and your descendants, 20 by loving the LORD your God, by obeying  
ir His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the  
c length of your days, that you may live in the land which the LORD  
h swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them."  
tr

Isolated, this passage could easily be construed as a foundation for works-based salvation. However, salvation is still God's great gift of grace, and in no way can it be earned. This passage isn't about good behavior. It's about faithfully believing that God's way is the best way and that eternal life isn't just in heaven but here on earth as well. This passage reveals the power of choice that lives within the realm of faith.

We can't always choose our circumstances or even the outcomes of those circumstances, but we can always choose the way we respond. Either we can either embrace God's grace, or we can reject it and choose sin

Does a particular area of your life reveal that you haven't chosen the wholeness of God's plan? It's easy to recognize choices that aren't Christ like. Describe the broken cistern you've chosen for yourself.

How could you choose to embrace grace in order to give a godly response in this difficult situation?

Reflect on the areas of your life in which you've chosen your way over God's way. Regardless of the consequences you've faced, thank God for being with you and remaining faithful. Ask Him to help you live the life He created you to live.

### DAY 3

#### WE'RE BROKEN, BUT WE CAN BE HEALED

Coming face-to-face with our brokenness can manufacture a wide array of outcomes. We can reject the idea of our brokenness and declare our identity as a personal right or an individual choice. Or we can admit that we have no way to fix ourselves and that we need God's grace and mercy, freely available in Jesus Christ, to save us from ourselves. We may even waver back and forth between two commitments, trusting in God's design one day and in our own ambition the next.

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Ultimately, our goal is freedom from our brokenness. Because people are broken, we often choose to remain that way and build identities on false foundations. Our lives don't have to be that way. God has another plan. The storm could have swept Jonah away. The fish could have done more than just swallow the prophet. It could have digested him. God provided Jonah a way out and illustrated His great mercy in the way He addressed Nineveh and in the way He continued to lovingly lead Jonah.

God offers rescue from our brokenness today. He can heal our broken hearts and desires. He promised to do that for His stubborn children in Jeremiah 18. And Scripture offers more examples.

Read the following verses.

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Read the following verses.

The men of the city said to Elisha, "My lord can see that even though the city's location is good, the water is bad and the land unfruitful." He replied, "Bring me a new bowl and put salt in it." After they had brought him one, Elisha went out to the spring, threw salt in it, and he said, "This is what the Lord says: 'I have healed this water. No longer will death or unfruitfulness result from it.' " Therefore, the water still remains healthy today according to the word that Elisha spoke.

2 KINGS 2:19-22

Elisha, the prophet who followed Elijah, was barely inaugurated into the role when the people of Jericho approached him with a problem. The location of their camp was good, but the water was bad. They needed a miracle. God made the water clean and safe to drink again, meaning the barren land could bear fruit again.

Identify the areas of your life in which you most need healing.

The way we respond to pressure excavates levels of brokenness in our lives that may have been hidden previously, buried far beneath the surface. We can fake it, making it from one seemingly normal day to the next, but when crisis comes, the truth unravels, and the foundation of our lives shakes.

Where did your brokenness come from? How have circumstances brought it to the surface?

The ultimate remedy for brokenness is forgiveness, but we can't receive forgiveness until we recognize our need for it.

Brokenness is often the tool God uses in our lives to help us realize our great need for Him. In this process of recognizing our true identity, we also truly understand repentance.

There's a big difference between being sorry for wrongdoing and experiencing true sorrow over our sin. The former is a recognition of an unfavorable result, while the latter admits the underlying root of our sinful condition. Once we've recognized the root of our sinful heart, we're ready to accept forgiveness and be made new in Christ

Record a prayer expressing your need for God's healing in your life. Confess ways you've been stubborn and unrepentant. Ask for complete freedom from sin through God's forgiveness.

