

REBUILDING YOUR BROKEN WORLD

Study Guide by Leslie H. Stobble

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Introduction

1. The author challenged you with his definition of “broken-world people.” (p. 12). What do you understand by the term?
2. How does your understanding of the term correspond to the author’s use of “broken-world people” (p. 12)?
3. What statement would you make about misbehaviour and its consequences (p. 14)?
4. How do *grace* and *rebuilding* fit into your statement (p. 17)?

THE TRAGIC REALITY OF BROKEN WORLDS

1: Broken Worlds

1. Check your answer to the question I.1 of the Introduction against the author's expanded definition (p. 22).
2. Re-read the three "broken-world myths" (p. 27). Cite one example of your mythologizing in this way.
3. Review your family history. Isolate an example of growth in a family member through a broken-world experience (see p. 29).
4. Identify the historical incident in the Bible that most resonates to your improved quality of living growing out of pain and brokenness (p. 30).
5. The author writes of "knowing yourself" as a sinner (p. 31). In your estimation, where or when are you most vulnerable to breaking?
6. What could you do "preventatively and remedially" to respond to broken-world experiences (p. 34).

2. A Broken-World Sampler

1. Trace the three stages that the author suggests will follow misbehaviour (p. 40). Add any others that you feel are indicated.

2. Choose a biblical account similar to that of Moses, Jonah, or Simon Peter (see pp. 43–51), and write a short dialogue for the time the character became aware of the broken-world experience. Some suggested characters: Saul, active persecutor; Job, left to die; Martha, after Jesus “put her down”; Zaccheus, dealings with debtors; David and Bathsheba, several scenes. This exercise of the imagination will allow you a feel for the pain of the ancients.

3. How do you feel—willing? somewhat hesitant?—to even think about such a negative possibility as a broken-world experience? Explain your answer.

3. Impenetrable Airspace

1. Name some principles that could guard and prepare you to caution someone to protect himself or herself against a broken-world experience (p. 54); to react to news of another person's broken-world experience (p. 54); and to expect the human reaction following a misbehaviour on your part (p. 54).

2. Recall the most recent news program that you watched on television or the most recent gossip session you observed. Measure your responses to Catherine Marshall's insights (p. 55).

3. Identify what the Christian does not take "seriously enough" (p. 59).

4. If Satan were to "blow you out of the water" (p. 59), how do you think he would do it?

4. Why Do Worlds Break Up?

1. Write a brief plea to the psalmist, David, at some point before he has come to a personal insight. Make it a first-person contemporary, and keep to the point of bringing him to see his sin.
2. Read Psalm 139. How might such a view of God have influenced David (p. 68)?
3. Write two or three sentences describing each of the author's concepts about personal insight:
 - a. Insightful moment (p. 63)
 - b. Environments of choice (p. 63)
 - c. Ache of the spirit (p. 65)
 - d. Repentance (p. 66)
 - e. Act of confession (p. 66)
 - f. Restoration (p. 67)
4. Describe the behaviour evidenced in a broken-world person who hasn't yet experienced personal insight (pp. 68-71).

6: *The Pain of Secret Carrying*

1. Read Psalm 51. What words in the psalm indicate David's desire for an "integrated system" (p. 88)?
2. *Insight* and *secret carrying* are defined as two acts. Using lines and circles, sketch each concept to show the differences between them (see p. 90).
3. Focus on *deception* as presented in the story of Aaron and the golden calf (pp. 90–93). At what point could Aaron have acted with insight and rewritten the story?
4. Personalize this chapter by bringing one of your own secrets into the light. It may be small or short term. What could you do to integrate your inner and outer worlds in relation to this secret?

7: Implosion

1. The author suggests what is not helpful when someone's personal world implodes because of *evil* or *sin* (p. 96). What responses might be more helpful?
2. From your own experience, cite some examples of aversion to the subject of evil (see p. 97, the Duchess of Buckingham) and ownership of one's sin (see pp. 97–98, Velma Barfield).
3. The author talks about exploring his inner space (pp. 99–105). Using a scale from one to ten, how would you rate your willingness to do such exploring?
4. Describe the two-part rebuilding process in the human experience (p. 106). Is that “the great hope” for you?
5. List the four times and places we are most likely to see our inner evil manifested (pp.107–109). Would you revise this list in any way?
6. The author mentions a young evangelist who persisted in his work because he hated sin (p. 111). Write a few sentences describing your feelings about sin.

WHY WORLDS BREAK

8: Unhealthy Environments

1. Write a list of affirmations for the traveller to be used as preventatives for unhealthy environments (see pp. 117–123). Begin, “The frequent traveller will . . .”
2. “The evil in our hearts and the environments of our worlds are a combination that must be studied and mastered to appreciate how worlds break up” (p. 116). List some ways of doing this.
3. The author says that “on any given day the best of us can cave in to a bad choice if we fool around in hostile environments” (p. 122). Sketch a poster with a verbal warning or write a proverb with that concept in mind.

