

## Restoring Others

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Xenos Summer Institute 2019

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### My Story

Disclaimers:

1 Hour?

Willingness needed

No formula

**Q: What gets people in the condition of needing restored? Of not wanting to give their all to servanthood?**

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### Topics

- Despondency is not uncommon
- God's Role and example
- Time
- Cultivating proper view of God, including Remembering
- Importance of correct view of suffering
- Uncovering unfulfilled expectations
- Hurt
- Space and Freedom
- Encouraging to Serve

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### How can this be? Psalm 23 and Psalm 42

The LORD is my shepherd,  
I shall not want.

<sup>2</sup> He makes me lie down in green pastures;  
He leads me beside quiet waters.

<sup>3</sup> He restores my soul;  
He guides me in the paths of righteousness  
For His name's sake.

<sup>4</sup> Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,  
I fear no evil, for You are with me...

<sup>6</sup> Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my  
life,  
And I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

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### How can this be? Psalm 23 and Psalm 42

Psalm 42: 11 Why are you in despair, O my soul?  
And why have you become disturbed within me?  
Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him,  
The help of my countenance and my God.

“Why then this statement ... ‘He restores my soul’?” Surely  
it would be assumed that anyone in the Good Shepherd’s  
care could never become so distressed in soul as to need  
restoration” (Keller, W. P. (2015). *A shepherd looks at Psalm 23*. Grand  
Rapids, MI: Zondervan.).

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### Even Moses and Elijah needed restoration

- Both desired to die
- Both had deep spiritual disappointment
- Moses: Disappointment at the discontent and  
murmuring of the Israelites... despaired of carrying  
God’s purpose
- Elijah—Felt alone in his passion for God.

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### Even Moses and Elijah needed restoration

- Tender and personal remedy for each
- Moses—seventy elders to share his burden.
- Elijah- solitary place, speaks to him alone, reveals Himself to him afresh, and shows seven thousand in support
- God is our example: Individually, patiently, lovingly... no formula

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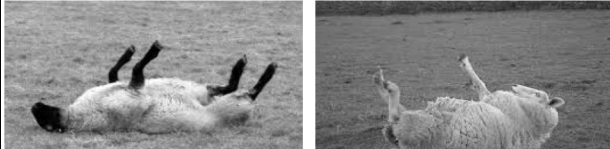
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### The Cast Sheep

Turned on its back and cannot get up again by itself.



"A 'cast' sheep is a very pathetic sight. Lying on its back, its feet in the air, it flays away frantically struggling to stand up, without success. Sometimes it will bleat a little for help, but generally it lies there lashing about in frightened frustration" (Keller, W. P. (2015). *A shepherd looks at Psalm 23*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.).

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### God is the Good Shepherd to cast sheep

"When I read the life story of Jesus Christ and examine carefully His conduct in coping with human need, I see Him again and again as the Good Shepherd picking up "cast" sheep. The tenderness, the love, the patience that He used to restore Peter's soul after the terrible tragedy of his temptations is a classic picture of the Christ coming to restore one of His own.....And so He comes quietly, gently, reassuringly to me no matter when or where or how I may be cast down" (W. Phillip Keller).

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Restoration is a spiritual endeavor

John 15: 5 I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.

Delicate work

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God restores and redeems

- Hosea 6:1 He will bind up our wounds
- Jeremiah 30: 17 But I will restore you to health and heal your wounds, declares the Lord...
- 1 Peter 5:10 And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm, and steadfast.

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God wants to use you

2 Corinthians 3: 4 Such confidence we have through Christ toward God. <sup>5</sup> Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as *coming* from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God,<sup>6</sup> who also made us adequate *as* servants of a new covenant

**Q: When it comes to restoring others, where do we get messed up in our thinking?**

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### Time

“Impatient Westerners prefer quick sanctification. Take your car into the shop and drive it again the next day. Bring your soul to a counselor or pastor and get fixed right away” (Crabb, L. (2011). *Shattered dreams: Gods unexpected path to joy*. Colorado Springs, CO: WaterBrook Press, 78).

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### Time and Direction

Powlison: “We love gazelles. Graceful leaps make for great stories about God’s wonder-working power. And we like steady and predictable. It seems to vindicate our efforts in making the Christian life work in a businesslike manner. But, in fact, there’s no formula, no secret, no technique, no program, no schedule, and no truth that guarantees the speed, distance, or time frame. On the day you die, you’ll still be somewhere in the middle.

