

“In *ReCreatable*, Kevin has brought us to a new level of discipleship that is contagious and filled with the hope and holiness of Jesus. Definitely a resource that will bring healing and growth, personally and in community. Honest! Hopeful! Thoughtful!”

—**Dr. Jo Anne Lyon**, general superintendent of The Wesleyan Church and founder of World Hope International

“Our creator God has given us this world so that we might live well, but like the earth itself, we are broken. Yet God offers each of us hope—hope for a new earth, and hope for restored hearts. *ReCreatable* extends the blessings of reconciliation to all of us. May we learn to rest in God’s healing and enter into His shalom.”

—**Matthew Sleeth**, MD, executive director of Blessed Earth and author of *24/6: A Prescription for a Healthier, Happier Life*

“Here is a biblical vision for discipleship and holiness that will resonate with a new generation. In *ReCreatable*, Kevin Scott marks out the ancient but oft-forgotten pathway to living well through the power of the Holy Spirit. Read this book with your family, your congregation, or your small group to discover together how to bring hope and healing to the corner of the world where you live.”

—**Dr. Stan Toler**, best-selling author, pastor, teacher, and general superintendent emeritus for the Church of the Nazarene

“In a world that is fractured and broken, Kevin has written a book that beautifully articulates how living and sharing the Kingdom Life brings eternal restoration here and now. *ReCreatable* will move people toward a life of transformation!”

—**Jeremy Summers**, coauthor of *Awakening Grace: Spiritual Practices to Transform Your Soul* and adult spiritual formation movement director for The Wesleyan Church

“The good news is that the Good News is for broken people, and *ReCreatable* maps out how the gospel transforms our brokenness in God’s sustainable way. In this practical and inspiring book, Kevin Scott helps us see how God fits the pieces back together again.”

David Drury, coauthor of *SoulShift: The Measure of a Life Transformed*

“All of us have brokenness in our lives, but *ReCreatable* reminds us that God is all about restoration. If I had to describe this book in one word, it would be *hope*—hope for all of us, hope for any of us.”

—**Rev. Kenneth C. Haugk**, PhD, executive director of Stephen Ministries, www.stephenministries.org

“*ReCreatable* is both heavenly and earthy. This book is rich devotionally with solid, practical application, inspiring a deeper faith.”

—**Mark O Wilson**, pastor and author of *Filled Up, Poured Out*

“Kevin Scott’s book has given me a whole new vocabulary—with words like *ReCreatable* and phrases like “in a pocket of the kingdom.” . . . *ReCreatable* is guaranteed to be a great resource for churches, schools, small groups, and individuals.”

—**Derek Cooper**, PhD, director of the Doctor of Ministry program at Biblical Seminary and coauthor of *Hazardous: Committed to the Cost of Following Jesus* and *Unfollowers: Dropouts, Detractors, and Doubters of Jesus*

“A fresh new look at discipleship! . . . Scott’s approach to holiness is freeing while also holding to strong biblical truth.”

—**Jason Taylor**, lead pastor of The Vertical Church, Yuma, Arizona

“Kevin Scott addresses an important question, which is, how do we keep a sustainable faith while living in a broken world? Anyone looking to sharpen their walk with the Lord will find this book helpful.”

—**Dr. Alvin Sanders**, associate executive director of EFCA National Ministries and author of *Bridging the Diversity Gap*

RECREATABLE

How God Heals the
Brokenness of Life

KEVIN SCOTT

 **Kregel**
Publications

ReCreatable: How God Heals the Brokenness of Life

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P.O. Box 2607, Grand Rapids, MI 49501.

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ISBN 978-0-8254-4211-7

Printed in the United States of America

14 15 16 17 18 / 5 4 3 2 1

*To Debbie,
my wife of twenty-plus years—
Your faith, hope, and love shine brightly.
It is in your presence I most often remember that
God loves me and gave himself for me.
May we live well together for
many years to come.*

*Ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is;
and walk in it, and find rest for your souls.*

—Jeremiah 6:16

*We live by mercy if we live.
To that we have no fit reply
But working well and giving thanks,
Loving God, loving one another,
To keep Creation's neighborhood.*

—Wendell Berry

*If you dare to pray for holiness, humility
or other dangerous things,
God may just give them to you.*

—N. T. Wright

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Every book is a collaboration, and this page is my opportunity to say thank you to just a few of the people who have contributed in some way to the writing of this book.

