

## How God Meets My Deepest Needs: Newness

### Pop Quiz - Names of God:

- El Simchathgali, which means "I am the God of exceeding joy" - I am the God who knows how to party, I am the God of overflowing, abundant joy.
- Yahweh-Jireh = God is My Vision or God is My Provider.
- Yahweh-Shammah = I am the God who is always there.
- Yahweh-Rapha = God is My Healing.
- Yahwah-Nissi = "I am the God who defends you." I am the God who protects you. "I am your banner. I defend you when the odds are against you."
- Yahwah Shalom = "I am the God of peace."

Today we're ending our series "How God Meets Your Deepest Needs" based on the names of God. We have been talking about what it means to put our hopes in the name of God and discovering that God provides for our deepest needs and reminds of this by telling us His name.

God revealed His character, who He truly was, by telling the people of God what His name was. There are two names of God that I want to look at today with you:

- Yahwah-M'Kiddish
  - What are we having for dinner, mom? Mom replies, "Kiddish." The child looks longingly and says, "Mmmm... Kiddish!"
  - Yahwah-M'Kiddish means, "I am the God who sanctifies you." Sanctify or "sanctification" means "to change for the better."
  - God is a God who will accept us the way we are, but will change us for the better.
- The second name of God is similar in that it tells how God changes us. Yahwah-Roi = I am the God who shepherds you.

Jewish people definitely thought of God as Yahwah-Roi, their Shepherd. A shepherd does two things: he directs your path, and he protects you. God continually did both for the Jewish people. Psalm 23 was especially important to the people of God. The Jews didn't just read it when a funeral happened. In

fact, they memorized it. Does anyone know how Psalm 23 begins without looking at your sermon outline?

- Psalm 23:1 - The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.

That is why it was so revolutionary for Jesus to talk as if He was the Shepherd to the people. Jesus spoke plainly about who He was when He said:

- John 10:11 - I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

Jesus said point blank: I am the one who protects you. I am the one who watches over you. I am the one who leads you. I am the one who shows you the path to take. I am the one who leads you to new waters, to new grass, to new hillsides. I am the one who leads you to the needed newness, the needed change in your life.

I want us to look at closely:

2 Corinthians 5:17 - if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

If this is true, why don't we act like it? Why don't we act like we are new people?

Today, I want to get at the heart of this and really find the answer to a big question: HOW IS MY LIFE MADE NEW BY GOD?

You see, we're spinning around in a love-starved world. We see it every day in the newspaper. People who are growing up in this world are not getting better and sweeter. They are getting more bitter and more violent.

Now we've got to ask this, "How is my life made new by God when the world is getting worse?" Is the answer a best selling book? Another seminar? Is congress going to legislate an answer for this? Is the marketplace going to come up with a business plan and then try to sell it to us?

The Bible boldly proclaims there is only one thing in the universe that has what it takes to meet this love-starved need. You can try to fill it with whatever you want but there's only one answer. The Bible boldly proclaims that. It's the love

of Jesus. The love of Jesus changes us! The love of Jesus sanctifies us! The love of Jesus makes us new! The love of Jesus boldly protects and guides and shepherds us!

But here is the thing: we can get caught in a trap and think two extreme thoughts, neither of which are Biblical.

One extreme is this that the change that takes place is all God. God does everything. All we have to do is kind of kick back on the couch. With this theory, if I don't change, if I don't transform, then it's God's fault. He messed up and He doesn't have to hold me accountable at all. God blew it. Thinking it is all God means LAZINESS and SPIRITUAL IMMATURITY

Another extreme says that God saves me but then it's all up to me to change. I've got to work and I've got to do and I've got to transform my behavior and my personality. It's work, work, work, do, do, do! And that is where this theory leads you to.

What the Bible teaches about change – the biblical position of sanctification – is that there is a God part and there is an “our” part. God's part is His power. Our part is our cooperation. We cooperate in this process of change but God's power through His Holy Spirit controls the process. We cooperate, God controls it. It's God's Spirit in us that does the changing and we do the cooperating.

But when we think that the change is all up to us, we have the wrong method:

Our greatest need is not money. Our greatest need is not success. Our greatest need is not fame. Our greatest need is not another job. Our greatest need is for God to be in our lives. The world around us is willing to do desperate things to fill this need.

- Some of us fill this desire with Performance. I think that when I achieve and I perform there are some people in our lives that are going to say, “Look what he did.... Look what she accomplished...” and we get a little bit of strokes, a little bit of value, a little bit of love.

