

SERIES: THE PROCESS OF BREAKTHROUGH

PART 11: FATHER'S DAY: GO TO GOD

**HOW TO STRENGTHEN, SUPPORT AND SECURE  
YOUR BREAKTHROUGHS**

This morning I want to look at how to be diligent and persistent in the constant maintaining of the ground you have gained of the previous steps we have talked about. This is what it means to be a fully devoted follower of Jesus Christ. Putting into practice these biblical principles is how you take up your cross on a daily basis, and put to death your selfish ambition and follow Jesus moment by moment.

Step 11 is the developing the intimate relationship with Jesus step. Please write in your notes. Today's step, the G in our acronym B.R.E.A.K.T.H.R.O.U.G.H. represents how to build and grow through the breakthroughs God gives you. G stands for...

**Go to God: Through a daily time with God in prayer, meditation and memorization of Scripture in order to know God and His will for my life and receive His power to fulfill it.**

This is based on Mark 14:38: **“Keep alert and pray. Otherwise temptation will overpower you. For though the spirit is willing enough, the body is weak.”** He's saying it is human nature to fail, to be inconsistent, compromise and to

go back to things that mess us up, even though we know they mess us up. It's human nature to let past problems revisit us, old hurts, habits and hang-ups come back to haunt us. So He said, you need to have some safeguards. And that's what this step is about. There are three safeguards that help you maintain your breakthroughs.

Three tools that will help you strengthen, support and secure your breakthroughs.

## **I. Consistent personal evaluation**

Lamentations 3:40 states, **“Instead, let us test and examine our ways. Let us turn again in repentance to the Lord.”**

What do we first examine? And, when?

### **A. What do I examine?**

**Four kinds of inventories:**

#### **1) Take a physical inventory**

You ask the question, **“What is my body telling me?”** Your body is a barometer of what's happening inside you. You have tense muscles? Guess what? You're under stress. You have a headache or a backache. What is it saying to you? Your body is a barometer, a warning light that maybe something is wrong, and so periodically you need to stop, maybe in the middle of the day and say, “What is my body saying to me? **Am I hungry? Am I tired? Am I fatigued?**”

**Am I stressed out?"** Take some clues that maybe things are out of line.

## **2) Take an emotional inventory**

How am I feeling right now? Am I allowing my real feelings to surface? Or am I just pushing them down? Pushing down your real feelings is like shaking up a Coke bottle and not taking the cap off; it's going to blow eventually. So it's important to do what I call a "**heart check.**"

**H Am I hurting?** If you are hurting and won't admit it and deal with it, it's going to mess up what you're doing.

**E Am I exhausted?**

**A Am I angry?**

**R Do I resent anyone?**

**T Am I tense or anxious?**

## **3) Take a relational inventory**

Am I at peace with everyone? If you're not, that internal conflict is going to keep you back and hold you back, from your recovery. There are some people in your life, and you obviously know when you are having conflict with them. But there are other people a million miles away... Do you realize you let some people live rent free in your mind? Aunt Bertha

hurt you fifteen years ago and she lives a thousand miles away, and you wake up thinking about her. You're letting her live rent free in your mind. Preoccupied with it. It's controlling you. You have to let it go. Ask yourself, "Is there anybody living rent free in my mind? Am I holding on to a hurt, anger, resentment or bitterness?" Who am I unforgiving towards?

#### 4) Take a spiritual inventory

This is where you ask yourself, "Am I relying on God in every area of my life?" You can best do this by going back over the previous 10 steps we have talked about. Please look at the front of your notes.

When you do an inventory at work, like a grocery store, you don't just look at the bad fruit that's spoiled, you look at the good fruit too. When you do an inventory you want to say, "What's good in my life?" You celebrate any victory, no matter how small it is, on a daily basis. I told the truth at least once today. I blew it three times, but I was calm twice. I at least wanted to be unselfish in that situation. You celebrate, no matter how small the progress is, I'm making progress.

