Rebuilding Your Broken World

Early in the pages of his deeply personal book *Rebuilding Your Broken World,* pastor, author, and sage Gordon MacDonald pens these selfless words of reflection: *I've come to a high point of sensitivity about broken-world people, for I am a part of those who look back into their personal history and recall with strong regret an act or a series of acts that have resulted in great distress for themselves and many others.*

From that intensely transparent confession, he takes the reader on a long journey detailing what happens when a leader falls. But he does not leave us there. Thankfully he charts a pathway back—one that is marked by both honesty and hopefulness.

This book is required reading for every spiritual leader in navigating the realities of life and leadership and most of all, embracing the liberating truth that *where sin abounds, grace superabounds*.

Take a look at these Book Notes and you will quickly see why you need to read this book…very soon.

Title: ***Rebuilding Your Broken World***

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Book Description:

What happens when your ideals and desires, plans and strategies, all go awry? From what sources might one find the resolve to begin a rebuilding process? "The fact is," writes Gordon MacDonald in *Rebuilding Your Broken World*, "the God of the Bible is a God of the rebuilding process. And not enough broken people know that."

No stranger himself to brokenness, Gordon MacDonald draws from personal experience and discusses the likely sources of pain, the humiliation, and the long- and short-range consequences of a broken personal world. And he offers encouraging answers to the questions everyone asks when their worlds fall apart: Is there a way back?

Book Quotes:

I've come to a high point of sensitivity about broken-world people, for I am a part of those who look back into their personal history and recall with strong regret an act or a series of acts that have resulted in great distress for themselves and many others. And what is worse is the fact that such performances are a terrible offense to God. LOCATION: 175

What I have called a connection of broken-world people is not a formal or necessarily visible body of men and women. I'm simply highlighting a mass of people who live with a certain kind of suffering. Not the suffering that comes through bereavement, an injustice, a persecution, a painful illness, or poverty. These people suffer from self-inflicted wounds: mistakes, errors, bad choices. Another word might be misbehavior. The hardest but most descriptive word for such suffering-inducing actions is sin. LOCATION: 178

All misbehavior is serious and is sin in God's eyes. And no one knows what consequences are liable to be unleashed when a person steps beyond the bounds of right performance. LOCATION: 211

I will always call myself a broken-world person because many years ago, I betrayed the covenants of my marriage. There was a moment when I brought deep sorrow to my wife, to my children, and to friends and others who had trusted me for years. LOCATION: 225

It begins with the premise that individuals who have failed must present themselves before God in openness and acknowledge responsibility and accountability. Nothing in this book is designed to make sense if that principle is not understood first. LOCATION: 233

BOTTOM LINE #1: Broken worlds are not uncommon; they can happen to any of us. And if they do, we may not be able to control the damage. Don't let anyone tell you differently. LOCATION: 287

Broken-World Myth #1 One myth suggests that broken worlds are the exception, not the rule. LOCATION: 368

Broken-World Myth #2 A second myth presumes that a broken-world experience can never happen to me. LOCATION: 373

Broken-World Myth #3 A third myth plays off the second. It is built on the assumption that if and when my world does break, I can more than handle the results. LOCATION: 377

One of my conclusions based on the reading I've done is simple: almost everyone in the Bible had a broken-world experience. Virtually no one was exempt. In fact, it's tempting to reverse the myth that broken-world experiences are anomalous and suggest that everyone then and now will have a broken-world experience sooner or later. It may not always be the result of one's own performance; it can be just as likely that one has to live with the consequences of someone else's choices. LOCATION: 414

Furthermore, the Bible seems to suggest through the stories of various men and women that broken-world experiences are usually the turnaround moments ushering people into greater and more powerful performances of character, courage, and achievement. LOCATION: 417

Tell Moses, Zechariah and Elizabeth, and St. Paul that the broken-world experience is an addendum, an add-on, to life. Tell them that pressure, failure, and embarrassment are not part of the course of human development and maturation. They simply won't agree. They will say that sorrow, pain, and stress are the "graduate school" of godly character and capacity if people are willing to enroll. The problem, they may suggest, is that this school has too many no-shows and dropouts. LOCATION: 429

