



---

## Some Thoughts On Church Renewal

All people (myself included) can get caught up with looking in the past. Maybe we view them as “glory days”, “better days”, or just “the good ol’ days.” This desire to look back is not all bad, but when our goal is to go back to something in our past, we find that it is impossible to do. Things have changed...including ourselves. I think it is interesting that the Scriptures are forward looking and moving. God doesn't make things like they use to be, He makes them new. What does that renewal (rebirth) look like within the local church?

Church renewal reveals itself in five areas.

### ***Personal Renewal***

Renewal begins with your heart. We must rekindle our connection to our first love. It's too easy to look outside of ourselves and say that “thing” or those “people” are the cause of our issue. But the church is made up of individual believers. Are you serving and putting first the one true God? When each individual follower of Christ is passionate in his or her pursuit of him renewal will occur. “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” (Matt. 22:37)

### ***Relational Renewal***

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matt. 22:39) Our renewal with God should flow out into relational renewal. Spend time with brothers and sisters. The church is supposed to be known for the love the members have for one another (John 13:35). This manifests itself in forgiveness, service, care, and joy.

### ***Missional Renewal***

God has called every one of his children into service for his glorious Kingdom. As renewal grows within us personally and within our body as a whole it produces a missional renewal. We will desire to share the gospel and make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:19-20). This missional renewal is rooted in our own experience of the grace, freedom and joy we now have in Christ Jesus.

### ***Cultural Renewal***

I am speaking here of church culture. When we are experiencing the previous three renewals the church will grow in many ways (spiritually & numerically). Renewal in the three previous areas will also present a shift in the very culture of the church. It will view and understand things differently than it did before. This is not to speak badly or look down on the past, but merely a reminder that God is a God of rebirth and renewal.

---

## **God's Glorious Full Renewal**

The Greek word is ἀνακαίνω (*anakainōō*). It's a verb that means to make new, to change into something new. This is the word translated into the English language as “renew”, but I think renew is often taken in a wrong way when it comes to the Scriptures. Renew often carries the connotation of extending something (like a library book) or resuming an activity again once it was interrupted. Today we often hear about renewable energy or something that can be used over and over again, but that too is not Biblical renewal.

When God renews He is not recycling or extending, but creating anew. Paul writes in 2 Corinthians, “So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being *renewed* day by day.”

(4:16) Our inner self is being made new day by day. That is a comforting truth to rest in. The Lord is not merely causing our inner life to be extended or picking us up where he left off. A far greater act is occurring. We are being made new. Every day I am being remade into the image of Christ.

How does one experience the blessing of the Lord's renewal in his/her life? Great question...I am glad you ask. Two verses later Paul writes, "look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal." (2 Cor. 4:18) We set our gaze on the reality of the gospel. "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." (2 cor. 5:17) This reality is true of all who have found redemption in Christ. You are a new creation.

God's renewal is complete replacement. Paul writes that the outer self is wasting away. Our flesh gets old and wears out. The corruption of the fall has impacted every human physically. But even our physical bodies that are wasting away will be renewed...or made completely new. "For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life." (2 Cor. 5:4) Our tents (the physical body) may be torn and tattered in spots, this present tent is not the end. We have the hope of renewed (new) better tents or clothing. This new life will be one of immortality.

Praise God for his form of renewing – taking off the old and making all things new.

Soli Deo Gloria,  
Pastor Kurt

---

### **FREEDOM THROUGH RENEWAL**

*"I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." Romans 12:1-2 ESV*

In my old ways I thought I was free to do whatever I wanted, however there was no freedom whatsoever. I was actually conforming to the worlds ways, a list of things to do, ways to talk, and things to buy. Always trying to prove my worth to other people and myself. Without Christ, we are all slaves to whatever false idea that we think gives us worth.

So here's how awesome God is...God transforms our mind so that we will love what God is about. So if freedom is doing what you love, then we are now free to do what God has caused us to – Love!

If you want what is "good and acceptable and perfect", in other words, if you love what God loves, then you don't have to conform to anything. You have been transformed and now are "Free to be You" in Christ.

*Your brother in Christ, Doyle Perry*

---

### **WHY DOES FBC, NEWMAN EXIST? (A MISSIONAL VIEWPOINT)**

Ask yourself the above question, and before reading further, answer it in your own mind. What thoughts are rattling around in your head as to why 50 to 120 of us come to this building at 910 R Street on Sunday morning, and for some on Sunday evening, and for others on Wednesday and /or Thursday evening?

If your answer to the above question doesn't emphasize some version of "to bring the Gospel of Christ to the lost", then your perspective is seriously in need of renewal. When you think about it, Christ's church

exists to fulfil the Great Commission— “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” (Matthew 28:19-20).

Is that what we are doing at FBC Newman? Are we bringing the Gospel of Jesus to the lost in Newman and Gustine? Are we helping to bring it to the people of California? To the people of North America? To the thousands of unreached people groups around the globe?

Unless you can give a resounding “Yes” to these questions as an individual, and unless our church body as a whole can give a collective resounding “Yes”, you are in need of renewal, and we as a church body are in need of renewal.

And just what is renewal? It is simply an intensified witness to the reign of God through our individual and collective lives as Christians. In a missional context, that renewal is manifested by intensified witnessing locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.