To the excellent staff at the Paradise Cafe in Noblesville, Indiana, for providing the perfect environment for writing this book.

To Ken Haugk, David Paap, Bill McKay, Joel Keen, Joel Bretscher, Steve Glynn, and so many other colleagues at Stephen Ministries, for your friendship and for growing and stretching me in so many ways over the years.

To the scholar, the philosopher, and the farmer—N. T. Wright, Dallas Willard, and Wendell Berry—three men whose insights have uniquely impacted my life. Their work underlies and is woven throughout everything in these pages, such that any contribution I may have made is only by standing on the shoulders of these giants, and others like them.

To Dennis Hillman, Steve Barclift, Dawn Anderson, Bob Hartig, Dave Hill, Noelle Pederson, Adam Ferguson, Leah Mastee, and the rest of the team at Kregel Publications for believing in me and the message of *ReCreatable*.

To my friend Lyn Rayn for her excellent design work on the cover of this book.

To our little pocket of the kingdom in Noblesville, Indiana, for being faithful companions who have often encouraged, strengthened, and challenged me.

To Kenny and Anna Panduku, whose friendship consistently leaves this introvert feeling energized. You are greatly loved and appreciated.

To my mom and dad, brothers and sisters-in-law, aunts and uncles, nieces and nephews, and other relatives, whether they be Scotts, Sales, Mounts, Banishes, d'Ablaings, Johnsons, or whatever other surnames may soon find their way in, I truly could not have been blessed with a better, more supportive family. You know it's true. Even though I rejected the bow tie suggestion.

To my children—Courtney, Lauren, Ethan (with Jesus), and Micah—who make life so fun and rewarding, and who sacrificed many hours of “Dad’s going to the coffee shop to write.” I love nothing more in this life than to see God re-creating your lives before my very eyes.

To my wife, my lifelong love, Debbie. Thank you for your undying confidence, companionship, sacrifice, and love.

And to Jesus, my Lord and Redeemer, for all of the above and everything else—past, present, and future—thank you. Amen.

INTRODUCTION

On January 19, 2013, Stanley Frank “The Man” Musial passed away. Musial was one of the best, most underrated baseball players ever. But rarely will you hear someone talk about Musial’s baseball prowess without quickly adding, “and he was an even better man.”

Few modern men have been so deeply rooted in a place. When you think of Stan Musial, you think of St. Louis. And when you think of St. Louis, it won’t be long until you think of Stan the Man.

Around St. Louis, where I lived for more than thirty-five years, Stan Musial was known for his approachability, decency, and enjoyment of life. He was also known for his faith, his eternal optimism, and his love for Lil, his wife of *seventy-one* years.

Oh, and he played a mean harmonica. This shy, quiet man learned to play the portable instrument as a way to quickly connect with people. Probably thousands of St. Louisans have stories of meeting Musial out somewhere and him whipping out his harmonica to play a quick rendition of “Take Me Out to the Ball Game.”

The printed piece handed out at Stan’s funeral featured these lines, written in 1904 by Elisabeth-Anne “Bessie” Anderson Stanley:

He has achieved success who has lived well, laughed
often, and loved much;
Who has enjoyed the respect of intelligent men and the
love of little children;
Who has filled his niche and accomplished his ask;
Who has left the world better than he found it;
Who has always looked for the best in others and given
them the best he had;
Whose life was an inspiration;
Whose memory a benediction.

Stan Musial was such a man.

He lived well.

In many ways, *ReCreatable* is a book about living well.

All of us are broken—some of us more than others, due to the circumstances in our lives. But all of us are ReCreatable. God is in the business of putting broken lives and relationships back together again.

People have all kinds of misconceptions about who God is and what he wants from us. The message of this book is that what God wants *from* you is more about what he wants *for* you: he wants you to experience life in all its fullness, life as he designed it to be when he created the concept.

He wants you, wants all of us, to live well.

And the thing is, as we learn to live well, we find that not only is God putting our broken lives back together again, but he also begins to work through us to help other people find healing in their brokenness as well—often without our even realizing the part we're playing!

From another perspective, *ReCreatable* is about Christian discipleship, learning to walk with Christ.

