

Fall Afresh – Part 1
“Our Strategy for Renewal & Refreshment ...”
January 6-7th, 2018

Intro:

- Happy New Year everybody!!!
 - Such an exciting time to put 1 year behind us & look forward into a new year...
 - A blank slate. - A clean canvas. - A bright future... hopefully.
- As we've prayed about this 1st series of the New Year, we had this sense that so many of us are in need of a Fresh Start!
 - We've all been through such a crazy, hectic, stressful season w/ Irma, in 2017!!!
 - **The reality is... more than a Fresh Start, we need a Fresh Filling of the Holy Spirit this year!**
 - Over & over through the N.T., we see this urgency among the Believers that no matter what they were facing, they needed to be Filled up with the Holy Spirit.
 - MIP: No matter what we face, Mountains or Valleys this year, the bottom line is: ***We are going to need the Power of the Holy Spirit within us & upon us to face it & come out victorious on the other side!!!***

? What does it mean to be refreshed by the Holy Spirit?

- WATER ILL.
 - 1) When you're hot & tired & exhausted, you want to drink it.
 - 2) But you also want to dump it on your head, or jump in a pool!
- Both refresh us!!!
- That's what we want these 4 weeks to be!
 - More than a **“Reset Button”**... But a **“Refresh Button”** in our Souls!!!
- Segue: These first 2 weeks, we are going to look at 2 distinct moments when David was in need of Refreshment before he became king over Israel.
 - David is a unique individual b/c we not only get to see him as a character in the bible, but we get to hear some of his thoughts about what was going through his head at the time as well. (Paul is another one)

Psalm 27 – David is reflecting on a super stressful time... (I Samuel 22)

- He is on the run from his father-in-law, king Saul and Saul reached the city where David was hiding out & b/c nobody would squeal on David, Saul has 86 priests & their entire families put to death!!!

- It's absolutely horrible!!!

- When David heard about what's happened, he is of course beside himself, & racked with Guilt b/c he knows its his fault that these people have died!

- In the middle of that Horrible Season, David is longing for the day when this season can be over...

Psalm 27:1-3 "The Lord is my light and my salvation— whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life— of whom shall I be afraid? ² When the wicked advance against me to devour me, it is my enemies and my foes who will stumble and fall."

v. 3 "Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear; though war break out against me, even then I will be confident."

- Then look at what he says!!!

v. 4 "One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple."

David's Strategy for Renewal & Refreshment:

- The rest of the chapter is an inside look at David's heart & desires!

v. 8 "My heart says of you, "Seek his face!" Your face, Lord, I will seek."

1. Seek God's Face.

A. David made a decision to Seek God's Face, even when he didn't feel like it!!!

- There's a Difference between Seeking God's "Hand," & His "Face!"

- God doesn't want us to just seek His Hand of Blessing, He wants us to seek His face of character.

B. ASKING TO SEE YOUR KIDS ILL.

- You wouldn't show me pictures of their hands, you'd show me pictures of their faces!!!

- Why? B/c their faces are Who they are!!!

- American Christianity is Very Much Focused on What God can do for us, instead of Who God is!!!

C. MIP: ? Are we more interested in God's Blessing or His Character?

- Let's be a church that seeks His face!!!

- Even when our circumstances scream at us to do otherwise!!!

- It's WAY easier to just watch Netflix & Veg-out on the couch then it is to Seek His Face!!!

- But if we want to be Refreshed, then we have to Seek Him!

2. Deal with Past Hurts & Wounds.

v. 10 "Though my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will receive me."

A. David wasn't the Easiest guy to be associated with at this point.

- So much so, that his parents & siblings had distanced themselves from him.

- This probably wasn't a distant pain, it was probably active in the present as well!!!

- David acknowledged the Hurt & the Wound.

- He didn't deny it or pretend it wasn't there!

B. Who we are in the Present is comprised of what we experienced in our past!

- So many people want to pretend this isn't true!!!

- Our past is affecting our present way more than most of us want to acknowledge!!!

C. David allowed the pain of his past to push him TOWARD the Lord, not away from Him!

- So many of us do the Opposite!!!

