



From the Pastor's Desk

Have you seen the color sections and advertisements in the local newspapers and on television lately? If you have, one of the things that you might have noticed were the sales of the various spring flowers and seed packets that are going on. One advertiser in particular listed all their plants under a banner headline of “Your backyard comes to life with color.” Of course the advertisement was speaking of the renewal of our gardens as the days are getting longer and warmer once again as growing season is in full bloom. Renewal is an important sign of spring but we also have a need for it in other areas of our lives as well.

Recently, Vicki and I began planning for our 40th wedding anniversary this coming fall. It will be a time for some physical renewal. We call that vacation. Vicki and I are looking forward to just relaxing. In the process our bodies will be renewed, as hopefully there will be no outside stressors affecting us. We will do what we want to do such as sleeping late, not worrying about telephone calls, sitting by the pool and ocean, swimming, fishing, reading, sightseeing, maybe play a little golf and of course eating and shopping. We all need to do this from time to time because if we don't get renewed we become burned out.

Yet physical renewal is not the only type of renewal that we need to take care of in our lives. There is what I call environmental renewal, and that is changing the environment that we live in. It might be as simple as rearranging the furniture in our homes to that of a total redecoration. But we need to do this as it helps to prevent us from living in a stagnant environment.

But there is also another type of renewal that is important for us all. And that is a Spiritual Renewal. Spiritual Renewal is an integral concept in Christian theology, although it has its roots in the Old Testament. In the post-apostolic age, the idea of renewal tended to become linked with that of Baptism and rightfully so. But it is also more than that. In reality, we need Spiritual Renewal today and every day as many of us have been baptized 50, 60, 70 or more years ago as infants and really don't remember our Baptism. So what are we to do? How are we to get that Spiritual Renewal that we desire and so desperately need?

We get it by making up our minds to consciously spend time with God who “renews your life and sustains you.” For when we do this, “inwardly we are being renewed day by day.”

As we walk through the season of Lent, my prayer for each of us is that we will become Spiritually Renewed and turn from those things that separate us from God,

for Scripture tells us that if we call on God, God will answer and tell you great and unsearchable things you did not know.

To help us in this process, during the Sundays of Lent I will be preaching a series of sermons on the power of praying together. I don't know of any better way to be Spiritually Restored than by spending time with God Almighty.

My prayer for each of us is that we make the time to be with God so that God can fulfill His promise to each of us.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Rich