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### Time and Direction

But you will be further along. When we lengthen the battle, we realize that our business is the direction. God manages to work his wonder-working power in and through all of the above scenarios [Gazelle, steady walk, trudging, crawling, stuck] ! God’s people need to know that someone else’s story doesn’t set the timetable for how Christ’s grace is working out in your life” (Powlison, D. (2017). *Making all things new: restoring joy to the sexually broken*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, p. 59-65

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### Cultivating proper view of God

"What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us" (TOZER, A. (2018). *KNOWLEDGE OF THE HOLY: The attributes of god. their meaning in the christian life*. S.I.: LUTTERWORTH PRESS).

Only after an ordeal of painful self-probing are we likely to discover what we actually believe about God" (TOZER, A. (2018). *KNOWLEDGE OF THE HOLY: The attributes of god. their meaning in the christian life*. S.I.: LUTTERWORTH PRESS).

Helping restore others to the proper view of God is one of the most important things we can do.

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### Cultivating proper view of God

"I came to the realization that I didn't believe God loved me. Nor did I ever feel that love. I had been acting in a transactional nature with God--if I do all this work, will you love me then? "

"As I began to intensely focus on the question of God's love for me, I began to understand love in a very different way. The Holy Spirit reminded me of all of God's provisions for me, even before I began a relationship with Him. He reminded me that I had a relationship with the God of the universe. I began to understand Christ's death as more than the opening of the door that allowed me to have a relationship, but rather as the very ground on which I stood. "

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### Cultivating the proper view of God

- Involves Remembering.....
- Psalm 77: 11 I shall remember the deeds of the LORD; Surely I will remember Your wonders of old.  
<sup>12</sup> I will meditate on all Your work And muse on Your deeds.  
<sup>13</sup> Your way, O God, is holy; What god is great like our God?  
<sup>14</sup> You are the God who works wonders; You have made known Your strength among the peoples. <sup>15</sup> You have by Your power redeemed Your people, The sons of Jacob and Joseph
- Knowing God: Remember who He is and what He has done

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Remember: Initial relationship with Christ

**Revelations 3: 4** But I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love. <sup>5</sup> Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first;

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Remember: God's past faithfulness

- **Joshua 4:7** " ...So these stones shall become a memorial to the sons of Israel forever."
- Events that were defining moments
- How has God shown His power?
- Have there been times you experienced His guidance?  
Answered prayer? Fulfilled a promise?
- Uncover: What are the ways God has been faithful to them in the past? Identify provisions.
- Write spiritual journey with eye on God

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Remember: your life without Christ

Ephesians 2: 11 "*Remember* that at one time you Gentiles . . . were without Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world"

- What was the trajectory of your life without Christ?
- What would your relationships be like? Your sin? Your attitude? Your marriage?
- What would your life be like without the love of Christ coming into your heart?

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### Cultivating proper view of God

Sanders: "What we need is a fresh revelation of Him as El Shadai, God All-Sufficient, immeasurably greater than our conscious inadequacy. Our trouble is that our God is too small, or rather that our conception and knowledge of our God are too small. He is inadequate to cope with the complexities and weaknesses of our nature. We must have a larger God..."

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### Cultivating proper view of God

...We will discover a larger God through meditation on His Word, and this takes time. There is no easy short cut. Ponder... amazing assertions... Believe in the availability of these resources, more than sufficient for our every lack. ..To regain such confidence in our Great God cannot but eliminate strain, for tensions develop only when we have an inadequate God" (Sanders, J. O. (1961). *A spiritual clinic: A suggestive diagnosis and prescription for problems in Christian life and service*. Chicago: Moody Press, 15)

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### Correct view of Suffering

- Life includes suffering...Suffering provides an opportunity to know him. "He is in the tunnel with us" (Moreno and Campbell, *Constructive Suffering*).
- Suffering becomes redemptive when we focus on seeking God.

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Correct view of suffering

- PAUL faced the problem of unanswered prayer.
- God did not change circumstance
- Assurance that his ministry would be enriched with the thorn
- The spiritual well being and growth is of greater importance than their physical comfort
- He does not always spare present pain if it will produce eternal profit.

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Correct view of suffering

“The help we need, most often, is suffering, the pain of seeing at least a few of our fondest dreams shattered. Shattered dreams are necessary for spiritual growth....If we are satisfied with good...we will never hunger for God’s best...” (Crabb, L. (2011). *Shattered dreams: Gods unexpected path to joy*. Colorado Springs, CO: WaterBrook Press, 57).