In pain, failure, and brokenness, God does His finest work in the lives of people. LOCATION: 437

Almost every personal defeat begins with our failure to know ourselves, to have a clear view of our capabilities (negative and positive), our propensities, our weak sides. LOCATION: 482

Rather, we should realize that broken-world experiences are most likely to happen to all of us sooner or later, probably sooner to those who pretend they are infallible or untouchable. LOCATION: 487

Too many of us have experienced our own broken-world moments, and even more of us have witnessed the broken worlds of those we love. One major experience teaches us something we usually never forget: the consequences are rarely capable of being controlled. They have an energy of their own, and no one—except God—knows where the effects of a broken world are likely to stop. LOCATION: 516

BOTTOM LINE #2: The pain of a broken-world experience is universal; the ancients knew it as well as any of

us. LOCATION: 537

But the most common broken world—the primary one I've chosen to write about—is the world that shatters because someone has made a series of bad choices, misbehaved, and now has to live with what he or she has done. No one else to blame; no handy excuses; no injustices to identify. LOCATION: 550

In the final analysis, few broken worlds touch only one life. Like a hand grenade, the effects of one person's terrible choices explode outward to wound many others. For a genuinely sorrowful broken-world person, this unintended wounding of others often brings untold grief. LOCATION: 557

Ultimately, rebuilding broken worlds can never happen alone. It is a team effort, and it has to be accomplished in concert with those who can give grace and affirm progress. LOCATION: 593

Will you concentrate on the pain of this broken-world experience and resist it, OR will you permit the pain to become an environment in which God can clearly speak to you about matters He deems of ultimate importance? The choice is yours. LOCATION: 610

BOTTOM LINE #3: An unguarded strength and an unprepared heart are double weaknesses. LOCATION: 809

And then I realized that this is what happens to every broken-world person. Personal airspace is violated by temptations from without or by strange stirrings from deep within. And the result is the seedbed of misbehaviors sometimes of the worst possible sort. LOCATION: 829

Before God, we are all lawbreakers, whether or not our misbehaviors have received special public attention. And Christians must recognize that as the primary affinity bringing us together before Christ. LOCATION: 919

A few years after that conversation my world broke wide open. A chain of seemingly innocent choices became destructive, and it was my fault. Choice by choice by choice, each easier to make, each becoming gradually darker. And then my world broke—in the very area I had predicted I was safe—and my world had to be rebuilt. LOCATION: 941

Chambers commented on the tendency of men and women to lose major personal battles not at the points of their weaknesses but, strangely enough, at the points of their perceived strengths. He wrote, "The Bible characters never fell on their weak points but on their strong ones; unguarded strength is double weakness" (The Place of Help). LOCATION: 949

BOTTOM LINE #4: Personal insight is not only momentary; it is a healthy way of living. Insight is the first step in rebuilding. LOCATION: 964

Repentance is activated, first, in the act of confession: the candid acknowledgment before God, and perhaps to others, that one has sinned and is in need of forgiveness. Both by example and by teaching, the Scriptures place a high priority on confessing, for in so doing, one actually reveals the secrets of the heart. And until the heart is voluntarily opened up, the process of rebuilding a broken world cannot begin. LOCATION: 1033

BOTTOM LINE #5: Almost no one bears a heavier load than the carrier of personal secrets of the past or the present. LOCATION: 1175

Secret carriers expend tremendous psychic and emotional energy to keep the past from interfering with the present. There is the energy of fear that something from "beneath the plank" may come back to haunt the present. No wonder most secret carriers are not integrated or peaceful people. LOCATION: 1237

This present secretive dimension of life might include a destructive habit, a relationship that betrays other

covenants, or entrapment in an addiction or an eating disorder. Harder types of present-tense secret carrying to identify are inner attitudes of anger, resentment, or jealousy (there are many others) that can lodge themselves in our private worlds where we think no one can see us as we really are. LOCATION: 1242

