

☞ **Prepare the Way**

I believe God has some “new wine” he wants to pour into the Church today. We must be willing to stretch with the new wine of His presence. We need to be made new.

☞ **You need a whole new experience for a whole new day.**

Get a fresh revelation of Jesus by reading the Word spending time with him.

Get a fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit by worshiping and praying.

Remember that God is in charge and he holds you close to his heart.

☞ **Decide if you really want to change, Stop making excuses, and Take action.**

Get down to business with God & make a sacrifice by fasting.

Let God have full authority in your life.

Invite the Presence of God into your daily routine.

We want to experience the presence of God. A visitation of God is often referred to as a revival...

The heart and center of revival is simply the rediscovery of the wonderful sense of the presence of God and a hunger for that presence.

--Vance Havner... What we call revival is simply New Testament Christianity – the saints getting back to normal.

A. W. Tozer wrote that we often think of revival in terms of a large group of people being renewed, when in reality it is always a renewal of individuals. Just as salvation is very personal and for the individual, so is revival. Nothing can prevent you from the renewal you need. It is a matter between just you and God. You can be living and walking amongst spiritually dead people and still be transformed and renewed completely. In other words, you don't have to wait for a church-wide revival; you can have a personal renewal on your own. Now, if you do that, I believe that it will affect others around you and can easily become a church-wide, city-wide revival. So, start with yourself, get renewed, and let's see what God will do in all of us.

--Ian Malins... Revival is a sovereign act of God, but He is looking for people who are prepared and ready to receive His blessings. For revival to come there are conditions we must recognize and preparations we must make. We must prepare the way.

☞ **Isaiah 40:3-5**

--Ian Malins... In ancient times when a king was to visit a city, a messenger would go before, telling the people to get ready. The people of that city would then get busy

preparing the road along which the king would travel. They would remove rocks and stones on the road, fill in potholes and make the road wide and smooth. If these kinds of preparations were made for an earthly king coming to visit his people, how much more do we need to prepare the way for the sovereign Lord to come to us in divine visitation? In the desert and spiritually barren places, we need to begin now to prepare a straight highway so that the Lord can come to us.

1. 📌 Raise the Valleys

= areas that are below grade; substandard; less than God's best. These need to come up to the required level. These are things we've neglected and not been diligent about and have allowed to degrade into substandard qualities. Humility is required here. We must admit we are under par and we need to ask for God's help to deal with it.

📌 Valley of Disobedience & Unconfessed sin

Letting little things slip by. Eventually they add up. Often, these are those things we know we should do, but in actuality don't do.

James 4:17

Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins.

It is never the big things that disturb us, but the trivial things.

Song of Solomon 2:15

Catch for us the foxes, the little foxes that ruin the vineyards

📌 Valley of Unforgiveness

This is a valley because we often leave it undone. We sometimes just ignore it and hope it will eventually go away. But we need to make a conscious effort to forgive.

Matthew 6:15

if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

--Charles R. Swindoll... There is no torment like the inner torment of an unforgiving spirit. It refuses to be soothed, it refuses to be healed, it refuses to forget.

Ephesians 4:32

...forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

☞ Valley of Hurt & Bitterness

Hebrews 12:15

See to it ...that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.

--Oswald Chambers... If there is the tiniest grudge in your mind against anyone ... your spiritual penetration into the knowledge of God stops.

Modern medicine has shown that emotions like bitterness and anger can cause problems such as headaches, backaches, allergic disorders, ulcers, high blood pressure, and heart attacks, to name just a few. By holding grudges or seeking revenge, we actually inflict great harm on ourselves.

Ephesians 4:31

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger...

2. ☞ Level the Hills

= areas of resistance; barriers between us and God; things that get in the way. More humility is required here. These are things that need a strong response of confession and repentance.

☞ Hill of Pride

Psalms 10:4

In his pride the wicked does not seek him; in all his thoughts there is no room for God.

Pride takes many forms: bragging; putting others down; being easily offended...
resentment is wounded pride.

People who run down others are taking a roundabout way of praising themselves.

Swallow your pride occasionally, and console yourself with the knowledge that it is 100 percent calorie free.

☞ Hill of Unbelief

Hebrews 3:18-19

...So we see that they were not able to enter (*The Promised Land*), because of their unbelief.

