

"Always Reforming"

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- [0 : 00] I'm pretty excited later this summer, my college roommates and I are going to spend a couple of days together in Connecticut. I haven't seen some of them in a long time.
- And I am really looking forward to time together with them to renew our friendships and our relationships.
- But as I've been reflecting on catching up with them, I got an email from one of them earlier that shared some really significant news in his life that I had no idea about. And I realized how far our relationship had drifted apart in the sense of being together in a relationship on a regular basis.
- Relationships need constant renewal, don't they? This is true in our co-workers or the people we work with. This is true in our friendships. This is true in our marriages, in our relationships with our kids.
- This is true in our relationships. Wherever our relationships are, we often feel that the force draws us away from intimacy and closeness in our relationships.
- [1 : 16] Sometimes it's experiencing great loss. And walking through grief isolates us from others. Sometimes it's the busyness of life.
- Everything that's right in front of me is so captivating and so important that I don't have time to look beyond. Or I lose sight of some of these longer term or more important things of life.
- Sometimes we just get distracted by new and shiny things. Whether it be a new hobby. Whether it be a new relationship. Whether it be a new TV.
- A new fire pit in your backyard. Whatever it is. New shiny things. And sometimes we just plain get lazy. We become complacency.
- We get bored. And it turns into neglect. And all of our relationships will wither and suffer. Unless we can continue to seek to renew them on a regular basis.
- [2 : 19] And so it is with our relationship with God as well. We within our relationship with God need the same kind of renewal on a regular basis.
- One of the phrases that came out of the Protestant Reformation was, excuse my Latin if I don't say this right, *Ecclesia Reformata Semper Reformanda*. Translated, the church reformed, always in need of reforming.
- That's a dynamic translation of it. But I think it's helpful to think about when the Protestant Reformation happened, there were two things that went on. One was a reformation of the church to reestablish clarity in the gospel so that we understood the Bible and Jesus and the means of salvation properly in light of some ways in which the church before then had really wandered from that.
- The church was renewed doctrinally. And so the church reformed refers to that. But then it says, but always in need of reforming. The person who wrote this, I didn't even write down his name because he's some Dutch guy and I would have butchered his name terribly.

But the guy who read this actually coined this phrase not for some sort of grand reformation of the church where we need to tear it all down and build it up from nothing again, but instead saying the church has been reformed in a renewal of doctrine and practice, but what we need is God's ongoing work to reform our hearts so that our hearts are captivated by the truths of the gospel and by the worship of God and our lives are lived to serve and please Him and to bring glory.

[4 : 12] And one of the fascinating things about this, and you'll see this as a thread through it, is that always in need of reforming. It is not a call for me to reform myself, but it is a cry and a recognition that I need to be reformed or renewed in my relationship.

Some of us, like an old married couple, have been with God for a long time. But maybe it's grown a little stale, a little cold, a little pro forma.

Our passage today speaks a lot about renewal, about renewal in our relationship with God.

It actually uses the word covenant a bunch to talk about a covenantal relationship with God. We're continuing in our series, our preaching series in 2 Chronicles, and we're going to look at 2 Chronicles chapters 23 and 24 today.

You can find it in your pew Bible on page 348, I believe. And as we look there, let's pull out our Bibles so that we can read along as I read it, as we go through the sermon.

[5 : 27] But remember that this book was written to a group of people who had come back from the exile of God's judgment on His people for their lack of reformation, for their wandering away and their forsaking God.

And now God had brought them back and restored them to the land of Israel. But they're asking, how do we go forward? How do we not let that happen again? How do we pursue a relationship with God and being God's people?

And one of the things that we see is they look back to the earlier stories to learn, right? And as the writer of 2 Chronicles was writing, and he said, I want you to look back and see what happened.