We need to help them see God’s love in the midst of suffering

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Common responses to talk through

Bitterness  
Resentment  
Self-Pity  
Listening, Prayer, Word are key

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### Uncover Unfulfilled Expectations

- What and who have let them down?
- Honesty and Reflection

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### Unfulfilled Expectations

- **Were they looking for benefits from following Christ more than Christ Himself?**
- The disciples were.... We often hope the same thing
- **Did they have expectations about what their role might have been?**
- Difficult and confusing to turn from these desires for ourselves and trust Christ for what He has for us

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### Fellowship expectations

"Christian brotherhood is not an ideal which we must realize; it is rather a reality created by God in Christ in which we may participate. The more clearly we learn to recognize that the ground and strength and promise of all our fellowship is in Jesus Christ alone, the more serenely shall we think of our fellowship and pray and hope for it.... For Jesus Christ alone is our unity. He is our peace. Through him alone do we have access to one another, joy in one another, and fellowship with one another"

(Bonhoeffer, D., Wells, S., & Doberstein, J. W. (2015). *Life together*. London: SCM Press. Chapter 1, Community).

- "I had put my friends in the body in a position only God should occupy. It is difficult because God promises to meet our needs, and he uses people to do it, but I had put them in God's place."

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### Hurt

- Help them admit the hurt they feel. Validate the pain, the cost, the long lasting effects without minimizing or excusing.
- Help them identify if they contributed to the situation
- What can be done? Conversation? Recourse? Writing a letter?
- Focus on God's justice— he is effective and redemptive. We are not. Put the offender on God's hook.
- Help them submit to Romans 8:28; asking God to show us His redemptive purposes.
- Forgiveness can provide freedom

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### Uncover Hurt

"When I began to slowly return to fellowship, one of the leaders whom I had left in the lurch by stepping down from leadership apologized to me for some of the issues between us. Her initiation of this allowed me to open the dialogue between us--and although difficult, it gave me space to be vulnerable both about how I had felt hurt and how I had been carrying guilt and shame over the ways I had hurt her."

Honestly think through how there could be healing

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### Space and Freedom

Ogilvie: "You have been a beloved disciple, but your heart is no longer with Me. You have a distorted idea of what it means to be free. You think you will be free if you turn your back on your commitment to me and follow your own desires, plans, and involvements.....I love you so much that I will not keep you against your will. You are released from any obligations of discipleship..."

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### Space and Freedom

"We are free to leave our Master, but would that be freedom? We are released to throw off the responsibilities of being a bond servant or righteousness, but would that bring freedom? No, but given the choice, we are introduced to the real person inside us and to what we really want.....We were created in such a way that it is only in this liberating bondage that we are free."

("Bondage that liberates", *Freedom in the Spirit*, Lloyd John Ogilvie, Harvest House Publishers, 1984. )

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### Freedom

"Finally, the leaders of the group encouraged me, very gently, to re-engage with others in the group, which communicated two crucial messages. First, they didn't judge me when I couldn't or wouldn't engage. They allowed fits and starts and failure without pushing. Second, they still believed in my ability and willingness to do the work of the kingdom. They provided a place for me to express all my doubts of my ability to trust myself in working with others and not transferring my faith to the people with whom I worked instead of staying focused on God."

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### Freedom

"The timeline on this was long....They give me space to be honest about feeling weak and tired and used up and unable to contribute to the group at full speed all the time. The honesty of that communication begun in that safe and strong group of leaders continues with my new iteration of leadership in a plant. Finally, planting the home group brought me full circle back to the work, wounded but stronger and more open."

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Encourage to Serve

Matthew 11: <sup>28</sup> "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. <sup>30</sup> For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."  
 •Connection between living in step with Him and rest

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Encourage to Serve

John 21: 17 He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Tend My sheep."  
**Full restoration includes love and service of God's people**  
 •Help them move toward people and take incremental steps  
 •We are created for love and service of others

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Encourage to serve

John 13: <sup>17</sup> If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.  
 Fulfillment through self filled life is a lie  
 True happiness is giving yourself away in service to others.

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### Christ as Center

“Christ is the true Source of all identity, and the better we know Him the better we know ourselves. All identity, influence, ministry, and impact come from knowing Him. In fact, everything that matters comes from knowing Him. The greatest source of ministry competence lies in knowing Christ. Here is where we find vision; here is where we find courage; here is where we find our gifts; here is where we find spiritual power. Without Him all we do is nothing”

(Chapter 1 from Bill Lawrence, *Effective Pastoring: Giving Vision, Direction, and Care to Your Church* (W Publishing Group, 1999))

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