

☞ Break the Pattern

We've been talking about Renewal for quite some time now. God wants to renew us even more than we want to be renewed. There are some things we can do to prepare for his ☞ renewal. We need to **wash** in the water of God's **Word**. We need to simply **ask for renewal**. We need to **get rid of some junk** in our lives. We need to **pursue God wholeheartedly**. We need to **look for God** in every situation. We need to **listen for God** in every situation. We need to be ready and **lean toward change**. And last week we talked about how quickly things can change, especially when God is up to something.

☞ Joshua 23:4-5

Remember how I have allotted as an inheritance for your tribes all the land of the nations that remain — the nations I conquered — between the Jordan and the Great Sea in the west. 5 The Lord your God himself will drive them out of your way. He will push them out before you, and you will take possession of their land, as the Lord your God promised you.

Joshua led them into the Promised Land and broke the power of the enemy. Then he explains that this land is their inheritance and they should take possession of it. It's the same for us... Jesus has saved us and brought us into the Kingdom, and he's defeated the enemy. Now, we have an inheritance in Christ that we can take ownership of. Listen to ☞ the things that the Bible says **we already have in Christ...**

2 Corinthians 5:17

☞ if anyone is in Christ, he is **a new creation**; the old has gone, the new has come!

Galatians 2:4

☞ the **freedom** we have in Christ Jesus

Ephesians 1:3

...who has blessed us in the ☞ heavenly realms with every **spiritual blessing** in Christ.

Colossians 2:10

☞ you have been given **fullness in Christ**

☞ I am **free from** the law of **sin** and death (Romans 8:2).

I am born of God, and **the evil one cannot harm me** (1 John 5:18).

I have **the mind of Christ** (1 Corinthians 2:16; Philippians 2:5).

I have **the peace of God** that passes all understanding (Philippians 4:7).

I have no lack for **God supplies all of my needs** (Philippians 4:19).

I am **more than a conqueror** through Him Who loves me (Romans 8:37).

☞ I am a **partaker of His divine nature** (2 Peter 1:3-4).

I am **an ambassador for Christ** (2 Corinthians 5:20).

I am **the light of the world** (Matthew 5:14).

I am raised with Christ and **seated in heavenly places** (Ephesians 2:6; Colossians 2:12).

I have a spirit of power, love, and **a sound mind** (2 Timothy 1:7).

These things are already given. We just need to live in them. This was the same for the people in the time of the Judges. The land was already theirs. God had given it. Joshua had led them in. Now, they just needed to take possession. But the Israelite tribes didn't fully trust God and settled for less than the entire possession.

It's like being the son of a billionaire. Everything is passed on to you, but you only take a  small portion and then try to scrape by. **There's so much more!**

We have a real enemy that wants to rob us of all that God has for us. He wants us to settle for less than God's best. He wants to limit our blessings. Actually, we face a three-fold enemy: Satan; the world; our own sinful nature. These tend to work together to keep us from experiencing everything that God has for us.

The tribe of Judah fought the enemy, but ultimately gave up because of their iron chariots. Sometimes the enemy seems to be unstoppable and we give up trying to overcome.

The tribe of Dan didn't even try to fight. They were confined to the hill country, while the enemy remained in the fertile valleys. Sometimes we have a mountaintop experience with God and we don't want to move on from there. Good things happen on the mountain and we gain a heavenly perspective, but God wants us to grow in our faith. Growth happens  in the valleys. We've got to **move on in our faith walk**.

Caleb stands out in contrast to the rest of the people. He drove out the giants to take possession of Hebron. He was known for his dogged determination and wholeheartedness in following God. He was 1 of only 2 that believed they could take the land some 40 years earlier, while everyone else was afraid and grumbled against God.

 ***If we will believe what God has already spoken and stand on the truth, living wholeheartedly for God, we can overcome the enemy and take possession of the promises and blessings of God.***

In the case of the Israelites, instead of removing the enemy, they tried to make slaves of the enemy. They felt strong. Sometimes we do the same thing. Instead of removing the things in our life that distance us from God, we try to simply control them. We feel strong. But here's the deal: You won't always be strong in yourself! Remember Joshua said, God will push the enemy out.

It's also important to note that Moses didn't lead the people into the Promised Land. Joshua did. Moses represents the law; legalism, self-efforts. These will not succeed in the

👉 long run. Joshua represents Christ. His names means, “God saves.” So, **relying on God** is the key to success. **He always wins.**

When Joshua led them in, the first place they stopped was Gilgal. And we see in the book of Joshua that they repeatedly met at Gilgal. Gilgal was important. First, it’s important because that’s where God was. Second, it’s important, because that’s where the people set up remembrance stones.