Active secret carriers become experts in deception to survive. Large amounts of energy once funneled toward creativity and vital living get siphoned off in the constant planning and implementing of elaborate schemes to cover tracks. LOCATION: 1246

Studies suggest that more than half of American midlife males live with at least one secret in the past of their personal lives, and these men believe its revelation would bring about catastrophic consequences for them and those close to them. If this is true, a lot of people are living unhealthy inner lives today. We need to look hard at the nature of our relationships to see if we encourage secret carrying by making it difficult for people to come to the truth about themselves. LOCATION: 1296

BOTTOM LINE #6: The person who carries a secret has sentenced himself to a dungeon. LOCATION: 1369

Each of us is created to be a seamless system of personal and corporate life. The truth by which we live in our public worlds must be the truth by which we live in our private worlds. The gap or the difference between the two worlds will largely determine the state of our personal health. And it will indicate whether or not we have any integrity at all. LOCATION: 1403

Deception is never more ugly than the moment we reenter the light and realize how we have been living under the influence of a series of inner lies. LOCATION: 1483

BOTTOM LINE #7: “The one spiritual disease is thinking that one [is] quite well.” G. K. Chesterton LOCATION: 1500

As I said, many of us would be uneasy to make the inner voyage of exploration that David requested of God and that Teilhard described. Most would dare to barely descend beneath the surface. Excuses might include “not enough time” and “it seems so morbid a project.” But the thing that makes us most likely to resist David’s “search-me” prayer is the dread we have of finding out too much about what’s below. Too painful, too humiliating, too demanding for change. And to the extent that any of us avoid the journey, we invite shallowness of personhood and the ultimate possibility of a broken-world experience. LOCATION: 1575

But dragons inevitably break through the strongest gates, and they have no respect for our timing or our convenience. When they come, most of us are shocked beyond words at the thoughts, the motives, the attitudes, and the distorted values that they bring with them. LOCATION: 1599

Art experts have since restored the Pietà so that the damage can hardly be detected by anyone but the most knowledgeable. And the genius of the Christian gospel is that the beauty of humankind is also restorable or “rebuildable” no matter how badly one’s world has been damaged in one’s past experience. LOCATION: 1678

A friend tells me that you know whether or not you’re really a servant by the way you react when you’re treated like one. And I suppose that there is a corollary: you know if you have accepted yourself as a sinner when people help you find out just a little bit more concerning your sinfulness. LOCATION: 1728

BOTTOM LINE #8: Influences and moods, people and atmospheres, pressures and weariness: some or all of these, like a smoke screen, can distort what might otherwise be good thinking. LOCATION: 1779

I strongly believe that our Christian view of human performance must always take into account the decision-making environments if we are to understand why people have broken-world experiences. Most broken-world

people who are terribly remorseful will say that the choices they made are now mystifying even to them. As they look backward, they discern conditions that affected the way they thought and acted. And with such hindsight they see things now that they did not look far enough to see then. Influences and moods, people and atmospheres, pressures and weariness: some or all of them, like a smoke screen, distort thinking. LOCATION: 1826

Before God, there is no excuse for evil choices. LOCATION: 1833

BOTTOM LINE #9: Wise people need to know how their spiritual and mental systems are apt to operate in the various environments. LOCATION: 1945

History includes many stories of reliable men and women who suddenly seem to have reversed course and engaged in a personal scenario totally out of keeping with what they said they believed, what they might have done in the past, or what their stated goals and objectives in life have been. LOCATION: 1965

Why such a break? Why such a choice? We've already established as firmly as possible that the ultimate answer to those questions focuses on the evil in the human heart. Not one of us, in the past or the present, can shirk our responsibility for the dark side within our private worlds. Unmanaged and unrestrained, evil can run amok, confuse and distort thinking, and affect our choices. LOCATION: 1968

Study the tragic moments in many lives, and you will often discover that a secondary set of conditions was right behind the reality of embedded evil. Those conditions weakened the resolve of a man or woman to resist temptation and make decisions that were not right or true. LOCATION: 1987