I am well aware that only a small percentage of book readers actually start by reading the introduction. Obviously, you are one of those people. So I want you to know that these next few paragraphs are some of the most important in the book.

ReCreatable is about how you can become a disciple of Christ, but it's also about how you can become a disciple who *makes disciples*—not all by yourself, but within a pocket of the kingdom with Christ at its head.

The book is structured to make it easy for you to not only read, but also remember and pass on its basic message to others. Being a disciple of Jesus is about becoming a person who

reflects his glory
by living well
in a pocket of the kingdom.

That's the five-seconds-or-less description of a disciple who makes disciples. It's highly portable, just like Stan's harmonica.

We can begin to unpack that definition by adding the book's title, subtitle, and chapter titles, so that we come up with a deeper but still forty-five-seconds-or-less description:

“Reflecting his glory” means that God is taking the **shards** of the world and our broken lives and restoring his **glory** to them. We become a place of **intersection** where people can meet God as he makes us **holy**.

“Living well” means that Christ develops in our hearts a **sustainable** pattern of **faith, hope, and love**. This is the essence of healing, holiness, and God's glory in us.

“In a pocket of the kingdom” means that the holy life—the attractive life—is lived with other Christians who come together around **Scripture**, **worship**, and **community**, and who welcome others into the kingdom pocket through Christian **mission**.

It is through this process—this story recapitulated in every disciple’s life—that **God heals the brokenness of life**. We may be broken, but we are **ReCreatable**.

For those who are ready to go deeper than this forty-five-second definition, you can unpack each of the words bolded above by working your way through the book, chapter by chapter.

Then when you’re done, you can pack it all away again in that five-second definition—ready to be pulled out at a moment’s notice to share again with each broken person you encounter, as the Holy Spirit leads you.

I hope you will do this. Memorize the five-second and even the forty-five-second description of a disciple. Study the book with your family, with your small group, within your congregation, or in your neighborhood or community. I’ve provided a group discussion guide with thought-provoking questions that you can use to guide groups through this study, just as I have in my congregation.

What I’ve tried to give you is a portable message.

If I could, I’d make it possible for you to play it on a harmonica.

Before we jump in, let me offer one quick caveat. This book is about finding healing for life’s brokenness, and that is precisely what Christ offers. But it’s important to mention that you don’t find Christ’s healing in a book. You find his healing most often in relationship with a person or people who listen and provide careful attention and

support—the kind of caring presence that can and should be found in “pockets of the kingdom.”

At times, though, you may need to find a deeper level of care than a group can provide. You may need to seek out the care of a specially trained layperson, such as a Stephen Minister, who can provide one-to-one care during a particularly difficult time.

Some types and levels of brokenness are more complex than a small group or a trained layperson can adequately care for. Certain traumatic or deeply rooted forms of brokenness require the care of a mental health professional.

In any case, while this book describes “how God heals the brokenness of life,” his healing touch most often involves relationships with people who are actively caring for you. This book is not a substitute for that.

I write not as a guru but as a fellow companion on the journey. I have many of the same questions, challenges, struggles, and failings as you. Maybe more. I too am a broken person. But by God’s grace and mercy, he is putting both you and me back together again.

You are immensely valuable to God. Though you may be aware of brokenness in your life or the lives of those you love, you can be sure that God is capable of picking up the pieces to make beautiful things out of the shards—and more than willing to do so.

Live well!

—KEVIN SCOTT
October 2, 2013
Noblesville, Indiana

Part One

REFLECT HIS GLORY

*I am a creature, it is true, but I have a calling
to be the creature glorified.*

*I must be the creature, but I do not have to be
the creature like the clod in the field,
the cabbage which is rotting in the field as the snow melts.
I am called to be a creature by choice, on the basis of Christ's
finished work, by faith:
the creature glorified.*

—Francis Schaeffer

Chapter 1
SHARDS

With his shameful, chaotic, horrible death he has gone to the very bottom, to the darkest and deepest place of the ruin, and has planted there the sign that says “Rescued.”

—N. T. Wright

Her voice hinted at a barely-controlled panic.
“Umm . . . Mom! Dad!”

The logs in our back porch fire pit were crackling, and we were just beginning to smell the rich, warm scent of fudge brownies through the screen door.

