

Broken Crayons

Arrange chairs/participants in small groups of 6 and one team member.

Leader's Welcome and opening remarks first.

(Continue) Here is what is going to happen today.... We are going to hear some talks. The talks will be a witness from the speaker from the experiences of their own life and their family. Each of the speakers didn't know the topic until we met last night and no one knew who was even going to talk til our meeting. Therefore what will be said hasn't been rehearsed and made perfect. I hope each will be sharing about their struggles and successes to walk with Christ...and you will see their hearts. Talks will be followed by a discussion time in your group. I ask that each of you participate and share with the others in your group how you feel about what the speaker said. How does it hit you in your attempt to walk with Jesus in prison? Then you will have about 10 minutes to talk and pray with a prayer partner in your group. I know this freaks some of you out... but I ask that you do this and see what happens no matter if it makes you uncomfortable. This is the safest place to be inside the fence. These are the safest people to be with... I hope! There will be plenty of breaks so please don't get up and go to the bathroom, there will plenty of time for that.

The topic of today is Broken Crayons Still Color (Pause....)

Have you ever thought about the fact that broken crayons still color?

Who has not been broken at some point in our lives? Broken by disappointments; Broken by failed relationships. Broken by friends and family who let us down. Broken by life circumstances. Broken by hurts, pains, suffering and sorrow. Broken by health challenges. Broken by going to prison?

How about Just plain ol' broken! We've all been there, done that and may have several t-shirts that testify of our brokenness. But, broken crayons still color! Although broken, they still serve their purpose! Although broken they are still useful. Although broken, they are still valuable and can be used to bring beauty and color to a colorless picture or drawing!

Paul puts it like this in II Cor 2:10 - "I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." In other words, Paul was saying that although I may be broken,

I can still color! Here, Paul explains what God told him about his limitations (as some would view a broken --not at its best potential). God told Him that His grace is enough and it's ALL He needs, no matter the limitation/handicap/weakness. Once he had that revelation, he viewed his set-backs as a blessing because it then showcased God's showmanship even more. He realized that his weaknesses were able to show God's strength to be amazing. We are to do the same! Broke, limited, or hurt, God can still use us to create an artful masterpiece, by His grace and strength!

And you know what else, even though our tendency is to throw broken crayons away, a bunch of broken crayons can be melted and swirled together, and you get something very cool! You can even make candles that provide light in the darkness. When all of us 'broken crayons' unite, we are beautiful.

So, you may be broken right now but I encourage you to keep on coloring. Keep living on purpose for the One Who is able to keep you from falling. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." We were created to color this world with the love of Jesus. We were designed to bring color to the dark and dismal places where others are going through life feeling defeated.

Because we have received mercy, because we have this treasure in earthen vessels, we can't faint or grow weary. Though we may be troubled on every side, we are not distressed, we can still color! Though we may be perplexed, we're not in despair, and can still color! We may be persecuted, but we're not forsaken, so keep coloring! Yes, some of us have been cast down, but we've not been destroyed, so keep coloring! People may mock us or attack our character and dis our dreams... But God is making us a success story! My translation of that – though they tried to break you, because of the presence and power of the Lord in our lives, we can still color!

Here is a short poem about broken crayons:

RED is for the blood he gave

Green is for the new life He made

Yellow is for the son of God come to earth

Black is for the sin we made

White is for the grace He gave

Let's pray and then we will begin our talks about brokenness...