- Others will fill it with People. Oftentimes we get love and affirmation and value from people. We think if our kids are great and our spouse loves us, then that is all we need.
- Some fill it with Pity. A lot of us in here will put ourselves down. Then people will come up to us and pat us on the back saying, "You don't resemble a toadstool." We think this fills the void in our lives.
- Some of us fill the void with Position. Some of us feel like, "If I can just get that next manager position ... that CEO, ...that next spot on the ladder, then I'm going to be valued and my life will be fulfilled."
- For others it is Physical affection. A lot of times we equate contact with love. "If I could just have sex, then my life will be fulfilled." This just leaves us empty!
- For some its Pleasure. "If I could just have that next vacation ... that next high ... that experience."
- Then there's Possessions. "If I could live in that house ... if I could move out of Cerro Gordo and into a fancy town ... if I could drive that car ... not just a sports utility vehicle but a Mercedes sports utility vehicle! Everybody's got a sports utility vehicle. I need something greater. "
- Problems. This is more a juvenile form but a lot of kids will have a love mask, "If I just get into trouble ... if I just create problems ... then people are going to give me the attention I want."

The problem with all of these fillers is that they're temporary. They're all temporary forms of love, temporary pleasure, temporary value, temporary acceptance, temporary appreciation. When you try to fill the void in your life with these things – let's be honest – people do respond. The problem is that these methods always dry up, while God's ways always brings something far better than we could imagine!

## GOD BRINGS REVELATION

If God is our Shepherd... If God is the one who brings sanctification, change, newness, then we must understand how he does it.

There is an example in the Bible of a person who was trying everything to get right with God, but was failing miserably. He was trying all the wrong things:

position, popularity, performance, and was getting no where with God! He thought that he was working for God, but was in fact working for the enemy. God had to get his attention. God had to bring REVELATION, a new truth into his life!

TURN WITH ME TO Acts 9:1-6

Jesus had to change Paul's whole perspective, by giving him the right revelation! The same is true for us. We need God's revelation in order for our lives to be truly made new in Christ.

You know, a Shepherd leads us by showing us the path to take: God does it by bringing revelation, or new truth, in our lives.

How does God bring the truth we need? Jesus told us how God does this in one of the last few days that He was here on earth. Jesus told us that put simply, the Holy Spirit brings revelation, brings truth!

- The Holy Spirit comes to teach us truth - John 14:26 - The Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.
- The Holy Spirit comes to convict us with truth - John 16:7-11 - I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.
- The Holy Spirit guides us with the truth - John 16:13 - When he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

Why do we need the Holy Spirit to speak truth into our lives?

Here is the deal: if God is our Shepherd, Yahwah-Roi, then we are...?

That's right, Sheep! The only thing I don't like about God being a shepherd is realizing that that means you and I are referred to as sheep. Sheep are dumb! Very dumb! If you don't know that, have you ever seen sheep in a circus? No. They're too dumb. Have you ever seen sheep run? They don't bend their knees and they have knees. They have not figured it out yet. They are dumb! And hundreds of times in the Bible we are called sheep. It's like as if God were saying, "You want to know how the body of Christ works? Study sheep." A sheep farmer will tell you this: Sheep require endless attention because they easily stray.

I wonder why we're called sheep!?!

Revelation is the starting point for God to shepherd our lives. It is the starting point, for God to bring the change, the newness that we need. But, remember, it is not all God. God expects us to work with him in this change.

#### WE ARE TO REPENT

If God is our Shepherd, if God is the one who sanctifies us, then we have a response. Do we want to do it our way, or God's way?

Repentance is what God wants. Repentance might be a fancy church word that everyone has heard, but what does it mean? Repentance means making a "U-TURN" in life!

Read with me Acts 9:7-9

You see, there is an immediate sorrow from Paul and it began in verse 5, when Paul calls Jesus "LORD" for the first time.

- Paul acknowledge Jesus as Lord, he says to Jesus that he had it wrong. He was busy trying to do things Paul's way, rather than Jesus' way!
- Paul realizes that he has been spiritually blind, so Jesus gives him an object lesson by making him blind. You would think that Paul would be upset. Think about it: you give your life to Jesus and things are suppose to be better, right? Nope, Paul is blinded!
- Paul then does exactly what Jesus says - he gets up (even though he was blind) and goes to the city of Damascus.

Repentance is not just for Paul. It is for us too:

- Ephesians 4:22 (NLT) - Throw off your old evil nature and your former way of life, which is rotten through and through, full of lust and deception.
- Proverbs 28:13 - He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.

