

### 8.3.25 Broken Crayons Still Color ~ “Masterpieces in the Mess”

**Theme:** God doesn't wait for us to be perfect. God meets us in our brokenness and, through Christ, creates something beautiful—with us and through us.

#### **Ephesians 2: 1-10** *The Message*

**2** <sup>1-6</sup> It wasn't so long ago that you were mired in that old stagnant life of sin. You let the world, which doesn't know the first thing about living, tell you how to live. You filled your lungs with polluted unbelief, and then exhaled disobedience.

We all did it, all of us doing what we felt like doing, when we felt like doing it, all of us in the same boat. It's a wonder God didn't lose his temper and do away with the whole lot of us. Instead, immense in mercy and with an incredible love, he embraced us.

He took our sin-dead lives and made us alive in Christ. He did all this on his own, with no help from us! Then he picked us up and set us down in highest heaven in company with Jesus, our Messiah.

<sup>7-10</sup> Now God has us where he wants us, with all the time in this world and the next to shower grace and kindness upon us in Christ Jesus. Saving is all his idea, and all his work.

All we do is trust him enough to let him do it. It's God's gift from start to finish! We don't play the major role. If we did, we'd probably go around bragging that we'd done the whole thing! No, we neither make nor save ourselves. God does both the making and saving.

God creates each of us by Christ Jesus to join him in the work he does, the good work he has gotten ready for us to do, work we had better be doing.



"Do these look useful to you? **SLIDE**

Each one is broken—paper torn, tips snapped.

Broken Crayons...we find them all over the place in P1—our parsonage,  
with 3 and 5 yr old grandkids hanging out at Papa and Gigi's.

Some have been stepped on (BUT hear this trustees...  
all on the wooden floors, so no worries!),  
some chewed & slobbered on by Ruhe our Chesapeake Bay Retriever  
(who was clearly disappointed it was not a tasty grandbaby snack)  
and many left at the bottom of the crayon tub we now keep.

I told my oldest grandkid Abby about today's sermon.  
I showed her a tiny broken tip of a crayon  
(one that Ruhe had tried to snack on),  
and asked what can you do with this? She shrugged her shoulders.  
I said, "Do you think it can still color? She smiled and said no.

So I said "Well let's try"...and I rubbed it on a piece of paper.  
And boy her eyes lit up and she said triumphantly, "It still colors!"

She then wanted to use that tiny bit of broken crayon,  
so we made a drawing together using **only** broken pieces.  
I said, "How cool is it that broken crayons still color?"

She very seriously nodded and said  
"Gigi, little pieces are fun and made the best sun ever!"  
She took that masterpiece home.

Today we continue our T-Shirt Theology Series & this week my T-shirt  
**Title Slide** proclaims boldly: "*Broken Crayons Still Color.*"  
And that's not just cute—it's gospel truth." Amen?!

Let's hear again how Paul puts it in **Ephesians 2:10 from The Message:**  
"God creates each of us by Christ Jesus to join him in the work he does,  
the good work he has gotten ready for us to do,  
work we had better be doing."

The **NIV** says: *“For we are God’s handiwork,  
created in Christ Jesus to do good works...”*

That word *“handiwork”* in Greek is *poiēma* (**poy-EE-mah**)—  
poem, art, something lovingly created...a masterpiece.  
It’s Not factory-made. Not perfect. Not pristine.

Poiēma is a creation that is **intentional, purposeful, beautiful**.

This is cool especially in light of the context of what Paul is writing  
to the believers in Ephesus. He begins,  
“It wasn’t so long ago that you were mired in that old stagnant life of sin...  
you filled your lungs w/polluted unbelief, & then exhaled disobedience.  
We all did it... all of us in the same boat.”

Paul begins with: *“You were stagnant/dead in your sins...”*

Not *You were thriving*

Not *You had it all together*

*But you were broken, lost, stuck... and God loved you anyway.*

What an amazing gift...

that kind of grace and mercy, compassion and love amidst our mess.

**And friends, I’m here to say it loud and clear—the Mess Is Real.**

The messiness of life we each face... the messiness that comes with  
Our own struggles, messiness with being part of a family,  
a church, a community, a nation.