Joshua 4:20-24 ...*“someday your kids and grandkids are going to ask what these stones mean... tell them about God parting the Red Sea and crossing the Jordan or dry ground.”*

We need to remember things that God has already done. What are some examples?

How did you get saved? Was it by your efforts? Don’t ever forget that this whole Christian life depends on God’s work in you, not your own efforts!

Colossians 2:6-7

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, 7 rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

How did you receive Christ? By faith, simply trusting God to save you. So how do you continue to live in him? By faith, simply trusting God to lead you.

👉 **Remember your initial experience with God.** Then, **walk by faith.**

2 Corinthians 5:7 We live by faith, not by sight.

2 Corinthians 1:24 it is by faith you stand firm.

Galatians 3:14 by faith we ...receive the ...Spirit.

Back to the Israelites: Gilgal is also important because that’s where the people dedicated themselves and set themselves apart for God. We also must **resolve to follow God wholeheartedly**. Our hearts; the very core of who we are, must **be set apart for God**. Not for anyone or anything else; not for ourselves even, but for God.

We must get rid of our own fleshly efforts and learn to rely completely on God. It’s painful to admit you can’t do it. Our pride wants to be successful on our own, but we must come to a place of total and utter dependence upon God.

Gilgal was the place of remembrance; the place of dedication; and the place where God was. In Joshua’s time, it was where they began in the Promised Land, and it was the place they gathered again from time to time. Here’s the point: no matter how long you’ve been a Christian, you are not strong enough to overcome the enemy on your own. It all comes

☞ back to relying on God. **It all comes back to Jesus.** He saves you; he delivers you; he leads you; he is “greater than the one who is in the world.” It’s not you; it’s him!

Romans 7:24-25

What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? **25** Thanks be to God — through Jesus Christ our Lord!

The people during the time of the Judges didn’t rely on God wholeheartedly. They compromised with the enemy; they were overconfident in their own abilities; and they failed to experience the fullness of the promises. I believe Samson, the last Judge mentioned, sums up the entire book. God gave him great power, but he squandered it. He was arrogant, selfish, and independent. And, near the end, he was oblivious to his real weakness and he was blinded by the enemy.

This is the state of the Church in America today. It is the state of many believers today. We’ve experienced some of the blessings and power of God and in some cases, we’ve become arrogant, thinking it’s from our own efforts. We’ve been selfish, wanting to keep what little blessings we’ve received all for ourselves. And, ultimately, we’ve become independent. We’ve learned to “do Church,” and to do “being a Christian,” without God. But in reality, we are weak and blind. Sounds like the last Church spoken of in Revelation...

Revelation 3:14-20

To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: ... I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! **16** So, because you are lukewarm — neither hot nor cold — I am about to spit you out of my mouth. **17** You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. **18** I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see. **19** Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent. **20** Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.

You can hear the parallels today. “I’m a good person.” “God has blessed me.” “I don’t need much of anything.” “God is meeting my needs, so I must be okay.” But God sees the real truth and says many are actually wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. And, remember, he’s speaking to the Church!

-- Warren Wiersbe... Christ stands outside the door of the lukewarm church. This church has wealth and power, but no Christ. How tragic that a church can become so lukewarm and proud that Christ has to leave and stand outside. They are totally indifferent toward Christ. He is left outside their plans and programs, and their hearts.

What we really need is gold refined in the fire. This represents faith in God (1 Peter 1:7) It always comes back to faith. And when we rely on God it naturally leads to the other items we need...

We need white clothes to wear. This represents purity. (Revelation 3:4) He makes us pure. We need eye salve. This represents the light of the Spirit in our hearts (Ephesians 1:18)

Notice, that all of these come from Christ! Here we are again at this fundamental point: everything depends on Christ. You can't be saved on your own. You can't overcome the enemy on your own. You can't break the patterns of sinfulness on your own. You can't be renewed in your own efforts. Only Christ can do these things! You have to **keep coming back to Christ for everything!** Jesus is knocking, wanting to come in and help. So...

☞ **Be earnest.** Don't be half-hearted. Be like Caleb who was wholehearted.

Repent. Change the way you think. Change direction. Turn back to Christ again!

Hear his voice. Listen. Read the Word; do what it says.

Open the door. Take action. Invite Christ in. Don't go alone.

☞ To break the pattern, **reply completely on Christ.**