BOTTOM LINE #10: When the body and the emotions and the mind are stretched to the limit, the risk of sinful choices climbs out of sight. LOCATION: 2182

I've written in other places that I believe weariness is a spiritual and physical plague of our time. Modern men and women are choosing to live in constant emotional and spiritual deficit. Most of us are expending more energy than we are taking in. Only a certain number with unusual resilience can maintain such a pace. The rest of us try to measure ourselves against these superperformers and then wonder why we lapse back again and again into weariness and guilt because we cannot keep up with them. LOCATION: 2291

BOTTOM LINE #11 : Misbehavior may often be rooted in the undisclosed things of our pasts. LOCATION: 2419

There is such a large assortment of this baggage from people's pasts. Much of it is heavy and bulky. It takes a lot of energy to carry it, and the fatigue of carrying it brings out the worst in many of the baggage handlers. I'd like to name three pieces of luggage of the past as examples. They are the "suitbag" of unresolved relationships, the "overnighter" of unaddressed guilt, and the "attaché case" of untreated pain. LOCATION: 2471

Guilt is usually experienced as a feeling, but it is actually spiritual pain. Real guilt is the result of the inner spirit, created in God's image, crying "foul." God's laws have been violated; His honor diminished. Something deep within us shouts in protest. We feel the shout as guilt. LOCATION: 2532

Unaddressed guilt makes for unstable choice making. It distorts perspectives, twists meanings, and undermines the confidence we need to press forward in the present. We cannot expect to live healthily in the future when the baggage of the past keeps banging away at the trapdoor of our minds demanding attention. LOCATION: 2568

Guilt is dispelled only when the truth is told, when the cover-up is exploded away, confession made, and

restitution accomplished. Only then will guilt like a block of ice melt away. LOCATION: 2583

If anger is like a piece of radiated material in a dump, poorly identified and improperly shielded, unaddressed guilt is like a huge block of ice. Kept in a dark, cold place, it remains hard. But brought into the light, identified, and confessed, it begins to melt, and soon it is gone. And free is the soul that no longer is frozen by unaddressed guilt. LOCATION: 2587

Among the other things that hinder us as we seek to keep our personal worlds strong is the problem of untreated pain. These are the open wounds created and sometimes perpetuated by others in our worlds. LOCATION: 2593

Untreated pain can exist far below the surface of our conscious minds. Smoldering like an underground coal fire seeking oxygen, it simply awaits a distant moment when it can explode. LOCATION: 2616

What does untended pain leave us with? Sometimes a struggle with self-confidence. Sometimes an inability to trust others, especially anyone who reminds us of the one who may have caused hurt in the past. Or we can be left with an expectation that we will be mistreated again, so we resist participating in a relationship or a task that might raise the risk of a repeat experience. LOCATION: 2629

Our memories are deep, seemingly bottomless. And unless we search them in a time of dis-ease, they are liable to betray us when unresolved relationships or unaddressed guilt or untreated pain tap into our spiritual circuitry. LOCATION: 2632

BOTTOM LINE #12: A disrespect for the power of evil is a major step toward a broken personal world. LOCATION: 2651

The final source of temptation comes from within the human heart. But this is not an attractive thing to think about. Nevertheless, the Scriptures are quite clear that inner spiritual sicknesses can plague us all and always, given a chance, draw us away from intimacy with God.LOCATION: 2820

No environment is more vicious, none more dangerous, than the dark side of the human heart and its capacity to promote evil. LOCATION: 2833

If the conditions of evil around us and in us are bad news, the good news is that we can be alert to them and appropriate the power of God to defend against them. Christianity is not a gloomy faith; it is a brilliant and powerful strategy against all else that is gloomy. LOCATION: 2842

Going beyond the fences has to do with outright disobeying the will of Christ and neglecting the spiritual disciplines given to us for our maximum protection. When we cross the fence line, we open the gate to increasing the possibilities for broken-world choices. We invite more intense spiritual warfare. And we are likely to have insufficient “weaponry” to handle the oppression. LOCATION: 2858