D. MIP: ? What pain from 2017 or your further past, do you need to forgive & allow the Lord to heal so you don't carry it into 2018 & beyond???

3. Keep up your Confidence in the Goodness of the Lord.

v. 13 “I remain confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.”

A. “I Will...” – He is Choosing to stay positive & stay confident!
- He is Willing Himself to Trust in the Lord.

B. MIP: Sometimes we just have to Choose & Will ourselves into Trusting in the Goodness of the Lord, especially when we can't see His hand at work!
- When we can't “see”... We trust!!!

C. KAREN MURANO – “You have to start with, ‘God is Good’ after that, everything else falls into place!”
- I had to take the conditions off of “God being Good,” b/c we know the end, no matter what!!!
- I chose to believe God is Good ahead of time, it added a different depth & strength through the whole process!
- Phil: I started w/ the “What If's”, but then I had to set my heart on choosing Joy!
- “Joy” as Final Word at Easter!!!

4. Wait on the Lord.

v. 14 “Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.”

A. ? Who is he talking to? The whole psalm has been about himself.
- He's talking to himself!!! - He's commanding himself!!!

B. Be Strong – Posture yourself as one capable of carrying the load.
- PICKING SOMETHING UP WHEN YOU'RE NOT READY ILL.
- You can do it, IF you're in a posture to do it.
- Otherwise, if you're not, you might hurt yourself!!!
- Some of us have “hurt ourselves” b/c we're not postured in a way that we can be strong!
- *Humbly submitted to God & totally leaning on Him is how we posture ourselves!!!*

C. Take Heart – This is the Opposite of “Losing Heart.”

- Resolve ourselves to stand firm until God Moves in our life!

D. Wait –

- This is not a Passive exercise, it's every bit active!!!
- A KID WAITING AT THE DOOR FOR A FRIEND OR RELATIVE ILL.

E. How do we Wait?

1) We create space for Him by being intentional about His Presence.

2) We prioritize being where He is.

3) Then, we respond when He falls on us!!!

Conclusion:

- We don't need a “Reset,” we need a “Refresh,” & that comes from the Holy Spirit.

- Have them lift their hands if they want to receive the Refreshing of the Holy Spirit!!!

- Salvation

Fall Afresh – Part 2
“What to do at a Low Point”
January 13-14th, 2018

- Last week we began a series on Walking in the Refreshment of the Lord this year!

- We talked about when David was at a Low Point in his life.
- On the run from his father-in-law, armies all around him, & how he responded.

- I actually want to pick up the story, basically from there...

I Samuel 27:1 “But David thought to himself, ‘One of these days I will be destroyed by the hand of Saul. The best thing I can do is to escape to the land of the Philistines. Then Saul will give up searching for me anywhere in Israel, and I will slip out of his hand.’”

- So David leaves the country & hides out in a city called Ziklag for 16 months!

I Samuel 28:1 “In those days the Philistines gathered their forces to fight against Israel. Achish said to David, ‘You must understand that you and your men will accompany me in the army.’”

I Samuel 29:1 “The Philistines gathered all their forces at Aphek, and Israel camped by the spring in Jezreel. As the Philistine rulers marched with their units of hundreds and thousands, David and his men were marching at the rear with Achish.”

- STOP! Put yourself in his shoes for a second!

- What an absolutely surreal moment! He is literally marching out to war against the country he is one day going to be the king over!

- In fact, if the Philistines win & Saul is defeated, then David will become king!

- This has to be one of the lowest moments of David’s entire life!

- The land I love & want to serve is now my enemy & my enemy that I want to destroy is now who I'm fighting for!

- But as if it can't get any worse, it does!- The Philistine guys get scared & think David will get out there & turn against them so they send him & his men back to Ziklag!

- Which should have been a good thing! But... look what happens when they get back there!!

v. 30:1 "David and his men reached Ziklag on the third day. Now the Amalekites had raided the Negev and Ziklag. They had attacked Ziklag and burned it, and had taken captive the women and everyone else in it, both young and old. They killed none of them, but carried them off as they went on their way."

