

Wednesday Word

April 24, 2024

Psalm 51:12- “Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.”

As I shared two Sundays ago, I was driving home from the LCMC district gathering and I felt the Holy Spirit speak three specific words into my spirit for Living Word specifically. While I did share them that next Sunday AM, I wanted to expound on them and give a bit more detail into what I believe the Lord is leading us into as a church community. I will take the next three weeks to share one “Word” per week. Please take these to the Lord in prayer as you process and consider.

I always love going to conferences with the larger church family. I have gone to a few different denominations district conferences, and I really press in and listen closely to what the Holy Spirit is saying to the larger church family, in this case, to the Lutheran Congregation on Mission for Christ family. I had great conversations with church leaders, and the speakers were very inspiring and challenging and spoke to the Lutheran movement and tradition. God has his hand on the Lutheran Church and, if we obey and trust him, we will see a great growth numerically and spiritually.

I had prayed through the whole conference and asked the Lord to share with me some specifics to bring back to Living Word to inspire us all to follow Him more closely and to lean in to his leadership. As I was driving home through Kalama right alongside the Columbia River, I felt the Holy Spirit whisper to my heart three words to bring back home to share with you all. This week I will discuss the first word and then one word each of the next two weeks.

The First was RENEWAL! I believe with all my heart the Lord wants to do a spiritual renewal in our church Family. The word renewal reminds me of the church in Ephesus that we looked at a few months back. This church was a hard-working church and was committed to the ministry of the church but had gotten so focused on their duties, they had forgotten to continually renew their love and zeal for their God.

If I were to be honest with you, and I will be, I feel like one of the members of this church. I have been in ministry of some sort since I was in 6th grade (shout out puppet team!). I love the ministry. I love the organization; I love the planning; I love getting people involved; I love seeing a plan come together and come to pass. But so many times I have worked so hard at doing work **FOR GOD**, I have forgotten to give my attention **TO GOD**. Every time I find myself in this place it is time for a renewal.

I look around at Living Word and all the committed people who have sacrificed their lives to build this church and I feel the Holy Spirit wants to reward you with a renewal of love, passion, and revelation of God Himself. I believe God is inviting you into a deeper and more personal and more tangible relationship with him than maybe you have ever experienced in your life up to this point. He wants to show you things in His Word that you have never noticed; He wants to renew your awareness of His presence through Prayer, Worship, and Fellowship with His Spirit, and the Sacraments. He wants to renew your appreciation for your Lutheran heritage that so many of you have celebrated for your entire lives.

This Renewal could also mean other areas of your life as well. Maybe a renewal of your marriage vows; maybe the renewal for your vocation; maybe the renewal of your passion for a hobby or recreation. God cares about those things too.

In closing, I ask you to consider all these things in prayer. Sometimes in church life we can get so used to our day-to-day service that we can forget about the one we are serving. His desire is to know us each in an individual and very real way. To submit to a renewal of our Spirits by God's Holy Spirit may require us to let go of some things that bring us comfort and control to let Him be our comfort and let Him be in control.

Let's seek Spiritual Renewal together!

I love you and God Loves you!

Pastor Eric