BOTTOM LINE #13: The freest person in the world is one with an open heart, a broken spirit, and a new direction in which to travel. LOCATION: 2903

It is more difficult to understand that repentance is not a one-time act; it is actually a spiritual lifestyle. To live in a constant state of repentance is to acknowledge that the heart is always ready to drift into wrong directions and must constantly be jerked back to control. This is not a call to a morbid kind of introspection that is always on a sin-search, putting ourselves down. But it is an honest recognition that the inward part of us is inclined toward rebellion and disobedience against our Maker. And it will always be that way until the end of time. That’s why the hymn writer, Robert Robinson, observed: Prone to wander, Lord I feel it, Prone to leave the God

I love; Here's my heart, O take and seal it; Seal it for thy courts above LOCATION: 2995

Brokenness implies an acceptance of full responsibility for what has happened, a genuine sorrow reflecting an awareness that one has grieved God and those who have been affected by the broken-world choices. LOCATION: 3026

Most outstanding men and women in the Bible seem to have had some sort of experience with brokenness. In fact, it seems to be the absolute essential before God is willing to work with any of them. Having read and reread their biographies, I've come to the conclusion that we might have disqualified the majority of them from ever holding appointed Christian leadership. LOCATION: 3047

BOTTOM LINE #14 : The process of rebuilding requires some temporary operating principles by which to navigate through the dark times. LOCATION: 3101

When the broken-world person is living with great wounds he has brought on himself and perhaps also inflicted on others, a season for slipping into a quiet place is necessary. This is no hour for plotting what the politicians call a comeback. LOCATION: 3177

The deeper and wider the hurt, the more important this withdrawal. It is a time to take stock of what happened and why; a time to realign and recharge spiritual resources; a time to probe deep within the inner world to understand where the blind spots were. This cannot normally be done in a matter of weeks. If it is unwisely hastened, there may possibly be a recurrence of misbehavior later on. LOCATION: 3179

But we were determined to seek God's rebuilding of our broken worlds the way Job had sought it—by getting our minds off ourselves and praying for our friends. LOCATION: 3254

BOTTOM LINE #15: Listen; receive; give; and then anticipate. No time in the wilderness is ever wasted for the one who intends to return what grace has given. LOCATION: 3271

Genuine Christianity is a faith of the suffering, we learned. In the broken-world moments, deep calls to deep; pain reaches out to pain; failure searches out failure. And Christianity talks of better, more hopeful days when night ends. LOCATION: 3305

And what were we learning personally? How insignificant in God's eyes is the applause that comes with organizational leadership and public recognition. How relatively empty the overly busy life no matter how good the goals and objectives. How cheap the mountains of words we pile up in public talk after public talk. Not that these are bad or inconsequential things. But they are fruitless if one operates from a spiritual baseline that is not richly fed and nourished in communion with the deep where God speaks. LOCATION: 3314

Either you believe in the capacity of Christ's atonement to make you a new person, or you don't. If you do, then start living like a forgiven person should live. And how is that done? By being a lot more quiet, humble, thankful, sensitive, and anxious to serve than you ever were before. Forgiven people basically live like that. LOCATION: 3335

When I was an athlete in track and cross-country, I learned that the champions spend a large amount of time dealing with the matter of pain. Mediocre runners like myself made pain the termination point of our performance. But champions made pain the threshold of performance. They knew what the rest of us resisted: you are only beginning to move into the possibilities of your best performance when you refuse to let pain become your termination point. LOCATION: 3357

The rebuilding process demands that one accept the pain. The bulk of the pain has an ending point, although I

am presently convinced that the broken-world person may live with a certain amount of heartache for the rest of his life. That's part of the consequences of sin. LOCATION: 3368

BOTTOM LINE #16: The granting of restorative grace is among the greatest and most unique gifts one Christian can give another. LOCATION: 3472