Look at the good places where God was at work and where people were responding rightly. And look at the bad places where God was at work and people were ignoring Him and doing other things. More specifically, in the story of the kingdom of Israel, the context has been in chapters 21 and 22, we've seen the story of three bad rulers, Jehoram, Ahaziah, and Athaliah.

We saw that this is the influence of the house that ruled the northern kingdom that had no interest in following or serving God. In fact, they followed other gods. And at the time when we're going to jump into the story, Athaliah sits on the throne.

[6 : 56] She is the mother-in-law of the last king in the line of David who had died. And so, this leads us to... I'm just going to read this so that we can get a little bit of context.

Chapter 22, if you want to look back one chapter, chapter 22, verses 10 through 12, this is the context and the setup. Now, when Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the royal family of the house of Judah.

But Jehoshabath, the daughter of the king, took Joash, the son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from among the king's sons who were about to be put to death, and she put him and his nurse in a bedroom.

Thus, Jehoshabath, the daughter of King Jehoram, and wife of Jehoiada the priest, because she was a sister of Ahaziah, hid him from Athaliah so that she did not put him to death.

And he remained with them six years, hidden in the house of God, while Athaliah reigned over the land. And as we see this little story, we see that the seed of renewal for God's people is planted.

- [8 : 13] So let's see what God has to teach us about that. Let me pray and ask for God's help as we look at our passage this morning. So pray with me, if you will. Lord Jesus, Lord, we need your help this morning.
- Lord, how often our hearts do grow cold. We pray this morning that by your Spirit you would, Lord, bring your winds of renewal into our hearts and lives.
- Lord, I pray that you would give us understanding of this section of your word. Lord, I pray that you would help me to speak your truth as I ought to.
- And I pray for us that we would sit under and receive your word. And Lord, that you would do your work in our hearts as we listen to your word today.
- We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. The big idea of our passage this morning is pretty straightforward.
- [9 : 18] It is, we will see the importance of renewal in the relationship of God's people. The importance of renewal in the relationship of God's people. We will see it in three steps.
- The renewal that revives devotion to our King. The renewal that clarifies our practice of worship of God. And a renewal that keeps us from falling away from our God.
- So, there's your outline if you want to follow along. The first thing we're going to look at is at the beginning of chapter 23, verses 1 through 15, we'll see renewal revives devotion to our King.
- So, we're going to read that together and then we'll look at it for a few minutes. 2 Chronicles chapter 23, verse 1. But in the seventh year, Jehoiada took courage and entered into a covenant with the commanders of hundreds.
- Azariah, the son of Jehoram, Ishmael, the son of Jehohanan, Azariah, the son of Obed, Maaseah, the son of Adaiah, and Elishaphat, the son of Zichri.
- [10 : 22] And they went about through Judah and gathered the Levites from all the cities of Judah and the heads of the fathers' houses of Israel. And they came to Jerusalem.
- And all the assembly made a covenant with the king in the house of God. And Jehoiada said to them, Behold, the king's son, let him reign as the Lord spoke concerning the sons of David.
- This is the thing that you shall do. Of you priests and Levites who come off duty on the Sabbath, one-third shall be gatekeepers and one-third shall be at the king's house and one-third at the gate of the foundation.
- And all the people shall be in the courts of the house of the Lord. Let no one enter the house of the Lord except the priests and ministering Levites. They may enter for they are holy, but all the people shall keep the charge of the Lord.
- And the Levites shall surround the king each with his weapon in his hand. And whoever enters the house shall be put to death. Be with the king when he comes in and when he goes out.
- [11 : 27] The Levites and all Judah did according to all that Jehoiada the priest commanded and they each brought his men who were to go off duty on the Sabbath and those who were to come on duty on the Sabbath for Jehoiada the priest did not dismiss the divisions.
- And Jehoiada the priest gave to the captains the spears and the large and small shields that had been King David's which were in the house of God and he set all the people as a guard for the king every man with his weapon in his hand from the south side of the house to the north side of the house around the altar and the house.
- Then they brought out the king's son and put the crown on him and gave him the testimony and they proclaimed him king and Jehoiada and his son anointed him and they said, long live the king.

