

THE 3 "R"s FOR 2022: RESTORE, REFRESH, RENEW

In the midst of the stresses we face, Jesus calls us to a place of refreshment, restoration, and renewal.

KEY POINTS

- ❖ Many are quite familiar with the term "The Three 'R's," whether it was learned as Reading, 'Riting, and 'Rithmetic, in public school or as the Three "R"s of waste management: "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle."
- ❖ The theme for Faith Sanctuary in 2022 is the Three "R"s: **RESTORE. REFRESH. RENEW.**
- ❖ This year, let us seize the opportunity to engage in the Three "R"s and really make 2022 a powerful year of positive change and growth in our lives.
- ❖ There was a time in Jesus' ministry when He returned home to Nazareth after a productive time of preaching, teaching and miracle working (Matthew 11 to 13). He went into the synagogue and taught in such a powerful manner that the people were totally astonished to hear a hometown boy speaking such words.
- ❖ But instead of thanking God and embracing Jesus as their own, they were offended and turned against Him in unbelief, so that He was only able to heal a few sick people in His own town (Mark 6:5-6).
- ❖ Immediately after this, Jesus called His disciples to Him, gave them supernatural power over Satan and sickness, and sent them out two by two to preach, heal and cast out unclean spirits.
- ❖ While all of this was going on, we read in Matthew 14 that King Herod arrested Jesus' cousin John, His forerunner (the one who announced Him to the world and who had baptized Him).
- ❖ John was a preacher of righteousness who wasn't afraid to call out sin whenever and wherever he saw it. He did this with Herod, who had married his own sister-in-law in violation of Jewish law (Leviticus 18:16, 20:21).
- ❖ To please his new wife, Herod threw John in jail and eventually beheaded him (see Matt. 14:1-12).
- ❖ This gets right to the heart of today's message. We may be in the midst of great triumph and success as the disciples were, or we may be in a time of intense sorrow and grief as Jesus was. We could be at either end of the spectrum. Or we could be like the vast majority of folks who are somewhere in the middle.
- ❖ It really doesn't matter where we are in life and what our situation may be. It's all too easy to lose touch with some very important things that Jesus spoke about in Mark 6, like physical rest, proper eating habits, and, most importantly, time alone with God.
- ❖ In His life, Jesus made a point of not falling into this trap. For example, Mark 1 tells us about a particular day when Jesus had gone all-out: teaching in the synagogue, healing the sick, casting out demons.

KEY SCRIPTURES: Matthew 11:28-30, 14:13-25; Mark 1:35-37, 6:30-32; Luke 5:15-16

- ❖ He did this well into the evening and the whole city of Capernaum was gathered at His door. By the time the last person had left, He was most likely exhausted and completely worn out. Verse 35 tells us He took the time to go to a solitary place to pray (see vv. 35-37).
- ❖ Peter and the others didn't realize that Jesus couldn't do what He needed to do unless He was constantly being restored, refreshed, and renewed in the presence of God.
- ❖ You may not be preaching the gospel, healing the sick and casting out demons every day as Jesus was, but you get the point. *You* also have a busy life and there's a lot on your plate, whether good or bad. So, it is very important that you take full advantage of the offer Jesus made in Matthew 11 to come aside and rest a while (see vv. 28-30).
- ❖ Matthew 11:28 is a blanket call to anyone who will hear, believe, and come. There is no guilt or shame attached to His call. He has given no preconditions. So, let's not be the ones to erect artificial barriers between ourselves and God.
- ❖ Matthew 14 records one of the most famous miracles in scripture. Despite the pain and sorrow He was going through concerning His cousin John's death, Jesus had received enough strength and restoration in that short time of solitude to be the source of food for 5,000 men, plus women and children.
- ❖ This shows us what can happen when we spend time in the presence of God as He dispenses the 3 R's to us! Who knows what He may choose to do through you?
- ❖ Even in the midst of the stresses we face, let us prioritize time in God's presence to receive from Him the 3 R's: Restoration, Refreshment, and Renewal.

DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. What is your definition for each of the following: "Restore," "Refresh," "Renew"? What are some scriptural examples that exemplify each term (e.g., Isaiah 40:31)?
2. How can we use these scriptural examples to recharge from the stressors of life?

PRAYER TIME

Lord, it is only in Your presence that I am able to be restored, refreshed, and renewed. So, "into Thy presence I come."

Start-up: In this New Year, is there a resolution you hope to make? What must be done to make it possible?

WEEK OF SUNDAY, JANUARY 2, 2022

NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week's message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

✓ (Reminds me/Confirms) 💡 (New idea) 🔄 (Think about)

! (Do this) ❤️ (Speaks to my heart) 🗣️ (Must share)

PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS

Go deeper with your Life Group family.
CONNECT-REFLECT-DISSECT THE WORD