- Are you kidding me???

- When David & his men get back, all of their possessions and families have been taken captive by *another* army of raiders!

- And at this point, they are done!!!

v. 4 "So David and his men wept aloud until they had no strength left to weep."

- They are devastated! - This can't get any worse!!!

- You can't go home! - Your families aren't safe here!

- This is the absolute lowest point for David... **except its not!**

v. 6 "David was greatly distressed because the men were talking of stoning him; each one was bitter in spirit because of his sons and daughters."

- My gosh!!! - Now, his own men want him dead!!!

- Now, he's at the absolute lowest point of his life!

- No country, no family, everything has been stripped away, no friends even

? So what does David do when he's at his lowest point?

- Go the bar? - Turn off his phone? - Have an affair? - Go into Hiding? - Go into a Deep Depression?

- No, he doesn't.

v. 6b "But David found strength in the Lord his God."

- There it is!!! - That's what I want us to see! - B/c that's the model for us in our lives as well!

* When life doesn't go our way, we must develop the Discipline to Go to God!!!

- The world doesn't teach us that!

- The world teaches the exact opposite... get angry, get high, drink, medicate, escape at any cost!

- If we can learn what David learned, it will change everything for us!

4 Things David did at his Lowest Point:

v. 7 "Then David said to Abiathar the priest, the son of Ahimelek, 'Bring me the ephod.'"

1. He put on the Ephod.

A. What was that? The priestly garment – David saw himself as the go between of his Situation & his God!

- Most of us see ourselves as Helpless Victims, David saw himself as a Powerful Player in the Story!

- This wasn't happening to him in a vacuum, he was completely empowered to trust the Lord even in the darkest hour!!!

B. Some of us have a **Victim Mentality** on us!

- You've seen yourself as a victim for your entire life! - It's time for that to change!!!

C. MIP: ? How do you see yourself? Victim or Player in the story?

v. 8 "and David inquired of the Lord, 'Shall I pursue this raiding party? Will I overtake them?'"

2. He Inquired of the Lord.

A. Instead of cursing the Lord, he ran to Him!!!

B. MIP: God is NOT your Problem, He is your Solution, no matter what you're facing!

C. STANDING ON MY BIBLE ILL.

D. ? Are you running TO or running FROM the Lord in a Dark season?

v. 8b "Pursue them,' he answered. 'You will certainly overtake them and succeed in the rescue.'"

3. He got his plan from God.

A. Most of us start scheming and planning in the natural, but what God wants is for us to go to Him and Listen for His Plan!

- Most of us would have just ran toward the raiders & never stopped to ask God what the plan is.

B. Relief from Discomfort is not the Point, doing God's Will is!!!

C. ILL. – RUNNING AHEAD OF GOD AND NOT SEEKING WISDOM FROM HIM & WISE COUNSEL ILL.

- We never should assume or presume upon God. - Ask Him!- Go to Him! - Talk to Him!

C. MWK ILL – I can't tell you how many times I have seen someone do this. - They end up worse off b/c they "assumed" on God.

D. MIP: Most of us, are not spending enough time Inquiring of the Lord about our lives!

- We don't take jobs haphazardly,

- We don't enter into relationships b/c we're lonely.

- We don't make huge, life-altering decisions based on emotion or even circumstances.

- We MUST ALWAYS inquire of the Lord!

E. God WILL answer us IF we will seek Him!

v. 18 "David recovered everything the Amalekites had taken..."

4. He turned a Corner in his Leadership forever.

A. His credibility is reestablished w/ his men.

- AND... he WASN'T at the battle where King Saul & his son Jonathan were killed.

- Can you imagine how much of a moral delimma it would have been for David to be there when his king & best friend died???

B. God mercifully repositioned him... He just used a Low Point to do it.

C. From this point on, David's Life & Leadership took a dramatic turn upward.

- Within a few weeks, he is anointed as king & steps into his greater destiny!

Challenge:

Are you at a Low Point? Do you remember the last time you were? - How are you doing at it? - How did you do...?

What do you need to do to begin prioritizing time in God's Presence so you can hear His voice???

PRAY