When Athaliah heard the noise of the people running and praising the king she went into the house of the Lord to the people and when she looked there was the king standing by his pillar at the entrance and the captains and the trumpeters beside the king and all the people of the land rejoicing and blowing trumpets and the singers with their musical instruments leading in the celebration and Athaliah tore her clothes and cried, treason, treason.

Then Jehoiada the priest brought out the captains who were set over the army saying to them, bring her out between the ranks and anyone who follows her is to be put to death with the sword.

[12 : 58] For the priest said, do not put her to death in the house of the Lord. So they laid hands on her and she went into the entrance of the horse gate of the king's house and they put her to death there.

Okay. Old Testament narrative is so much fun. There's so much detail. What is going on here? So Jehoiada, right, is the priest overseeing the temple in Jerusalem where they worship God.

His wife is Jehoshaphat who is the woman who saved Joash who is the son of the king who has passed away from being killed by his grandmother so that she could have power.

That was her. She wiped out all of the remaining rivals to the throne so she could take the throne of Israel. But God preserved that boy.

And six years later, Jehoiada decided, it is time. And with the Lord, he put a plan in place.

[14 : 08] He carefully built support. He pulled together the military commanders. He pulled together the religious leaders and the Levites who were those who served in the temple.

He pulled together the fathers of the families. So he gathered a broad coalition of the people of Israel who wanted to see a restoration. And there's probably an undercurrent here of saying, Athaliah was a terrible ruler and people didn't want her to keep going.

They wanted something new. And Jehoiada took advantage of this. And it took shrewd planning. There's a lot of detail in here, but basically what Jehoiada was doing was picking the perfect time to pronounce this new king.

It was when there was a change of guard. So there was a guard coming in and there was a guard going out and he said, everyone stay. So he has twice as many guards as normal. And there are all these people here and it's on the Sabbath so people are here worshipping.

And he said, at this time we're going to set up a cordon around the temple and then we're going to proclaim the king in the middle of it. And that's basically what he does.

[15 : 12] Right? And Athaliah, the sitting queen at this point, who didn't seem very interested it seems in the house of the Lord, she didn't go there regularly because, as we will see, she worshipped Baal.

She worshipped in a different place, a different God. So she was probably unfamiliar with some of these shenanigans that Jehoiada was pulling off. She shows up and she yells and says, what's going on here?

Treason, treason, which is so ironic, right? She who usurped the throne from her, the rightful heir who lived and took it for herself.

She who led the people astray in so many ways. Her treason against God was far greater. And yet here she is crying treason, treason, and Jehoiada says, no, your time is done.

And the military takes her and they remove her from the temple courts, from the areas, from the places of worship, and she is removed and executed for her rebellion and for her unrighteous taking of the throne.

[16 : 30] In all of this, the nation was reverting to a renewal of what should have been. The line of the kings of David was being restored.

And did you notice that there were a couple of times, you see it in verse 23, verse 1, you see it again in verse 3, that Jehoiada led in people making covenants, that is, agreements to renew their relationship with one another so that they could be God's people and do what God had called them to do.

They were stepping back into a stream of covenants that go back even further, that go all the way back to Father Abraham, the one who God made a covenant saying, I will make you the father of a great nation and I will bless you and your nation and your people will bless the whole world.

It's the covenant that God made with the people of Israel through Moses at Sinai when he gave the law and said, this is what it means to be my people. This is how you are to live as my people and I will be your God and you will be my people for, till the end of the earth and I will establish you and make you to be a place where I display my glory and the covenant that he made with David, I will make your throne an eternal throne and this will be a kingdom that will last forever and one of your descendants will sit on this throne forever.

And the restoration of Joash to the place of king is a restoration to the promises of these covenants to be God's people in God's place, renewing a way to walk with God and to have a relationship with Him.