On the occasions that I heard or thought about people who were not prepared to act in grace, I confess that I was tempted to nurse a defensive spirit. But then something inside would remind me rather pointedly that broken-world people are in no position to demand grace or even to deserve it. They must merely be appreciative receivers; and if some people do not wish to give it, broken-world individuals must accept that as part of the consequences of the situations. What some people may or may not do with the grace there is to give to others is between them and their God. LOCATION: 3532

Without restorative grace, broken worlds cannot be rebuilt according to God's standards. Unfortunately, there are many stories of men and women who in their distress felt so abandoned and so ostracized that they put their own worlds back together in whatever fashion was possible. But this kind of rebuilding process was fueled perhaps by anger or by the need to survive or by the energy that comes from wanting to stubbornly prove oneself. The results of such rebuilding are usually something like my attempts to rebuild an appliance. Several pieces are left over, and the thing doesn't work very well. LOCATION: 3588

Then there is restorative grace, and that is what this chapter is about. This kind of grace comes to a broken-world person who comes to insight and acknowledges misbehavior in attitude or deed. Restorative grace is God's action to forgive the misbehavior and to draw the broken-world person back toward wholeness and usefulness again. It is God's response to the acts of repentance and brokenness. Restorative grace doesn't mean that all of the natural consequences of misbehavior vanish, but it does point toward a wholeness of relationship between God and the one who has returned in repentance LOCATION: 3610

Grace in any of these forms cannot be purchased; it can only be given and received. Grace is the "glue" that takes the pieces and bonds them into something new again. Grace is the "welcome mat" that lets a person know that having repented and demonstrated the fruits of brokenness, he or she is bid back to a privileged place in the family just as the father welcomed his lost prodigal son. Grace is the "scrubber" that cleans the blotched record and says that some things will be remembered no more. Grace is the "rubber stamp" that says CANCELED and acknowledges that the account is paid for. And (may I go around one more time) grace is the "electric current" that energizes virtually everything of value in the life of followers of the Lord. LOCATION: 3630

BOTTOM LINE #17 : We must assume the inevitability of attacks by an enemy hostile to our spiritual interests and build our defenses in the places he is most likely to attack. LOCATION: 3711

Maturity…suggests not that we become more perfect but that we become more willing to face up to what we are within and without and name what is offensive to God and to others. In naming our misbehaviors, we begin to gain control over them. We have a handle with which we can renounce them and throw them away. We have an identifying symbol that we can carry to the Cross when we confess our sins and ask for forgiveness. LOCATION: 3774

Brokenness is not only an immediate experience when we come to insight about misbehavior; it is a way of life. It is an attitude of the spirit, and it is built on the conviction that left to itself, evil is liable to break out in almost any form in our thought life, our words, or our actions. Therefore, we must be ready to name it, acknowledge it, and repudiate it. No excuses; no rationalizations; no denial. LOCATION: 3788

Spiritual discipline is to the inner spirit what physical conditioning is to the body. The unconditioned athlete, no

matter how naturally talented, cannot win a world-class race. LOCATION: 3812

The man or woman who is not taking a premium amount of time each day to look within and draw from the hand of heaven through the Scriptures and intercession takes great risks. LOCATION: 3849

If we are to successfully defend against bad choices resulting in broken-world experiences, it will also be because we have set out to develop some significant personal relationships that offer mutual accountability. LOCATION: 3852

I am often asked what sort of things friends in accountability might ask of one another. Having found little if any helpful literature on this subject, I put together a list of twenty-six questions, some of which friends might wish to consider if this personal defense initiative is to be effective.

