

THE GRAPEVINE – Issue 27:17th Sept 2020

Dear Friends,

The Repair Shop is one of the most popular programmes on the BBC. During lockdown the viewing figures reached 6.5m. Nestled deep in the British countryside in an old thatched barn is where a team of Britain's most skilled and caring craftsmen and women rescue and restore items their owner's thought were beyond saving. Together they transform priceless pieces of family history and bring loved, but broken treasures, and the memories they hold back to life.

It seems that no 'restoration job' is beyond the love and expertise of the restorers. And in a disposable, throw-away society what could be better than seeing something restored to its former glory! Well, not quiet to its former glory, because they are returned to a good working condition while retaining the signs that the item has had a life.

There are many people who feel that their lives are broken. The challenges and pressures of life, especially this year, have brought many to breaking point, and sadly many are feeling like some of the items in the TV programme, in desperate need of restoration.

I was reminded of David's words in Psalm 51. David had been 'found out' after his adulterous affair with Bathsheba and in Psalm 51 comes to God in repentance. In verse 12 David asks God to 'Restore to me the joy of your salvation'; and in verse 8 he says, 'Oh give me back my joy again; you have broken me'. David isn't blaming God, but acknowledging that he himself has messed up and in need of being restored by God. David acknowledges in verse 17 that as he comes to God broken and repentant, God will not reject him or turn him away, but lovingly restore him.

In John 21, a post-resurrection appearance to his followers, we read of Peter's 'restoration'. Just a few days before, Peter had denied his Lord, and now Jesus speaks to Peter. But notice that Jesus doesn't reprimand Peter for what he had done, but lovingly restores him to his place of leadership.

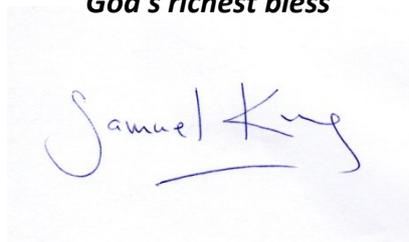
As Jesus restored Peter, he longs to restore each of us – no matter how 'broken' we might feel. Many, because of the events of this year, are feeling 'broken'. Aspirations, plans and dreams have been shattered and at best put on hold. Emotionally, mentally and spiritually many are feeling that their lives are falling apart around them through no fault of their own. Yet Jesus lovingly comes alongside to restore, encourage, support and guide us. The pain of our scars and wounds will be taken away, but the stories of how we got them will show how God used them for good.

I'm reminded of the words of the great hymn, 'Praise my soul the King of Heaven' – we are 'Ransomed, Healed, RESTORED, Forgiven'. No wonder the hymn-writer encourages us to:

'Praise Him, Praise Him, Praise the Everlasting King'!

If you're feeling in need of restoration allow Jesus to mend the broken pieces of your life and in time, use the scars for good.

God's richest bless



Samuel King