

SERIES: THE PROCESS OF BREAKTHROUGH  
PART 10: USE DAILY ACCOUNTABILITY

We've been talking the last 9 weeks of looking at the habits, attitudes and actions in our lives that are presently blocking and sabotaging the necessary breakthroughs that God wants for us and those breakthroughs we want for ourselves. We've been in this series, THE PROCESS OF BREAKTHROUGH, for 9 weeks, and many of us are seeing some great changes and transformation in our lives. I have received emails, phone calls and have had conversations with many of you talking about the changes you are experiencing in your lives through this series. That's tremendous.

Today I want to talk about how you can support and keep advancing in the breakthroughs you are praying and asking God for. I want us to look at, "What is the progress you are making in your Christian life?"

The fact is, growth is not smooth. The process to breakthroughs is jagged. It's two steps forward and three steps backward sometimes. It isn't all easy. You have problems, you fall back into self-defeating patterns. That's called a breakdown. The alcoholic goes back to drinking. The overeater gains the weight back. The gambler goes back to the casino. The workaholic fills up his schedule again. The liar keeps deceiving people. The rage filled person keeps yelling or threatening those they love. The arrogant and proud person keeps making everything about themselves. The

unkind person goes back to their pattern of saying and doing things that hurt other people. The self-centered person goes back to making all of life about them. The parent who is neglectful, inattentive, yells and calls their children names will fall back into those patterns, if they are not convinced of the breakthroughs that God has for them. We tend to repeat the patterns of our past. It's very easy to slip back. It's easy to slip back into old hurts, old habits, and old hang-ups.

Today I want to look at what causes a breakdown, and then **HOW TO USE THE ACCOUNTABILITY STEP**, which is Step 10 in **THE PROCESS OF BREAKTHROUGH**, on how to steer clear of the barriers, blockades and breakdown that often happen. **Breakdowns happen when you fall back into a self-defeating pattern.**

First, I want you to understand that breakdowns happen in a very predictable pattern.

## **I. Identify the predictable pattern of breakdowns**

Please read out loud with me James 1:13-16, “**And remember, when you are being tempted, do not say, ‘God is tempting me.’ God is never tempted to do wrong, and he never tempts anyone else. <sup>14</sup>Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away. <sup>15</sup>These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death. <sup>16</sup>So don’t be misled, my dear brothers and sisters.”**

Lets look at the...

## **Common roadblocks to your personal breakthroughs**

### **A. Complacency**

This is where you start getting comfortable with short-term gains. You start saying, “I don't need any more help, my pain has been reduced, not eliminated but reduced, but I can live with reduced pain. So I don't need to go to my small group anymore or CR groups or Men’s Ministry or Women’s Ministry anymore. I don’t need to be consistent in gathering with my CVC family every Sunday for worship, the Word, fellowship and prayer. I don't need to work the steps to breakthrough anymore. I don't need a counselor or an accountability partner or ‘sponsor,’” and you become complacent.

### **B. Confusion**

This is when you start rationalizing by saying to yourself, “Maybe it wasn't really so bad after all, the problem really wasn't that bad, I can handle it myself.” You start forgetting how bad it was. Then you move to....

### **C. Compromise**

You go back to the place of temptation. You return to the risky situation that got you in trouble in the first place, whether it's the bar, or the mall, or 31 Flavors, or you start

stretching the truth or withdrawing, or pouting or bullying family members or friends. You go back to that place. Like the gambler who says, “Let's go to Vegas, we'll just see the shows.” You start compromising.

## **D. Catastrophe**

This is where you give in to the old habit, old hurt, and the hate comes back, or the resentment comes back, or the old hang-up. You need to understand that the collapse is not the breakdown. The catastrophe is not when the breakdown happens; it started much earlier. The catastrophe is simply the result of the pattern that happened.

Why do we fall back? Why do we, even when we know which way to go, when we know the right thing, why do we tend to go back on what we know is the right?