So let’s renew our hearts and minds as individuals and as a church collectively so that we can measure the vitality of FBC Newman, not by the numbers in the service each Sunday, but by being missionally engaged in the world around us. And if you as an individual need a starting spot for your renewal, you might prayerfully consider coming to the Mission Committee’s next planning session on July 3<sup>rd</sup> at 4:45PM.

### ***Your Missions Committee***

---

## **RENEWAL----MY LIFE! MY LOVE! MY HEART! MY MIND! MY WORK FOR THE LORD! AND MY FINANCES!**

We need to be made alive. Sometimes we hear a whisper in the dark and we wonder where it comes from. We at times feel lonely, wondering if God is in control and guiding us. This whole time, no matter the darkness that you think you’re in, God’s voice is whispering in your ear wanting you to come back to him. Come on!!! Why do I write this? Because God is always near, and we give up way too easily. I know I do this more than I should. We use so many excuses by saying we’re way too busy, haven’t enough money to do anything, or it’s too hot outside to do anything and better to stay inside...hibernating with the air conditioning blasting through the house. Where are you people of Nazareth? If you’re sick of this feeling, do something about it. It’s time—for what(?)---to reach down inside and trust God to renew your mind, have him take control of it, think less of yourself and put self to death once and for all. Aren’t you tired of chasing your own tail and getting nowhere? I know I am. If you’re sick of it and you have a burning desire for God, get up then and give more to God--your talents and gifts, offerings, praise and prayers to Him and not man, and your time to your church family.

Let’s go people of Nazareth; it’s time to rise from the woodwork, Christians. *Oh Lord, RENEW a great revival in our soul. In 1 Corinthians 2:16, Paul quotes Isaiah 40:13 and then makes a statement concerning all believers “We have the mind of Christ.”* Believe it people of Nazareth, as this means we are sharing the plan, purpose, and perspective of Christ, and it is something that all believers possess. Yes, you have this. Paul has a phrase he uses, “to be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” This is found in Romans 12:2.

*Heavenly Father, you continue to sanctify us, renew our minds and cleanse our hearts. Lord I’m in a war with my mind, this world and my spirit. Please God...I cry out to you to take me and my thoughts; rejuvenate me with love, kindness, compassion, and less judgement towards people in general. I know I am alive, but not alive in you--at least not enough. Lord, create a dynamic explosion underneath me, get me off my couch, and push me to the limits so I don’t get lazy with your Word, work, my family, and my duties in Your church. Lord, give us the mind of Christ by sharpening it...give us your wisdom, renew our spirit and give us discernment. In your precious name, Amen, and Amen!*

***Paul Marquez for the Finance Committee***

## **A Message for Women from a Crossway 14 Day Devotion:**

*Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”*

*So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. **Genesis 1:26-27***



### **Where do you find your identity?**

Is there a child out there who calls you mom? Is that where your identity lies? What about your husband? Is your identity in your marital status? Or what about your job? It surely consumes the majority of your time. Is your identity in your work?

We are all, men and women alike, tempted to find our identity in a variety of things. Sometimes those things are good things. Sometimes our identity seeking turns good things into idols. Maybe you are a beloved daughter who is consumed with caring for your aging mother. Exhausting days filled with nursing home visits and estate planning can cause you to think you are defined by this relationship, so when it ends, you are lost. Maybe you are new mother, and these first few weeks have been so exhilarating and tiring that you can't see straight. But when the baby doesn't sleep through the night like the book says he will, you look in the mirror and see a bad mother, a mother who is defined by a baby that won't sleep.

We are created beings, always on a mission to find out who we are, what we are made of, and where we belong.

We are identity seekers. In fact, women have been looking for a new identity ever since Eve took that fateful bite and questioned God's right to rule over her. We have been trying to define ourselves ever since. Feminism is one of the many ideologies that have attempted to shape a woman's identity over the years. Early feminism started with a good goal, to fix the problems of injustice. Modern feminism espouses the right for women to define themselves, to find their identity in their accomplishments. It's become something entirely different.

God's Word gives us a different kind of identity, one that is not rooted in our accomplishments, our work, our ability to bear children, our clean house, our marital status, our family, our talents, our exercise plan, or anything else you can think of that defines you. Our identity actually starts with him.

In the beginning, God created us. He had a vision for us before he even breathed life into Adam's lungs or crafted Eve from Adam's side. It was to bear his image. God's first word regarding us as women is that we are made in his image. Every other thing we possess will fade away (our family, our spouse, our body, our friends, our job, etc.), but the fact that we are image bearers sticks with us.

Your primary purpose in this world is to display God to all you come in contact with. You do that with your words, but you also do that with your very life. You, an image bearer, tell a story about God and his character. Your identity is rooted in him, not stuff. This radically changes how you view the world. This means you can face the loss of a loved one, an aging body, a job that doesn't satisfy you, a friend who abandons you, a church that hurts you, an unkind word, or even a womb that never bears children, because your identity is not in what you do or who you know—it's in the God who never changes.

You are an identity seeker, that is true. But God's Word has already given you the roadmap to finding the right path to identity. It's in the God who made you and gave you his image.