“Mom. Dad. Could you come here? Quick!”

As we made our way into the kitchen, she called us to the oven, where we could see that a minor catastrophe had taken place. Only minutes before, Courtney had placed in the oven a baking pan filled with brownie batter. But in a moment of inexplicable weakness, the glass pan had popped, shattered, and then crumbled.

Deliciously fragrant brownie batter dripped and coated the bottom

of the oven. But now it contained an unexpected, unwanted ingredient. Hundreds of tiny glass shards were baking into the batter on the hot surface of the oven floor.

Only moments before, the batter had held such promise. It had smelled so inviting . . . and actually, it still did. But now it was worse than useless—dangerous to touch, perhaps deadly to taste. The glass pan had but one purpose, and it had failed miserably at that task. There was nothing to be done but carefully clean up the mess and throw it away.

Like that glass pan, you also were created for a single, specific purpose. And here it is:

You were created to reflect God's glory.

You carry God's image. You're his glory-bearer. And you're called to bear his image and reflect his glory in the midst of the people with whom you live and work. Today.*

It's not your job alone. In fact, it works best when you're among a group of people who are committed to reflecting God's glory together until the earth is "filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" (Hab. 2:14).

But as you might suspect, there's a problem. The mirror of your life is cracked. The reflecting pool has become polluted. God's image in you is now distorted. Like the shattered brownie pan, you begin your journey with God as a broken person, tragically unable to fulfill your specific purpose and calling. You fall short of his glory (Rom. 3:23).

We all do.

*See, for example, Genesis 1:26–27; Isaiah 43:7; Matthew 5:16; Romans 8:16–17; Ephesians 1:12; Philippians 2:11; and 1 Corinthians 10:31.

When others look at our lives and relationships, they generally don't see God's glory; instead they see our brokenness. Even as I say that, I feel compelled to assure you that "it's OK." But really, it's far from OK. What I *can* assure you is that it doesn't have to be that way.

Much of our brokenness comes from resisting and rebelling against God's call to become a fully mature human being. But a lot of it is because those around us—parents, spouses, children, friends, neighbors—are broken too. No matter where our brokenness comes from, it's still our brokenness.

Since we're all broken people, we often end up hurting those around us, even those we love—sometimes *especially* those we love. Like those shards of glass baked into a seemingly delicious brownie, we have the potential to injure others and destroy relationships.

It's painful to admit this is true, right? We all want to minimize and normalize our sin even as we magnify the sins of others. After all, it's always easier to see the effects of others' offenses than our own.

Most of us have patterns of sin so deeply engrained in us that we easily convince ourselves that it's just *the way we are*.

Maybe. But it's not who you were created to be.

You were created to be holy, the perfect image of God in all his glory.

When our brownie pan exploded, there was nothing to be done about it. We couldn't put it back together again. It would never again fulfill the purpose for which it was created. We carefully scraped and swept it up and tossed it in the trash.

And when it comes to our broken lives and relationships, it seems much the same. As much as we might want to, we don't seem capable of fixing what's broken.

All of this sounds like very bad news. And, well, it is bad news. But there is good news too. And it can be summed up in five powerful words:

Jesus is Lord and Redeemer.

That is the gospel. That's our promise that God puts broken people back together again.

Long ago, even before God created the world, he mapped out a plan for its redemption and ours. God chose *not* to sweep up the mess—in the world or in your life—and toss it in the trash. Instead he looks at your life (and mine), in whatever state of mess and disarray it may be, and says, “I created it, and I can put it back together again.”

You are ReCreatable. Jesus wants to pick up all the broken pieces of your life and fit them back together so you can once again take up your calling to reflect his glory in the place where you do life. You can become a fully mature human being who lives life to the fullest, bringing God glory in the process.

But the first step is to stop denying that you're a mess. It's to own your brokenness.

This might be a tough thing. Some people struggle to see the ways they are broken and how they pass that brokenness on to those around them. Others find it harder to believe that God can redeem anything out of their mess. Whichever tendency you may have, it's time to embrace your identity as a broken person in whom God is restoring the capacity to reflect his glory. Wrestle with this chapter. Own it in your life. You will take a gigantic first step toward living well, reflecting God's glory with your whole life.

Maybe you're not quite ready to recognize and deal with your brokenness. That's OK. Just skip this chapter, go on to the next, and come back later when you feel ready.

But for those of you, the brave ones, who are ready to face your brokenness, let's begin with a look at where it all began.

Three Attitudes That Can Break Relationships

When God lovingly crafted the original man and woman, the bearers of his image, he placed them in a beautiful garden. It was a place that offered the hope of unending joy and harmonious, healthy, satisfying relationships. He gave the man and woman a choice: to reflect his glory with their whole lives or to reject the calling and seek their own pathway.

The choice was summed up in a command that they should avoid eating the fruit from a single, desirable tree in the middle of the garden—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God said if they ate the fruit of the tree, they would die (Gen. 2:16–17).

Unfortunately, Adam and Eve were ensnared and enslaved by three seemingly innocuous attitudes.

Discontent

We don't know how long it took—it could have been hours or decades later—but one day, a malevolent spiritual force, manifested somehow in a serpent, tempted Eve to eat the fruit (Gen. 3:1–7). Part of the attraction was simply to do something for herself. The fruit looked delicious and desirable; there seemed no good reason to deny herself the pleasure. Though God had given Adam and Eve all they could ever need or want, Eve found herself desiring what she could not have. Maybe you've been there too. This was the first small step toward brokenness.

Distrust

The serpent continued to seduce Eve, planting seeds of doubt that God had her best interests at heart. In mocking amazement, he asked: "You can't eat from any of the trees? Seriously?" (Gen. 3:1; author's rough paraphrase).

Well, no, God had not said that, and to her credit, Eve corrected the serpent. She said God allowed them to eat from every tree but one. Only the tree in the middle of the garden was forbidden. But then Eve went further: “God won’t even let us touch the fruit or we’ll die.” It was a revealing exaggeration. Eve was leaning in toward a seemingly sympathetic ear.

Sensing the slightest opening, the serpent unleashed the assault. He didn’t deny God’s existence or that he was the Creator. He didn’t even deny that God could tell Adam and Eve what to do. All of that would have been too obvious. Instead, he did something much more devilish.

The serpent denied God could be trusted. Eating the fruit, he said, wouldn’t kill them; it would make them stronger and wiser. They would become like God. God didn’t want that to happen, he said, and that’s why God had forbidden them to eat the fruit (Gen. 3:4–5).

Eve bit. And her growing distrust was a second giant step toward brokenness.

Disregard

Eve’s unholy act was surely also a naive one. She could not have understood its implications or its consequences. After all, such a thing had never been done. Eve was not an evil, diabolical person; she had never questioned God or been resentful of him. Not that we know of. She simply made a poor decision in the heat of the moment. We can sympathize with her.

However, what seemed like an insignificant act—reaching out to pick and eat an attractive piece of fruit—was the first, inexcusable act of human rebellion.

Eve knew her Creator and his command. She knew what consequences he had promised. She was fully aware of her disobedience.

By eating the fruit anyway, Eve acted with total disregard for God.

Then she offered the fruit to her husband, and apparently without hesitation, he ate it too.

Three seemingly innocuous attitudes—discontent, distrust, and disregard—proved both dangerous and destructive, and soon the damage was done. Ever since, the heavens and earth, which were created to demonstrate God’s glory, have been filled instead with an unending pattern of broken relationships and broken lives.

Museum of Broken Relationships

Innocence is a gift that should never be taken for granted. At first, eating the fruit must have seemed like an insignificant, inconsequential act. But slowly it began to dawn on Adam and Eve that everything had somehow changed, that life would never be the same again. They may have thought they were enjoying a private, personal rebellion; but the effects of their sin were anything but contained. Maybe you can relate. The consequences were immediate, and the devastating reverberations continue today.

By rejecting God’s command and eating the fruit, they showed they were capable of something God never intended: unholiness. The thing they didn’t know—couldn’t know—was that unholiness always leads to brokenness.

God’s law is never arbitrary; it is rooted in who he is and in who he created us to be. So sin is not the breaking of an arbitrary rule or law. It is any activity or behavior that is unworthy of a human being—one created in God’s image. To sin is not to be human; it is to *degrade* our humanity. Sin makes us less human, not more. That’s the tragedy. We fail to be what God—in his infinite wisdom—created us to be: a bearer of God’s glory.*

*See N. T. Wright, *Romans*, New Interpreter’s Bible Commentary (NIBC) (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2002), 434.