## **II. What can cause failure?**

### **A. Reverting to willpower**

Paul writes in Galatians 3:3, **“Have you lost your senses? After starting your Christian lives in the Spirit, why are you now trying to become perfect by your own human effort?”** You start off trusting God, and Step 1 is Become Clear. I'm not God. My life is out of control. Step 2 is Realize God is God. Believe that Jesus Christ is all powerful. Jesus is our power. Step 3 is Embrace His Will. You choose to surrender your will to God's care. And you let God make

those changes in your life, but after a while you start thinking, "It's me that's doing this, I'm making the changes. It's my power." And you resort to good old willpower, and that doesn't work. You have a few successes and suddenly you think you're all powerful, all knowing and can handle everything. It's like the middle-aged lady that went to New York and went up to the twenty-third floor of an apartment, knocked on the door, a beautiful young lady opened the door, incense wafting out, music playing, and she's wearing a sari, she's clapping little bells and she said, "Are you here to see the great Bhagwan? The one who knows all, sees all, tells all, understands everything, is in ultimate control?" She said, "Yes, tell Sheldon his mother is here." We all need somebody to tell us when we're Sheldon. We all need someone to say, "Who are you kidding? You're you." And God will let you relapse and relapse and relapse until you realize you can't do it on your own. He'll just let you fall, one hundred, two hundred, three hundred times till you say, "God, I can't do it." Zechariah 4:6: **"Not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit says the Lord. You will succeed because of your surrender to My Spirit."** Only God has the power to take away those defects. If you go back to willpower you're going to relapse. If you're thinking, "I'll just try harder," forget it. Read with me again, please, 1 Corinthians 10:13, **"But remember that the temptations that come into your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful He will keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can't stand up against it. When you are tempted, He will show you a way out so that you will not give in to it."**

## **B. Ignoring one of the steps**

We get in a hurry. We try to move through the steps too quickly. Maybe you want to skip a difficult step like, “I don't think I need that step that we looked at last week on owning my responsibility by making reparations to those I have wronged. I'm okay with partial breakthrough, and we'll just kind of skip that one that says, ‘Go back to the people you've harmed.’” No, you need to do all the steps in the process of breakthrough, or it doesn't work. And you need to follow what the Bible has said are principles for life. So there's no quick fix. You didn't get into this mess overnight; you're not going to get out of it. You need to do all the steps. “You were doing so well. Who made you stop obeying the truth.” He says, “Keep working the steps. Use your daily accountability. Stay with the basics.”

## **C. Trying to break through without support**

“I'll achieve the breakthroughs I need by myself. I don't need anybody else's help.” You're asking for a breakdown and relapse. “I'll listen to these teachings, but I'm not going to go to get an accountability partner. I'm not going to go to Celebrate Recovery, I'm not going to go to small group; I'll listen to these messages and I'll just get breakthrough on my own.” That's just wrong, friends. It doesn't work that way. Please read with me Ecclesiastes 4:9-10, **“Two people can accomplish more than twice as much as one; they get a better return for their labor.”**<sup>10</sup> **If one person falls, the**

**other can reach out and help. But people who are alone when they fall are in real trouble.”** You can't break through all of the barriers in your life on your own. God didn't design you that way. If you could have you would have. But you can't so you won't. When you're tempted and things are going bad, who are you going to call? That great theologian Bill Withers said, “We all need somebody to lean on.” We do all need somebody to lean on, and we need support. And you're not going to make it in life if you don't have those relationships. Hebrews 10:25, **“And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage and warn each other, especially now that the day of His coming back again is drawing near.”** Yes. You can do these steps on your own and you'll see short-term effects, but you cannot do long-term breakthrough and discipleship without close intimate relationships. The root of your problem is relational. You can go out and practice these things on your own and not get involved with anybody else. It will work for a while, but it won't work for long, and you will experience breakdown and failure. I guarantee it. It's kind of like driving a car at fifty-five miles an hour and you take your hands off the wheel. You're not going to crash immediately, but it will happen inevitably. And if you don't get support when the temptation comes, and then you don't feel like doing the right thing, who's going to help you do the right thing? If you fall, who's there to help you? **Celeste please come and stand by Scott.**

In order to avoid a relapse, breakdown and failure you need to get support in your life. Because of denial you often can't

see your own problems. So we need each other to serve as mirrors. That's the value of these testimonies and stories we've been having. When you share your story I see some of myself in it. I would never have seen it in me except you shared it about you. And when I share you see part of yourself in me. And so when you share a testimony it brings healing to yourself and hope to other people. Please welcome my friend **Celeste Garcia**.

