

"TIMES OF REFRESHING"

Zoe Christian Fellowship of Whittier
Bishop Edward A. Smith

INTRODUCTION TO LESSON

Life Group Lesson Objective: Continue individual Life Change as we understand that growing in the Lord requires “Times of Refreshing – in the presence of the Lord”

Life Group Leader preparation:

Scripture: Acts 3:19 – Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of “*refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord*”.

- Repent – change your mind and purpose
- Refreshing: invigorating, rejuvenating, reviving, stimulating: the scriptures speak often of “rivers of living water”
 - Ps 36:8 – they shall be abundantly satisfied (or watered), who put their trust in you.

Peter was preaching to the people that if they repented of their sins that “times of refreshing would come”. Times is plural more than one time.... how many times? He just said “times” of refreshing. Holy Spirit knows we will need times of refreshing. Not just a onetime event. a refreshing has a renewing effect on the state of body or mind

Ex 33:14 – My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.

Matt 11:28-30 – Amp: Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy-laden *and* overburdened, and I will cause you to rest. I will ease and relieve and refresh your souls. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am gentle (meek) and humble (lowly) in heart, and you will find rest (relief and ease and refreshment and recreation and blessed quiet) for your souls. For My yoke is wholesome (useful, good—not harsh, hard, sharp, or pressing, but comfortable, gracious, and pleasant), and My burden is light *and* easy to be borne.

Week #1: Entering His presence

Group Discussion Questions: How do we enter His presence?

Bible says – in His presence is fullness of Joy!

We can experience a time of refreshing through daily times of Worship, Prayer and Bible reading. When we spend time with the Lord, we **can** experience His peace and joy which renews us.

Prayer, Worship, meditate on things above so that we can tune out the noises of the world, or anything that distracts us from God and His word; **all distractions** may not be necessarily a sin.....but if it distracts from Him, from prayer, from worship or His word it becomes a problem.

DESCRIBE HOW YOU ENTER HIS PRESENCE??

- I will bless the Lord at a times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth –
Read Psalm 34
- Learn to trust Him more – In His presence is fullness of joy!

Let's be honest – Discussion: Take time during LG to experience entering His presence. Describe how you experience His refreshing?

Week #2: DEALING WITH DISTRACTIONS

Group Discussion Questions: Name some causes that you have experienced...How do we deal with distractions?

Recognize Distractions:

Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace to receive..... Heb 4:16

1. Be intentional: with a “holy boldness” to come into His presence.
2. Hebrews 10:19 – Having therefore boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.
 - a. Don't be intimidated, Jesus made a way for God's people to draw near to Him by His death. We have a right to come boldly to God.

Taking time for the refreshing:

- God reveals his secrets: the secret things belong to the Lord
 - Isaiah 6:1-8 – (Isaiah's vision) God will give us specific instructions when we are in His presence.
 - He reveals the things we need to know (personal)
- Ps 16:11 – Thou will shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand are pleasures evermore.

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Satan does everything he can to keep us from entering the presence of the Lord. No one is exempt from the attacks of the enemy.

THINGS TO REMEMBER:

Psalm 139:7-12 – The presence of God is everywhere

Isaiah 66:1 – Heaven is my throne; the earth is my footstool (think about it)

2 Chronicles 16:9 – For the eyes of the Lord move to and fro throughout the earth to shew himself strong on behalf of them whose “heart” is perfect toward him. – KJV

Exodus 33:14 – My presence shall go with thee, and I will thee rest

God is a comfort in trials: Christians have trials, and **we must learn** how to handle them by faith... trusting in God and speaking the Word. James said we learn patience by the trying of our faith. James 1:3-4.

Isa 43:2 – “When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, nor will the flame burn you...NASB

Sometimes we bring trouble on our own selves

Prov 11:29 – He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind: and the fool shall be servant to the wise of heart.

But there is a refreshing in the presence of the Lord!

Let's be honest – Discussion: Do you have a favorite devotional that you read, or a special music that opens your heart to the Lord, or just being quiet?

Week #3: Apart from Him We Can Do Nothing – John 15:5 amp

Group Discussion Questions: How do we draw near to God with a sincere heart?

Connect to the fruit bearing vine = life and spiritual growth, transformation

In Acts 3:19 – Peter was responding to the people who witnessed healing of the man who was lame from his mother’s womb – Acts 3:1-18)

- They had denied that Jesus was the Holy One, when Pilate was determined to let him go.
- They needed to repent of their unbelief, so they could believe in the “One” who had healed the lame man.

Now the comforter has come:

John 16:7 – Jesus had to go...so that the comforter could come.

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The Holy Spirit came to the World or unbeliever → to convict of Sin

The Holy Spirit is here for the Believer

- Guide us into the truth – the refresher
- Show us things to come – times of refreshing
- He shall glorify Jesus
- He shall take of Jesus and show it unto us
 - Example: Matt 11:28-30
 - The Comforter gives us rest:
 - So, the way of the believer’s yoke is easy in Christ Jesus
 - And, believers’ burden is light in Christ Jesus

Be filled with the Holy Spirit – Acts 1:8

Evidence of the Holy Spirit – Acts 2:1-4

Let’s be honest – Discussion: Holy Spirit

Week #4: He shall come down like rain and refresh us – Ps 72:6

Discussion Question: Describe the “presence of the Lord” and what it means to you.

Acts 17:28 – For in Him we live and move and have our being. God is omnipresent...He is not far from us.

Discovering God’s plan and purpose for our lives is not for pushovers, you can’t be a doormat. You can’t do what’s just easy on the flesh and don’t nourish yourself in God’s word.

1 John 5:4 – this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith. Other people can’t enter His presence for us, it is our responsibility.

Spending time with God must be intentional

Heb 10:22 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you...

Not in His presence = No Peace

If you find yourself anxious or worried about something or fear tries to come upon you, sickness or disease -- REMEMBER GOD’S WORD IS MEDICINE

- Proverbs 4:22 – His word is medicine to my flesh..... take your medicine
- Spend time listening to the Word to keep your faith up

Note: If Sunday or Life Group is the only time you “hear” or “study” the bible you will be thirsty and hungry! You will always need a refreshing!

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God speaks to us when we spend time with Him.

- What is He saying to you? Write it down, keep a journal.
- Do your Evangelism skills need refreshing?

Psalm 46:10 – Be still and know that I am God....

- Getting to “know God”; to understand Kingdom principles concerning marriage, ministry, family, finances, career, health, relationships. Be intentional about being in the presence of God.

He corrects us there too!

Let's be honest – Discussion: We're about to go on the Daniel Fast – this is a good time to write down what you hear from God. Even if you don't join the fast, its a good time to purpose in your heart to hear God for your future.....