Through one unholy act, Adam and Eve introduced the reality of unrighteousness and brokenness into every aspect of their lives and relationships—and to all their descendants.

In the town of Zagreb, Croatia, there is a quirky exposition called the Museum of Broken Relationships. Artists Olinka Vistica and Drazen Grubisic created the museum to give a permanent home to some of their cherished mementos from when they were still a couple. As word of the “breakup” museum spread, many other items were donated—sentimental love letters, teddy bears, an axe that was used to destroy furniture after a breakup, and even a prosthetic leg.*

While most of us haven’t immortalized our tokens of affection (or spite) in such a public way, we all know the damage and grief that broken relationships leave in their wake. Every relationship and every *kind* of relationship is impacted by human sin and brokenness.

Broken Identity

Sin immediately changed the way Adam and Eve thought of themselves, altering their self-awareness and hacking into their identity. First they noticed they were unclothed. They felt exposed, vulnerable. They couldn’t seem to escape one another’s gaze. Surely there could be no defense for their unholy act, no one to blame but themselves. For the first time, they experienced guilt and shame. Then, there was fear, and with a most unexpected trigger: the God who had lovingly crafted them (Gen. 3:10).

In one regrettable moment—like that moment when you release the locked car door with your keys still in the ignition—everything was changed. A moment before, Adam and Eve had known only

*“Museum of Broken Relationships,” Atlas Obscura, accessed April 17, 2013, <http://atlasobscura.com/place/museum-odd-broken-relationships>.

innocence, satisfaction, confidence, security. Now they were owners of a broken identity. And there was nothing to be done about it.

Brokenness has been part of our identity ever since. Each of us is a unique bundle of insecurities and neuroses. We brew our personal concoction, with varying amounts of guilt, doubt, shame, anxiety, and fear. You may have been dealt a tougher hand than others. Or perhaps you've been fortunate. Either way, you can be sure that your brokenness extends to the way you view yourself.

Broken Trust

With that first unholy act, the man and woman became partners in crime. They even hid out together. But now something was uncomfortable about their relationship; there had been a breach of trust. Before their crime, they were naked and unashamed. Now neither could long endure the gaze of the other. So they sewed some fig leaves together and covered the parts of their bodies they suddenly knew could be exploited. Later, when God questioned them, neither would own their actions. The man blamed his wife and the woman blamed the serpent.

Now it seems we are almost “wired” to distrust one another. We do it without thinking. Our natural instinct—due to our brokenness—is to look out for our own needs and wants first, often to the exclusion and detriment of others. We instinctually serve our own esteem and comfort as we subconsciously try to shore up what was lost in the garden of Eden. If you take an honest look at your relationships, past and present, you'll probably see a pattern of brokenness. And it goes both ways.

Broken Faith

Sin had a devastating effect on Adam's and Eve's relationship with God. After all, he had entrusted his newly created world to them. He

was their Creator and Provider; everything they had came from him. After their rebellion, they felt compelled to hide from God. They feared what he would do. Even with their new clothes, they still felt vulnerable and exposed to his gaze. Maybe you've felt that way too.

Adam and Eve were probably unsure how God would respond if he knew they had eaten from the tree. They may have thought for a moment that they could hide the truth from him. Instead of being forthcoming, Adam tried to explain that he hadn't come out to meet God because he was naked.

Unholy acts damage everything they touch, but the damage is most severe in our relationship with the God who created us. Many people today feel they're "alone in the universe." Others feel burdened by the weight of guilt and shame. Yet we are the ones who have broken faith with God by our rebellious behavior. From the moment of the fall, men and women have searched for something, anything, that can fill the void left by this broken relationship, but there is nothing outside of God that can satisfy our need for fellowship with him.

Broken Creation

One final consequence of Adam's and Eve's sin was a broken relationship with God's creation (Gen. 3:14–19). This is the meaning behind the curses God placed on the serpent and on the ground. Ever since, there has always been an element of danger in our interaction with the place where we live. And though the earth provides everything we need for sustenance and life, it does not yield its harvest easily.

Since that day, humanity has had an uneasy relationship with the earth—often appreciating and enjoying it but sometimes also fearing and abusing it. Left to ourselves, we tend to misuse the earth and deplete its natural resources with little thought of preserving or renewing them for future generations.