You do an evaluation, you celebrate your successes and confess your failures, but you be grateful for what you have done that's right. Galatians 6:4-5 says, **"Be sure to do what you should, for then you will enjoy the personal satisfaction of having done your work well and you won't need to compare yourself to anyone else."**<sup>5</sup> For we are each

**responsible for our own conduct.”** When you take these inventories you can say, “I'm grateful that God is working and I'm seeing progress in my life.”

## **B. When do I do my evaluation?**

There are several different times you can do your evaluations.

### **1) Spot check inventory**

At any time of the day you start feeling the pressure build you say, “What is my body saying to me? What are my emotions saying? Am I tuned into God right now? Do I have any relational conflict?” You try to deal with it immediately, because the longer you postpone a problem, the worse it gets. You need to learn to do what I call spiritual breathing. Just as natural as breathing is to you, you need to do spiritual breathing. Spiritual breathing is when you have blown it, you immediately confess the sin, blow it out and breathe in God's love, “I receive your forgiveness.” That's spiritual breathing. You need to learn to do that on a moment-by-moment basis. You can do spiritual breathing a thousand times a day as the need be. Keep short accounts with God. Don't let those sins stockpile. If you keep short accounts when you do that Step 4 Moral Inventory, it doesn't take sixteen pages, because you've had short accounts. How often do you take out the garbage? If you just let it pile up and up, pretty soon your house starts stinking. You have to take it out. And your life starts stinking if you don't deal with the garbage that's in it on a moment-by-

moment basis. So the spot check inventory is whenever you need it.

## 2) Daily review

At the end of the day find a quiet spot and review your day, confess your failures, celebrate your victories, look at your day.

## 3) Annual review

You go away for a day, do a moral inventory, take some time off to really look at your life. Look at my life, see if it's in order, and prioritize the things in my life.

## II. Meditate on God's Word

Meditation is a good biblical word that has been co-opted by a lot of other people. It simply means this: Slowing down long enough to hear God. That's all it is. Business stifles recovery and growth. This is the secret of spiritual strength, and I find that Satan fights nothing harder in my life than this issue—making sure I get time alone with God, quiet time. He has three tools he uses: noise, crowds, and hurry. Those three things keep you from hearing God on a personal basis.

**Psalm 1:1-3, “Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers. <sup>2</sup>But they delight in the law of the Lord, meditating on it day and night. <sup>3</sup>They are like trees**

**planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season. Their leaves never wither, and they prosper in all they do.”**

The key to growth is to have roots down deep in God’s word. The way you get roots down deep in God’s word is to meditate on it, seriously think about what you read in the Bible for a little bit, and then think about what does it mean to your life. That’s meditation. How can I apply this to me? When you do that He says, “You’re like a tree planted by the river, and when the heat’s on you don’t wither away, and when the drought comes you don’t dry up and blow away.” You don’t have a relapse. We need each other and we need God’s Word to help us keep on the Road to Recovery. Notice the benefit. He says, “If you meditate you will succeed in everything you do.” Succeed. How would you like to succeed in everything you do? God says, “Simple, just meditate on My Word.” That habit alone will help you know the right thing to do, and then you end up succeeding.

It’s like the pastor friend who saw this homeless person and realized he was a member of his church. He said, “What happened?” He said, “Pastor, you wouldn’t believe it, my life has fallen apart.” This guy was a mess. He said he had lost all of his income; his wife was leaving him because of the financial affairs; his kids were off on drugs; he had gotten fired from work. Life was a financial mess. Pastor said, “If you’ll just get a Bible and meditate on it, God says He will make you a success.” He was so confident about this. You go open the Bible, put your finger down anywhere and do what

it says.” Six months later he saw this guy again. Very successful. “What happened?” “Pastor, I just did what you said. I opened the Bible, put my finger down and it said Chapter 11.”

I don't suggest you use that technique. The point is God says, “My Word is the way you succeed in life.” This is the manual for life, and life becomes easier when you follow the instructions. This is why we practice as a church from adults to our children having daily devotions. We read our Bibles every day following the Bible bookmark that we make available for every one of you, and we use the SOAP principle.

