

UNDERSTANDING OUR TIMES

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A Time For Restoration
TALK IT OVER
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"Be glad then, you children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord, your God; for He gives you the former or early rain in just measure and in righteousness, and He causes to come down for you the rain, the former rain and the latter rain, as before. And the [threshing] floors shall be full of grain and the vats shall overflow with juice [of the grape] and oil. And I will restore or replace for you the years that the locust has eaten—the hopping locust, the stripping locust, and the crawling locust, My great army which I sent among you. And you shall eat in plenty and be satisfied and praise the name of the Lord, your God, Who has dealt wondrously with you. And My people shall never be put to shame. And you shall know, understand, and realize that I am in the midst of Israel and that I the Lord am your God and there is none else. My people shall never be put to shame." - Joel 2:23-27 (AMPC)

"For I will restore health to you, and I will heal your wounds," says the Lord, 'because they have called you an outcast,' saying, 'This is Zion, whom no one seeks after and for whom no one cares!'" - Jeremiah 30:17 (AMPC)

In our world of chaos, rebellion, and anarchy you and I are called upon to exhibit Kingdom principles of righteousness, repentance and restoration.

"Anarchy" is a state of disorder due to absence or non-recognition of authority. It is the absence of any governing body, rules, laws.

When mankind resists, rejects and denies God's authority, God's existence, God's ownership, lawlessness reigns.

An individual can be guilty of anarchism by personally allowing sin to rule their spirit. Years can be lost to pain, unproductivity, fruitless endeavors in which we try to survive but fail to thrive.

Money can be restored.
Property can be restored.
Cars can be restored.
Relationships can be restored.

One thing which can never be restored is spent time.

Time is simply the stuff of which life consists.

But when God adds His super to our natural, He supernaturally restores the years devastated by sin.

We cannot restore, recover, time. But God can, and He does.

His requirement for restoration has never changed – it is called repentance.

He is called the all-God, or the everything God. "Omni" means "all."

Into our brokenness and lostness, God sends the illuminating light of His restoration. His law of repentance activates His law of restoration.

"For I will restore health to you, and I will heal your wounds, says the Lord..." - Jeremiah 30:17 (AMPC)

Repentance causes an infusion of His zoe life to flood our human spirit. Bringing health, energy, hope and a sense of well-being characterized by His peace.

The Hebrew word "restore" means "to give life, to sustain life, to live prosperously, to be quickened, to regain health, life."

With that restoration comes a sense of confidence, boldness, power – we get our spiritual swagger back.

"Swagger" is the regaining of a sense of confidence, energy, enthusiasm, that coincides with a resurgence in successful endeavors. It is a feeling of being right with God, affirmed, accepted, receiving His favor.

Often, we live life on two separate tracks that seldom meet.

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One track is the reality of daily life with its mixture of daily routines, pressures, and busyness pursued with little thought of God. This track is often littered with disappointments, frustrations, conflicts, confusion.

On the other track is our relationship with God that often lacks energy, power, and communion. This track suffers because of neglect, willful disobedience, unconfessed sin, and a lack of total commitment.

In times of great stress, challenge, these two tracks have an opportunity to intersect.

We realize we have drifted apart from Him, the fire of passion no longer burns hot, there is an emptiness inside of us.

His voice beckons us to come and sit in His presence, feel His love, turn away from our lostness and embrace His forgiveness.

We return to Him. He restores us. The damaging effects of sin, neglect of worship, and intimacy in His presence robs us, steals from us and can ultimately destroy us.

The locusts came in swarms, the sky dark with millions of them, and they would devour every green vegetation in sight. It is a picture of being estranged from God.

"...Without grain and grapes, worship has been brought to a standstill in the Sanctuary of God. The priests are at a loss. God's ministers don't know what to do. The fields are sterile. The very ground grieves. The wheat fields are lifeless, vineyards dried up, olive oil gone. Dirt farmers, despair! Grape growers, wring your hands! Lament the loss of wheat and barley. All crops have failed. Vineyards dried up, fig trees withered, pomegranates, date palms, and apple trees—deadwood everywhere. And joy is dried up and withered in the hearts of the people." - Joel 1:9-12 (MSG)

Then comes God in His mercy to restore.

Verses 22-27 – God gives four supernatural miracles:

You shall eat in plenty. (The tree bears its fruit. The fig tree and vine yield their full strength. Verse 22)

You shall be satisfied and worship your God. (You will be full of life and joy. Verse 26)

God will deal wondrously with you. (Literally, He will perform wonders for you. Verse 26)

You will never be ashamed, for I will be in the midst of you. (Not dried up, unproductive, exposed. Verses 26-27)

God is waiting on our repentance, so that He can restore us – Energize, repair, bring back to His original design for us, our original use, function. Then we feel put back together, equipped for His Kingdom purpose.

Discussion Questions:

- One thing which can never be restored is _____ time.
- His requirement for our restoration is _____.
- _____ means to give life, to sustain life, to regain health.
- When we return to Him, He _____ us.

Prayer:

Pray a prayer of repentance and ask God to restore you. To energize, repair, and bring you back to His original design for you.

Notes:
