

Be a Berean!

The Bereans...received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day (Acts 17:11).

We know Jesus through the Bible, or we know him not at all. That is the urgent premise behind LAC's efforts to encourage personal Bible reading and systematic Bible study. We fervently hope that you will--

1. "Stand in the Rain" with us every day as we read through the Bible in three short years. Just go to ***lockportalliance.blogspot.com***

2. Attend one of these Bible-based classes this week—

"Study of Major Bible Themes"--Sunday at 9:45

"Value-Packed Parenting: Raising Rock-Solid Kids in a Pleasure-Driven World"--Sunday at 9:45

"Experiencing God's Dream for Your Marriage"--Sunday at 9:45

(Contact Franklyn Pfeil--pfeilmail@yahoo.com--with questions or comments.)

"where things were first broken"

I was 15 when the walls broke down and the enemy entered.

I remember a certain girl. I thought she was the world itself.

I remember a race. I cheated to win, because I thought the girl in the sentence above would like me if I were to win.

I remember a phone call. A friend was run over as he walked home. He was the other guard on the Emmet Belknap basketball team. He was the best pure shooter I have ever seen. Then he wasn't anymore.

I remember a swim meet. We'd driven through the snow all the way to Jamestown. I won a green ribbon for the breaststroke. But I lost the ribbon, or so I'd thought. Two weeks later, when a teammate pulled his towel out of his gym bag, a green ribbon fell to the ground: 'YMCA District Championships / 50-meter breaststroke.' Another boy picked it off the ground. "Jeff, you've never raced breaststroke."

Maybe he wanted to impress a girl. People have been known to stoop that low.

When I was 15, I walked out of the 'Y' after a basketball game and was slugged in the face. I got off the ground and fought. Charley wanted to fight me because I was white. Charley had failed two grades and we thought of him as a giant. Charley unhinged my jaw that night.

When I was 15, it was 1968. I remember the race riots and the war and the protests and the assassinations. We started to hear about drugs. For a while it was far away. But when the girl in the sentences above wasn't ever seen anymore unless she was seen with the pot-smoking crowd, it had moved right in to my town.

It was as if, in one year, the world had broken. My city was broken. Friends were broken. I was broken. Death had entered. Sin and death had marched right in through the broken promises, the broken principles, the broken hearts.

The city was broken far before I became aware of it in 1968. My Dad was born in 1914. He was 15 in 1929, the hinge year between the Roaring 20's and the Great Depression, which would stretch for a dozen broken years.

God, in the book of Ezekiel, looked down on a broken city. He looked for someone who would stand in the breach, the gap in the wall. But he could not find anybody. Because they were all broken, too. Nobody--*no not one* (1)--could fill the gap:

So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one. (2)

So God found the solution in himself. There, at his right hand, was the man who would repair the breach.

But it would be costly. Fixing what was broken would break the man himself. And, as the law demanded, when the man became sin for us, God for a time would sever his own right hand (3).

When I was about 45, I found the same man God had found. You keep looking and you'll find him too. You'll find him where things were first broken.

(1) Psalm 14:2-3; (2) Ezekiel 22:30; (3) see 2 Corinthians 5:21 and Matthew 5:30 and Psalm 22:1