How do I meditate on God's word? Psalm 119:9 & 11, **“How can a young person stay pure? By obeying Your word and following its rules.... <sup>11</sup>I have hidden Your word in my heart, that I might not sin against You.”** He says, “I think about Your words, I store them in my heart.” How? You memorize. As I think about Your Word and memorize key principles and key passages, it keeps me from sinning. It holds me back from relapse. You want to avoid temptation? Think about God's Word and order your life according to God's principles and truth. Meditate on His Word.

If you know how to worry, you know how to meditate. Worry is just negative meditation. Worry: you take a negative thought and think on it over and over and over. You take a verse of the Bible and think on it over and over and over—



that's called meditation. So if you know how to worry, you know how to meditate.

Now there's a third tool that God says will be helpful to you in maintaining your recovery and that's...

### **III. Prayer**

Prayer can do whatever God can do. In fact it is the way that you plug into God's power. You say that I can't do it but God can. How do I get God's power? You get it through prayer. Now most people don't realize that you can pray about any need in your life. God is a loving Father, maybe the Father you never had. You can pray about a financial need, a physical need, relational need, a spiritual need, emotional need. He will take any need.

Now how do I pray? Notice what Jesus says. Matthew 6:9-15, **“This then is how you should pray: Our Father in heaven, may Your name be honored. <sup>10</sup>May Your kingdom come soon. May Your will be done here on earth just as it is in heaven. <sup>11</sup>Give us our food for today, <sup>12</sup>and forgive us our sins, just as we have forgiven those who have sinned against us. <sup>13</sup>And don't let us yield to temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. <sup>14</sup>If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. <sup>15</sup>But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive you.”** Now I want you to notice a couple of things about the Lord's Prayer. First I want you to circle the word “how.” Notice it says this is “how” you should pray. It does

not say this is “what” you should pray. It says “how.” It's a model. It is not a ritual to be prayed. People often ask how come we don't say the Lord's Prayer every Sunday. Because a couple of verses right before this prayer, Jesus says don't repeat a ritual prayer, don't have vain repetitions. This was not a prayer to be used as a ritual, it is a model. This is not what you should pray, this is how you should pray. Now if you notice here, all of the principles of breakthrough: vs. 9, **“Our Father in heaven, may Your name be honored.”** **This is the prayer of connection.** I become clear I'm not God, but my loving heavenly Father is. I realize God is God. Vs. 10, **“May Your Kingdom come soon. May Your will be done here on earth, just as it is in heaven.”** **This is the prayer of surrender.** I embrace His will for my life in all areas S.E.R.F.V.I.P. Vs. 11, **“Give us our food for today.”** **This is the prayer of provision.** Vs. 12, **“And forgive us our sins, just as we have forgiven those who sinned against us.”** **This is the prayer for forgiveness and reconciliation.** Vs. 13, **“And don't let us yield to temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.”** **This is the prayer for protection.** You see, the process of breakthrough is part of the Disciple's prayer that the Lord gave to us. Jesus Christ gave us the principles of His power and presence so that we can live a life of breakthrough in the entirety of our lives.

Today I've asked Rick Whitlow to come and share an example of how, even though he experienced brokenness in his relationship with his earthly father, he has learned to go to his Father God and has surrounded himself with other men

that have been a band of brothers who have helped strengthen and support him in the breakthroughs he has experienced in the past. He is presently experiencing some exciting breakthroughs from his own focus on perfectionism and his performance to receiving God's love, acceptance, forgiveness, and he is learning to have fun and experience more laughter than ever. Please welcome my good friend and co-worker Rick Whitlow.

### **[RICK'S TESTIMONY]**

What is the barrier, bondage, blockage that you have allowed to thwart the breakthroughs your Heavenly Father has for you? If you've got an issue in your life that you say, "No matter what I do I can't get over it," the good news is, and I've been saying this for eleven weeks, that you matter to Jesus Christ and He has the power to help you. You can make the changes with His help that you want to make and He wants you to make, if you will just step across the line and let Him do it. The choice is yours.

Let's bow our heads.