[18 : 29] Now, before we keep going with this story, let's stop and think, how do we apply this today? right? Now, I always say this but I'm going to say it again. Israel, the nation state of Israel was God's people expressed through a political, socio-economic reality.

They had militaries, they had governments, they had... In the New Testament, the church is God's people, becomes a transnational, apolitical movement throughout all societies in the whole world, right?

And so, we're not looking to restore a new king to rule over politics or a nation or society as the church. We are looking for the king of the church to be exalted in the lives of the church so that we can be God's people throughout the whole world.

And we have that king and his name is Jesus. He is the descendant of David. He is the one who came proclaiming the kingdom of God is at hand.

He is the one who established his kingdom through his life and death and resurrection. And this is the king that we follow. Or is it? This is the question we need to ask ourselves as we think about this passage.

[19 : 56] Who is really the king of our lives? Who do we really trust for protection, for provision? Who do we run to for counsel and wisdom? Who do we bow our knee to and sacrificially follow?

Who do we devote our lives to pleasing and serving? Because this is what kingship at its best is meant to be. This is what Mariadoc Brandybuck saw in Theoden, king of Roan, in the Lord of the Rings when he bowed his knee before this old man and said, I will serve you as your servant because you are a king worth following and worshiping.

And we have someone even better than that in Jesus. But it's so easy, is it not, for our heart devotion to Jesus to wane? How easy it is for our, for us to look to other places than his saving power and redeeming power in our lives.

We look to our jobs and our bosses to provide for our physical needs, and so we end up serving them. we give our lives to our academic mentors or our loyalty to our political leaders and follow them sacrificially.

We look not to God's word or to the king of kings and lord of lords, but to podcasts, news sources, influencers on the internet and others to shape how we think what is good and wise and right in the world.

[21 : 42] And slowly we become weaned from Jesus being really our king. But we need to be reminded that Jesus our king came bringing riches of an eternal kingdom that far outweighs it all.

And the security of our salvation in him based not on our works but based on his gracious work for us is beyond compare. And the wisdom that he gives which is so unlike the wisdom of the world is so great.

we may require the careful planning that Jehoiada did to renew our love for Jesus.

We may need to cut out things that rival him in our hearts. We may need to turn off voices in our heads. We may need to rededicate ourselves to worshiping Jesus more than all to make him truly the controlling center of our lives because he is a king worth that kind of worship.

So we see that in this story there's not only renewal of a devotion to a king but secondly we see that there's a renewal that clarifies the practice of our worship of God.

[23 : 12] this is what happens as we get to the end of chapter 23 so let's read that together and look at it. Starting in verse 16 of chapter 23 says this, And Jehoiada made a covenant between himself and all the people and the king that they should be the Lord's people.

Then all the people went to the house of Baal and tore it down his altars and his images they broke into pieces and they killed Matan the priest of Baal before the altars.

And Jehoiada posted watchmen for the house of the Lord under the direction of the Levitical priests and the Levites whom David had organized to be in charge of the house of the Lord to offer burnt offerings to the Lord as it is written in the law of Moses with rejoicing and with singing according to the order of David.

He stationed the gatekeepers at the gates of the house of the Lord so that no one should enter who was in any way unclean. And he took the captains the nobles the governors of the people and all the people of the land and they brought the king down from the house of the Lord marching through the upper gate to the king's house and they set the king on the royal throne so all the people of the land rejoiced and the city was quiet after Athaliah had been put to death with the sword.

So having presented the king and restored him to his place then Jehoiada leads the people to turn their interest to the worship of God in the temple.