It is impossible to overstate the immediate and devastating consequences of humanity's fall into sin and rebellion against God. It has led to an unending string of broken relationships with ourselves, others, God, and his creation. Unfortunately, this is what we have come to think of as "being human."

No. "Being human" is to trust God and to reflect his glory in all our relationships. The problem is that sin has diminished and distorted our humanity. That's why God condemned sin itself on the cross (Rom. 8:3).

The pathway to holiness begins with awareness—a deep recognition—of the fact of our brokenness along with a genuine sorrow for the damage we've caused in our relationships. It is painful to take such an inventory, but only then do we truly understand the gift we've been given in God's gracious offer of redemption.

Beyond Brokenness

You may have noticed that in this chapter I've focused on brokenness as the primary result of sin and rebellion. I've only briefly mentioned our guilt before God. This is in no way to diminish its reality. I've focused on brokenness for two reasons. One is that many of us see our brokenness more than our guilt. It's sometimes easier to see how our life is a mess than to comprehend that we must give an account of our actions before a holy God. It's important that we come to terms with our guilt before God; but recognizing the mess we've made is a healthy, attainable first step toward recognizing and accepting our guilt before God.

Another reason I focus on brokenness is that this book is written for Christians who are seeking to grow in their walk with Christ. I assume that most readers have, in some way, already come to grips with their guilt before God. And if you are part of Christ's kingdom,

he has already atoned for your sins. You have already been justified on the basis of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. You have bathed freely in God's grace.

What remains is your brokenness. Becoming a follower of Christ does not automatically mend it.

As Christians, we need to connect with our brokenness. We need to recognize the ways in which sin and rebellion have twisted our lives and damaged our relationships. We need to admit the ways we've become traitors to ourselves, hurt others, disowned God, and abused his creation. We need to acknowledge that even though parts of our lives may look well put together and under control, there are other ways in which we are still a mess. Some areas of our lives and relationships are still utterly broken. To the extent that we fail to own that we are broken, we deny that we need a Redeemer.

My message and the message of this book is that there *is* something to be done about our brokenness. We don't have to remain a crumpled mess lying paralyzed on the floor. Our lives may be *utterly* broken, but they are not *irretrievably* broken. There is a Redeemer—someone who stands ready and is more than capable to put our lives back together again.

We are ReCreatable.

The story that God is writing in the heavens and earth is a story of redemption. We were created to reflect his glory, and yes, we fell far short of our calling. But there is redemption. This includes forgiveness and the promise of eternal life; but redemption also provides for the curse to be reversed. Adam and Eve rejected their opportunity to embrace holiness, the truly human life. Jesus came to offer us a second chance to live well, as fully mature human beings.

On my office desk I keep a seashell shard. Most people who visit the beach pick up the largest, most beautiful, unbroken seashells they

can find. Those are the ones they pack carefully in their luggage to take home and proudly display. But once, a man gave me this shard of a shell he had picked up on the beach. And I kept it. It stays right there next to my computer keyboard.

I pick up that seashell shard sometimes three or four times a day and turn it over and over again in my hand. After several years of handling it this way, it is now smooth, shiny, polished. I hold on to this seashell shard because it reminds me that I too am a shard—a broken person. All of us are. But we have a creator God who does not toss aside the broken pieces. He picks them up, treasures them, and redeems them.

Personal Reflection

1. What are some of the times in your life when you have felt most broken?
2. What are the ways in which your life feels broken at this moment?
3. Which of the three destructive attitudes (discontent, distrust, disregard) are you most aware of in your life?
4. Which of the four relationships (self, others, God, creation) feels most broken in your life right now?
5. In what ways would you most like to see God bring healing and redemption to your life as you work through this book?
6. Whom else do you know who might benefit from reading this chapter? Will you share it with him or her in some way?

Next Steps

1. Acknowledge to yourself, God, and at least one other person that you have some areas of brokenness in your life right now for which you would like to experience healing and redemption.

2. Identify one destructive attitude that you would like to eliminate from your life.
3. Identify one existing relationship that you would like to see restored to health.
4. Commit to making the attitude and relationship you chose a matter of regular prayer, trusting that God will bring healing.