Brokenness, disconnect, lostness...

are part of life in the midst of “the crazy” in which we live.

So many of us may feel sometimes like **broken crayons**—  
scattered and tattered, may be feeling useless or worthless...

- Grieving a loss that doesn’t seem to heal.
- Carrying shame from a past decision.
- Tired from trying to be strong for everyone else.
- Overwhelmed by what’s happening in our world—war, injustice, division.

And yet...*broken crayons still color.*

We are reminded once again in today's scripture that:

~God isn't afraid of our mess.

~God gets all up into it... Sees the brokenness, the sinfulness, the pain, the ugliness, the imperfection—BUT...

~God also sees all the potential, the possibility, the beauty...

~And through Jesus—God rewrites the story.

God saves us amidst the mess and showers us with grace and love.

God creates again and again beautiful, and YES...

sometimes messy masterpieces.

Here's what's stunning:

God doesn't just fix broken people. God doesn't just fix broken people

God **creates with them...Masterpieces in the making...**

~God takes our scars and makes them sources of compassion

~God takes our regrets and turns them into wisdom

~God takes our wounds and forms a witness

You don't have to be perfect to be purposeful.

God isn't waiting for you to be fixed—God is inviting you & me now:

“Join me in the work that I'm doing.

Let's color this world with hope, **together**.”

In Christ, join the good work he has begun & gotten ready for you to do...and you...and me...For all of us—

Work...that Paul says...we had better be doing!

And friends, isn't that's exactly what our **ASP mission team** will be doing this week?

They're going to Appalachia to **join God**

in work that's already underway—repairing homes, yes,

but even more, **restoring dignity, offering hope, bringing color** where things have gone gray perhaps.

The FMC Mission Team...are masterpieces in motion—

Each one...messy, imperfect, beautiful broken crayons—

coloring boldly alongside hurting families in Appalachia,

infused with the Holy Spirit's life-giving strength, love & grace.

They are artists of the Gospel.

Not because they're perfect, but because they're *willing*.

They said we see this work you've gotten ready for us to do O Lord...

And we're ready and excited to go do it!

And what about you?

You may not be headed to Appalachia this week,  
but God still has good work prepared just for you.

~Maybe it's encouraging a neighbor who's hurting.

~Maybe it's showing up for a friend who's feeling forgotten.

~Maybe it's volunteering with our kids or joining a small group  
to grow deeper in faith.

You don't need a hammer and toolbelt to be a Gospel artist—  
just a willing heart.

And trust...trust that God needs YOU in all your messiness.

Today, ask God—What have you already prepared for me to do this week?

Then be bold. Color outside the lines.

Be someone's unexpected masterpiece of grace.

And friends, isn't that what **this table**, Holy Communion is all about?

Jesus took **broken bread**—and said, "*This is my body, broken for you.*"

He took Life and death in this **messy world**—and made it **sacred**.

Communion is not a prize for the perfect. It's a **gift for the broken**.

So when you come to this table today, bring your whole self—

Your regrets....your doubts...Your worn-out places...

all that's broken & messy in your life...

Because God meets us here, and says:

"You're still mine. You're still beautiful. Together...

You and I still color the world with grace."

So if nothing else, I ask you to take this with you today:

- You are not disqualified...or considered less than...
- You are not too far gone.
- You are God's **handiwork**—even in the mess.
- And your life, all the tiny bits of broken crayons and all the messiness that we each have...YOUR LIFE still has purpose in the eyes and creative hands of God.

So let's go out this week and color boldly—  
in Jonesville, PA, in our families, our community—  
because grace, not perfection, is what makes the masterpiece.

This morning, we have a take away at the rail for each of you...  
once you receive the bread and cup  
there are scattered along the communion rail broken crayons.

I invite you to prayerfully take one as a token & reminder that YOU  
are a Messy Masterpiece, beautiful and created anew  
by an amazing God over and over and over again.

But look down the rail or at those sitting near you...  
and remember that so are they!

May we remember we don't have to be perfect to be called...  
to love & work alongside our Lord coloring the world with hope!  
May it be so. Amen and Amen.