[24 : 50] Right? And this was the place if you remember going all the way back to the Exodus God said I will be among you and he manifested himself in very physical ways and then he told Moses build a tabernacle which is a big tent it's a movable tent and that tent with him and God when they stopped God would show and manifest his presence among them and then further on when they finally returned to the promised land and they built Jerusalem they built a temple and that temple there was a special place where God himself manifested his presence among his people and one of the most grievous things that happened in the exile was that you can read this in the book of Ezekiel the glory of the Lord departed from the temple and was no longer among his people and here that's after this historically what you see here is Jehoiada renewing the worship of God while his presence was still manifested in the temple notice that the whole nation is involved this is not being led by a few people at the top and everyone else is just

I don't know what's going on but you see the people and the priests and the king were renewing their covenant with the God and then they were involved in this transformation where they went and they tore down the temple of Baal the place that was the center of worship of other gods that should never have been and they killed the priest who led that because he had led the people astray from worshipping God and he renewed the covenant relationship with the people and he rebuilt the temple taking from this false temple all the riches that had been lost and renewing them into the beauty and the glory of this physical place of the temple they didn't just rebuild the building though they rebuilt the practices it says that he renewed the Levites in the offering of sacrifices and did you notice as I was reading how often he said as David had done or even as Moses had done this was a renewal that was going back to the old practices where they were good where they were right and remembering what God had already said and saying let's keep doing that let's do that anew because we haven't done it for a while if I and so we see this renewal right of the temple they see this renewal of the worship and remember that the sacrificial system was one that pictured the gospel for the people of Israel in the Old Testament right it showed that the importance of sin as an offense to God and the inability to approach a holy God as sinful people and God gave this this this means by which that sin could be atoned for through the death of animals right in a momentary way the whole temple system was meant to show us that we're sinful people and that we can't just walk up to God and say hey how's it going as a holy God we don't we don't have the right to do that in fact it would incur upon us his wrath against sin and evil but God has made a way for us to be covered and that's the picture you see over and over again by covered by this blood so that we could again draw near to God and again worship him as we ought to and one other thing that's really cool is they renewed the singing did you notice that they renewed the singing that wasn't just doing rites and rituals but was also heartfelt praise and adoration glorifying and bringing and proclaiming the greatness of God if we read ahead into chapter 24 we're not going to read this but 1 through 14 we see a renewal in another way because what Jehoiada ends up doing with Joash is gathering taxes to continue to rebuild the temple and to renew it and so they refresh what had been lost during the last the reign of the last kings they refresh the temple so that it has all that it needs to properly do the worship that God called them to and so the second pattern of renewal is looking at the renewal of worship and how do we worship

God rightly and in the Old Testament it was determined this should be at the temple through the priests with the sacrificial system with the praising of God as a part of it right what about us today how do we be renewed in our practice of worship well that could be a really long sermon series but here are a couple of thoughts for you one way that I think we need to be renewed is how we come to this gathering on Sunday mornings how do we come to a corporate worship time together because we live in a consumer world and often we think what am I going to get out of this this morning am I going to be entertained intrigued or drawn in some of us may come for intellectual rigor and sophistication to build up knowledge to learn more stuff some of us might come for an emotional experience and for the feels that God is real some of us might come for community and to be loved and connected to others some of us might come because we know it's the right thing to do and all of those are good things right all of those are good things and

I'm glad that you're here this morning regardless of your motivation and I hope you'll come back but when God calls us to worship together he calls us so that we can be renewed by him we return to the means of grace that he has given us the word of God the practice of sacraments the fellowship of the saints these gifts so that we might remember God and his work and his greatness and be renewed in our faith we come so that we will see God that we will remember God so that our hearts will be turned to him again in adoration in devotion in knowledge and truth and we pray that as we gather here at Trinity every Sunday that God would be lifted up in our midst that

Jesus our King would be seen clearly and that that would be the thing that would make you come back week after week after week so as we gather we want to examine our hearts why do we gather what do we come here for is it in a consumeristic mentality or is it in a recognition that we desperately need to be renewed in our understanding and vision of who God is on a daily basis the other thing about renewing our worship is that we need to recognize that worship doesn't just happen here when we gather together that is not a biblical we often call this our worship service but it's not our worship service it's our corporate worship service worship is something that we do with all of our lives we'll read Romans in a little bit but that we are to pour out our life in all things as an act of worship to him that we are to do all things for his glory that is to please him to honor him to reflect him to proclaim him so we don't just worship