9: O-Rings and Cold Temperatures

1. *Pride* is named as the ultimate cause of the explosion of the space shuttle *Challenger* (p. 125). Write some lines from hymns that declare the places of pride in life.
2. The author uses the phrase “reality of environments” (p. 127). What questions should we learn to ask in order to sense the power of such environments?
3. Make one practical application from the environment of infancy (pp. 127–129) to our time of endangerment.
4. Elaborate on this point: “Adolescence offers a whole array of possibilities for misbehaviour” (p. 131).
5. A young adult with three primary needs for *intimacy*, *identity*, and *functional value* (p. 132) carries this search into the church. How might we see it reflected?
6. Suggest some practical ways of “taking the offensive” (p. 136) for the mid-lifer.
7. Think of some ways that senior adults who “need almost everyone” (p. 137) may be relieved of isolation through the church.

11: Carrying the Baggage

1. Hebrews 12:1—“Let us throw off everything that hinders ...and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us”—is a helpful command to memorize. Reread it and insert the author’s three pieces of luggage (pp. 157, 160, 164) after “everything that hinders.”

2. Recall yourself in your family matrix where your early relating patterns were developed. Draw one instance where each of the five gifts (p. 158) was given to you. Example: *well-being*, “a daily hug.”

3. Comment on the section about unaddressed guilt (pp. 160–164). List some book you’ve read on the subject of guilt.

4. How is the Genesis account of Joseph (p. 162) relevant to the present day?

5. “The man or woman who wishes to prevent broken-world choices monitors the inner self for the signals of guilt” (p. 164). List some of these signals.

6. From the section of untreated pain (pp. 164–167), reflect your understanding of high or low pain thresholds. Why does the author refer to untended pain as “baggage”?

12: Tiptoeing on the Spider’s Web

- How seriously do you take the information on pp. 168-72? Write a statement of your present belief in regard to the presence of evil.

2: FILL IN CHART: FOUR SOURCES OF TEMPTATION			
1	2	3	4
Major Biblical Reference (OT / NT)			
Principal strategy			
Manifestation			
Source of overcoming			

- In the three sections at the close of chapter 12—“Going Beyond the Fences” (pp.180-181), “Doubt” (p. 181), and “The Counsel of the Wicked” (p. 182)—the author adds his cautions about spiritual warfare. Comment on each of the three.

14: The Peace Ledge Principles

1. The author writes that St. Paul suggests “that there is only one useful posture when we come to insight about ungodly choices in life: the posture of silence before God and before the world”

2. (pp. 201-202). Use a Bible concordance to discover where in the apostle’s writing is this “silent” admonition.

2. Do you agree or disagree with the author’s discussion of Jesus’ defensive strategies (p. 203)? Explain your choice.

3. No other human being can remove what Chambers called “the ministry of the interior” (p. 205) from us. Describe the ministry of the interior and then explain why the first statement is true.

4. Meditate on the author’s list of aspects of the ministry of the interior (p. 206). Focus on his journey in intercessory prayer. Consider how you might strengthen your pattern or intercession if needed. Where would you begin?

15: More Peace Ledge Principles

1. The author mentions at least fourteen sources by “writers of deep things” (pp. 209-210). Which one have you read? Set a modest reading goal in this area if it is needed.

2. Describe how you think a forgiven person lives (p. 212). Don’t hesitate to make the description vivid.

3. State in your own words how the author feels a broken-world person should handle pain (p. 213).

4. Evaluate in a few sentences your feeling after reading “Join with Those Who Know How to Praise God” (pp. 215-217).

5. Where would you go immediately to find such a group of people?

6. Describe the kind of relationship that calls a person to integrity (pp. 246–249). Do you have a relationship of mutual accountability? Which of the twenty-six questions (pp. 248–249) have you asked in recent weeks?

7. What techniques do you use to work for the applause of others (p. 250)? Is there a way you can check this?

8. Stretch your mind to the maximum description of what would be fun for you (see pp. 251–52). List some of the elements that would be included.

9. If you were to say that you had “left all” as Peter claimed (pp. 252–253), what would have to be included in your “all”? Is there anything on this list that might be a snare to you?

10. Answer the author’s question, “Are you filled with the Holy Spirit?” (pp. 253–255).

REBUILDING YOUR BROKEN WORLD

1: Rebuilt

1. In the biblical accounts of Peter, Manasseh, and the instructions of Paul to new Christians (pp. 257–261), we learn something of God’s restorative ways. Cite an example seen in today’s church that reflects God’s ways in this area.

2. To understand the level of confession needed for the broken-world person, read Psalm 51.

3. Give your opinion about the idea of a “restoration team” (pp. 261–267).

4. What support can you give from history of Scripture that discipline is needed for restoration (see pp. 265–266)?

5. What writings would you use to comfort another and aid rebuilding? (If you have none, perhaps this is a goal for you to begin Gathering resources to use in this way.)

6. Have you ever advocated (p.267) for another person? Following Barnabas’ example of an advocate, list what you can do to advocate for another person in your world.

7. What “call” is the author speaking of (p.268)