1 John 5:10

Anyone who does not believe God has made him out to be a liar

We talked last week about how wavering in following Christ is really an indication of unbelief. And unbelief leads to spiritual drought and famine. If you're feeling spiritually dry, it could be that you are wavering through unbelief. Do you really believe God? Do you really believe his word? Do really believe he can renew you?

-- F.B. Meyer... *Unbelief puts our circumstance between us and God, but faith puts God between us and our circumstances.*

Hill of a Critical spirit

1 Peter 2:1

rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit... and slander of every kind

Never tell evil of a man if you do not know it for a certainty; and if you know it for a certainty, then ask yourself, "Why should I tell it?"

All too many Christians today go to church to find fault, to gossip, and to criticize. Warren Wiersbe wrote, "An incident in the life of Joseph Parker, the great British preacher, illustrates this tragic truth. He was preaching at the City Temple in London. After the service one of the listeners came up to him and said, 'Dr. Parker, you made a grammatical error in your sermon.' He then proceeded to point out the error to the pastor. Joseph Parker looked at the man and said, 'And what else did you get out of the message?'"

Don't write or say anything that you won't sign your name to. If you receive a negative, anonymous note, ignore it! Like the pastor who received an anonymous note with nothing but the word "FOOL!" written on it. The next morning he got in church and said, "I've gotten many notes without signatures before but this is the first time I got one where someone forgot to write the note and just signed his name!"

--A. Lincoln... *He has the right to criticize who has the heart to help.*

Ephesians 4:29

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

3. Smooth out the Rough Places

= areas of unevenness; inconsistencies; ups and downs; hot and cold; areas where refining is needed. Here we simply need God's help to even us out. We all struggle with this one, but God can work in us to be more consistent in our faith-walk.

Rough place of Impatience

--Bill Gothard... Patience: accepting a difficult situation without giving God a deadline to remove it.

Ephesians 4:2

...be patient, bearing with one another in love.

One moment of patience may prevent disaster; one moment of impatience may ruin a life.

Colossians 3:12

clothe yourselves with... gentleness and patience

Rough place of Irritableness

1 Corinthians 13:5

(love) is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

--Maggie Scarg ... Getting angry can sometimes be like leaping into a wonderfully responsive sports car, gunning the motor, taking off at high speed and then discovering the brakes are out of order.

When Abraham Lincoln had to write a letter to someone who had irritated him, he would often write two letters. The first letter was deliberately insulting. Then, having gotten those feelings out of his system, he would tear it up and write a second letter, this one tactful and discreet.

Rough place of Harshness & Unkindness

Proverbs 15:1

A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger

Gentle words fall lightly, but they have great weight.

There was an extraordinarily beautiful woman married to an extraordinarily ugly man. When a family friend once asked how such a beautiful woman could have married such an ugly man, she replied, "He has never once hurt my feelings."

--Alexander Maclaren... *Kindness makes a person attractive. If you would win the world, melt it, do not hammer it.*

--Richard L. Dunagin... *At their school carnival, our kids won four free goldfish (lucky us!), so out I went Saturday morning to find an aquarium. The first few I priced ranged from \$40 to \$70. Then I spotted it--right in the aisle: a discarded 10-gallon display tank, complete with gravel and filter--for a mere five bucks. Sold! Of course, it was nasty dirty, but the savings made the two hours of clean-up a breeze.*

Those four new fish looked great in their new home, at least for the first day. But by Sunday one had died. Too bad, but three remained. Monday morning revealed a second casualty, and by Monday night a third goldfish had gone belly up. We called in an expert, a member of our church who has a 30-gallon tank. It didn't take him long to discover the problem: I had washed the tank with soap, an absolute no-no. My uninformed efforts had destroyed the very lives I was trying to protect. Sometimes in our zeal to clean up our own lives or the lives of others, we unfortunately use "killer soaps"--condemnation, criticism, nagging, fits of temper, or unkind words. We think we're doing right, but our harsh, self-righteous treatment is more than they can bear.

Work with the Holy Spirit to replace these rough places with the evenness of the Fruit of the Spirit.

Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control.

Conclusion

We need to humble ourselves and deal with these valleys, hills and rough places. When we do, then God will want to draw even nearer.

☞ Malachi 3:1

"See, I will send my messenger, who will **prepare the way** before me. **Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple**

Let's prepare the way!

☞ Raise the Valleys

Lower the Hills

Smooth out the Rough Places