I love you and I love this church. Hear me as clearly as you can: you can know about God, and never really know God. Biblical knowledge, doctrinal awareness, and theological understanding are all very important. They're essential. They're essential for you and I to have so we're not blown back and forth by the winds of every belief. But that knowledge has to go hand in hand with repentance, with constantly making a U-Turn in life, with the desire to submit your life to the Author of the Bible, not just to know about Him. You want a picture of a changed life, don't just always look at the Bible-answer person, or the person who shows up to a lot of events. If you want a picture of a changed life, you look for the person who has humbly rearranged their life and their marriage and their parenting around what's taught. If you want a picture of a changed life you show me someone who, when no one is watching their life, choose God's way instead of the way of sinful pleasures when no one's watching. If you want a picture of a changed life, show me someone who manages their money and their resources the way God teaches, somebody who hungers and thirsts after knowing God so he will be translated into a genuine love for other people. That is what repentance is about!

The revelation of Jesus changed Paul so much, that repentance became the core of Paul's message! Later in the book of Acts, listen to what Paul says: Acts 26:20 - First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds.

We must truly understand what God wants from us. He is not busy trying to make us feel bad. That is not what repentance is about. Repentance is about God working in our lives and really showing us that He is Yahway-M'Kiddish. You see, when we repent, there is a promise.

Ezekiel 18:30-31 - Repent! Turn away from all your offenses; then sin will not be your downfall. Rid yourselves of all the offenses you have committed, and get a new heart and a new spirit.

The ultimate result of us repenting is a new heart and a new spirit from God! You see, God brings the revelation, we repent, and then in this dance of life:

## GOD BRINGS RENEWAL

Two things happened to Paul when He heard the revelation, and then repented.

READ Acts 9:10-19

Paul received the Holy Spirit and something like Scales fell from his eyes!

Paul went from being spiritually and physically blind to being able to see the very truth of Jesus Christ and actually physically able to see! Paul was renewed!

Paul's very soul was renewed! He was washed clean! Every time in the Bible, people accepted God's Truth in Jesus Christ and then repented, the same thing happens in different ways: God renews that person's very soul:

- Luke 19:8 - Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount."
- Acts 19:17-20  $\beta$  People in Ephesus rejected sorcery at a great cost - When this became known to the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus, they were all seized with fear, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honor. Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed their evil deeds. A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to fifty thousand drachmas. In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power.
  - A drachma is a day's wage - This means that if we say people made \$6/hour, the people burned \$2.4 million worth in scrolls!

God promises us the same thing when we accept His revelation in Jesus Christ, and then repent: RENEWAL. But the choice is yours:

Joshua 24:15 - Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.

This choice is where true renewal begins, where God truly shows us that He is Yahwah-M'Kiddish, the God of Sanctification!

When we make this choice to work with God in our lives, it doesn't stop there! It is contagious! We are to work hand in hand with God and when we do a true revolution happens!

## GOD BRINGS A REVOLUTION IN OUR LIVES!

Look what happened to Paul: Acts 9:19b-22

There was a revolution in his actions

There were feet to his faith

People were baffled by his words, astonished by his actions! Paul had come to kill, but Jesus came to bring life. This life was leaking out of Paul and people's lives were being changed! Revolution occurred!

When you make a decision for God, God brings the revolution!

If you struggle with a hidden sin, God takes it out into the light and kills it!

If you have unforgiveness towards someone, God gives you the power to find that person and bless them in a radical way

If you don't have a strong prayer life, God gives you the power, the commitment, and the determination to set your alarm clock early and do it.

If you deal with anger day in and day out, God gives you peace.

If you struggle with depression, God brings overflowing, abundant joy.

If you are totally lost in your life, God gives you Vision!

If you are lonely, God reminds you that He is always there!

If you are sick, God is your healing!

If the enemies are coming for you, God is your banner! He is the one who will defend you when the odds are against you!

If you sin, God gives you purity!

If you live a mundane life, give your life to Christ, and the revolution can happen!

Even though the world will challenge you, the devil will throw everything he's got against you, and your own flesh will betray you, revolution can occur in your life!

You must be relentless with a fierce perseverance, an uncompromising spirit, because of what God has brought into your life!

In this revolution, God does not leave you alone:

Philippians 1:6 - ...He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion...

The revolution in your life happens when you follow God. You learn to reflect, like a mirror, his power, rather than trust in your own power!

2 Corinthians 3:18 - We, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

Revolution happens when you allow God to guide you into the right paths.

Psalms 23:3 - He restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Remember: 2 Corinthians 5:17 - if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

This newness can happen when we put our faith in Jesus Christ!

Listen to what God wants to do for you:

Ezekiel 36:26 - I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

Isaiah 40:31 - ...those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

Jesus is the only answer for your very needs. In Jesus, we truly find that God is our sanctification, that God is our shepherd! Jesus is Yahwah-M'Kiddish and Yahwah-Roi. He is the very thing we need.

"'Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus" - Hymnal # 340

Communion