1. How is your relationship with God right now?
2. What have you read in the Bible in the past week?
3. What has God said to you in this reading?
4. Where do you find yourself resisting Him these days?
5. What specific things are you praying for in regard to others?
6. What specific things are you praying for in regard to yourself?
7. What are the specific tasks facing you right now that you consider incomplete?
8. What habits intimidate you?
9. What have you read in the secular press this week?
10. What general reading are you doing?
11. What have you done to play?
12. How are you with your spouse? Kids?
13. If I were to ask your spouse about your state of mind, state of spirit, state of energy level, what would the response be?
14. Are you sensing any spiritual attacks from the enemy right now?
15. If Satan were to try to invalidate you as a person or as a servant of the Lord, how might he do it?
16. What is the state of your sexual perspective? Tempted? Dealing with fantasies? Entertainment?
17. Where are you financially right now? (things under control? under anxiety? in great debt?) 18. Are there any unresolved conflicts in your circle of relationships right now?
18. When was the last time you spent time with a good friend of your own gender?
19. What kind of time have you spent with anyone who is a non Christian this past month?
20. What challenges do you think you're going to face in the coming week? Month?
21. What would you say are your fears at this present time?
22. Are you sleeping well?
23. What three things are you most thankful for?
24. Do you like yourself at this point in your pilgrimage?
25. What are your greatest confusions about your relationship with God? LOCATION: 3888

BOTTOM LINE #18: The grace that helps to rebuild a broken world is something given: never deserved, never

demanded, never self-induced. LOCATION: 4031

Restoration first requires confession by the broken-world person. The secrets of the heart and of past actions have to be put into the light. LOCATION: 4147

This is a confession of guilt and responsibility. It avoids all excuses and rationalizations. It makes no attempt to blame others or to shirk responsibility for what has happened. Until this happens, the healing process has no chance to begin. LOCATION: 4151

A second aspect of the restoration or rebuilding process takes place when the broken-world person and a restoration team take time to go into the history of events that led to misbehavior. This is an important process. LOCATION: 4153

I must underscore the significance of counseling at this point. Although we may give or receive forgiveness, that is no guarantee that all the roots of misbehavior have been discovered. Counseling from a gifted therapist can go a long way to making sure that the “decay” is treated. LOCATION: 4163

Third, restoration requires discipline. The broken-world person cannot take this into his own hands. He needs to trust in a body of mature, godly people whose agenda is rebuilding. Along the way some painful steps must be taken to regain the confidence of others and to experience healing, and the members of the restorative body should determine how much time to allow. LOCATION: 4166

Then restoration involves comfort. No one but the broken-world person knows how painful can be the humiliation and loss following misbehavior and its consequences. LOCATION: 4174

A fifth aspect of restoration is advocacy. The process of rebuilding always has a stated objective, which is healing and a return to service or usefulness. LOCATION: 4197

Finally, restoration requires an official declaration when it is accomplished. LOCATION: 4207

A specific time must come when one is released from discipline. Perhaps this is a public occasion, a time when the advocates of a person’s restoration are prepared to say to the world or to those who care: this person is ready once again for responsibility. LOCATION: 4208

BOTTOM LINE: When you have been pushed or have fallen to the ground, there can be only one useful resolve: Get up and finish the race! LOCATION: 4239

Many biblical challenges call us to a performance in the Christian life worthy of a medal. But underlying all of those encouragements is an even more important one: Finish the race. LOCATION: 4254

Both inside and outside the church are broken-world people, and they are there in no small numbers. They yearn for an understanding and wise ear; they dearly wish for an amnesty that would provide the chance to make things right and new. If their spirit is right, they are not asking that their sins be diminished or overlooked; they are not asking that people pretend that nothing has happened. What they seek is what the cross of Christ offered; grace freely given; healing fully applied; usefulness restored. LOCATION: 4264

Charles Spurgeon looked back upon dark hours in his own life and said: I bear witness that I owe more to the fire, and the hammer, and the file, than to anything else in my Lord’s workshop. I sometimes question whether I have ever learned anything except through the rod. When my schoolroom is darkened, I see most. LOCATION: 4269

The objective of rebuilding a broken world is not returning life to business-as-usual as if nothing had ever

happened. That could never be. No, the objective is to come out of a dark time and finish the race with a depth of grace and humility that might not have happened under any other circumstance. LOCATION: 4273

Note: should you wish to find any quote in its original context, the Kindle "location" is provided after each entry.