#### **D. We become prideful**

We get overconfident and prideful and say, "I'm strong. I've got this hurt licked. I've got this habit licked. I've forgiven them. It's OK." Proverbs 16:18 says, "**Pride goes before destruction, and haughtiness before a fall.**" The kind of pride that goes before destruction is where you have an excessively high opinion of yourself. It is called conceit. Haughtiness has to do with being scornfully and condescendingly proud. You need to stay humble or you'll stumble. The person who gets too big for their britches will eventually get exposed in the end. Remember the lesson of the whale: When you get to the top and are ready to blow that's when you get harpooned. Pride gets us in all kinds of trouble. Pride always sets us up for a fall. It blinds us to our own weaknesses. It keeps us from seeking help. It prevents us from making amends to other people. It keeps us from doing all the steps fully. The biggest problem with pride is that it causes us to blame other people for our own problems. We say, "It's not my problem." And that's pride when you hear that one. You push it off on somebody else. It's like the guy

who went to a psychiatrist and said, "I've got a problem, I think." The psychiatrist said, "I'm going to show you some pictures, you tell me what they are, and then I'll tell you what your problem is." He holds up a picture of a square. The guy says, "I see an apartment window, and inside there's a couple involved in sexual intimacy." He holds up a circle. He says, "I see a beautiful white beach, that's a beach umbrella, and underneath it there's a couple involved in sexual intimacy." He holds up a triangle. He says, "I see a beautiful reservation and that's an Indian teepee, and inside there's a couple involved with sexual intimacy. The Psychiatrist says, "We don't have to go any further, I know exactly what your problem is. You are obsessed with sex." He said, "Me, obsessed with sex; you're the one showing me the dirty pictures." What a classic example of, "It's not my problem, it's somebody else's problem." Pride causes us to blame other people. First Corinthians 10:12, **"If you think you are standing strong, be careful, for you, too, may fall into the same sin."** **The secret of lasting recovery is to live with humility.** It's the best protection for a relapse or breakdown. Not to get prideful and think I've got it all together. No. I'm getting it together. But I don't have it all together. I'm getting it together. And you live with a constant state of humility in your life. That's the best protection.

Do you remember a few years ago, before the Soviet Union broke up, there was a German teenage boy who flew a private plane into Soviet airspace and landed it in the Kremlin in Red Square? The most heavily guarded air space in the world and a kid flies right into it. That is a parable of life. What it says

is that your greatest weakness is often an unguarded strength. You say, “I've got this all together” — “Let him who stands take heed lest he fall.” “Oh, my marriage would never fall apart.” Watch out. “I'd never get addicted to anything.” Watch out. “Let him who stands take heed lest he fall.” Because often the very area you think you're strongest in is unguarded, and that's where a plane's going to fly in and land right in the middle of it.

What have you heard, or saw or felt God communicate to you today? Where are you in the process of the breakthroughs you're pursuing God for? Is there one or more of the common roadblocks that is thwarting your breakthroughs? Did you identify any of the causes of failures that you would go, “That is preventing me from moving forward”? Today we're going to celebrate what Jesus did for us as we share communion together. As the cracker and the cup are being passed out, would you please hold the cracker and cup so we can take it all together. If you choose not to celebrate communion with us you can just pass the trays on, no problem. Please follow along as I read Mark 14:17-25, **“In the evening Jesus arrived with the Twelve. <sup>18</sup>As they were at the table eating, Jesus said, ‘I tell you the truth, one of you eating with Me here will betray Me.’ <sup>19</sup>Greatly distressed, each one asked in turn, ‘Am I the one?’ <sup>20</sup>He replied, ‘It is one of you twelve who is eating from this bowl with Me. <sup>21</sup>For the Son of Man must die, as the Scriptures declared long ago. But how terrible it will be for the one who betrays Him. It would be far better for that man if he had never been born!’ <sup>22</sup>As they were eating, Jesus took some bread**

**and blessed it. Then He broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, ‘Take it, for this is My body.’<sup>23</sup> And He took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. He gave it to them, and they all drank from it.<sup>24</sup> And He said to them, ‘This is My blood, which confirms the covenant between God and His people. It is poured out as a sacrifice for many.<sup>25</sup> I tell you the truth, I will not drink wine again until the day I drink it new in the Kingdom of God.’”**