[33 : 28] God here we do worship God here but then we go out and we worship God as we wipe noses and as we study really hard and as we go to the work of whatever the work is that God calls us to every day as we rub shoulders with the people that God surrounds us with every day we think how do we worship God in every context how do we do this in our families in our marriages how do we do this in our friendships how do we do this in our hobbies in our recreation how do we worship God in all things everywhere because this is what God has called us to do and so our worship of God is not merely in our gathering but also in our scattering renewal!

Renewal in our loyalty to our King and the worship of our God are two of the key things that we learn from this passage but the third thing is in the end of chapter 24 starting in verse 15 where we see that renewal keeps us from falling away so let's read this passage together 24 starting in verse 15 but Jehoiada grew old and full of days and died he was 130 years old at his death they buried him in the city of David among the kings because he had done good in Israel and toward God and his house now after the death of Jehoiada the princes of Judah came and paid homage to the king then the king listened to them and they abandoned the house of the Lord the God of their fathers and served the Asherim and the idols and wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this guilt of theirs yet he set prophets among them to bring them back to the

Lord these testified against them but they would not pay attention then the spirit of God clothed Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest and he stood above the people and said to them thus says God why do you break the commandments of the Lord so that you cannot prosper because you have forsaken the Lord he has forsaken you but they conspired against him and by command of the king they stoned him with stones in the court of the house of the Lord thus Joash the king did not remember the kindness that Jehoiada Zechariah's father had shown him but killed his son and when he was dying he said may the Lord see and avenge at the end of the year the army of the Syrians came up against Joash they came to Judah and Jerusalem and destroyed all the princes of the people from among the people and sent all the spoil to the king of Damascus though the army of the Syrians had come with few men the Lord delivered into their hand a very great army because

Judah had forsaken the Lord the God of their fathers thus they executed judgment on Joash when they departed from him leaving him severely wounded his servants conspired against him because of the blood of the son of Jehoiada the priest and killed him on his bed so he died and they buried him in the city of David but they did not bury him in the tombs of the kings and those who conspired against him were Zabad the son of Shimeath the Ammonite and Jehoshabad the son of Shimerath the Moabite accounts of his sons and of the many oracles against him and of the rebuffing of the house of God are written in the story of the book of the kings and Amaziah his son reigned in his place well this is a depressing end to the story the lack of renewal leads to a tragic ending Joash started well he partnered with

Jehoiada in all the renewal that we had seen but then at the end when Jehoiada passed away Joash fails to continue to pursue renewal he invites in new counselors who lead him astray he forsakes the renewed worship that he had established and turns back to the worship of the house of Ahab and the people of Canaan around them he leads the people away from their relationship with God and God has not forsaken him he sends prophets and he reminds them and he finally sends Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the very man who had saved his life Zechariah says because you have forsaken the Lord he has forsaken you when we do not pursue renewal disaster happens it is a tragic thing to see what happened to his life and we are reminded that renewal is not something we do once but it's something we do over and over again there is great danger in thinking that we have arrived with

[38 : 52] God and the chronicle reminds us that many stumble at the end we have already seen it with other kings this is what the story of Asa was all about and some others we have already seen we may begin with great zeal but finishing the race can be so hard some of you have more years than I do and know this even better than I but there are particular temptations that come from getting old we can become complacent that allows for laziness leads to neglect as we experience this loss and trials we struggle to trust God as much as we used to and intimacy fades as we get older and we feel more weariness of living in a fallen world we experience greater disappointment when life doesn't turn out the way we want it to and we wonder where is

God and his goodness in this story of Joash reminds us that we need to be constantly renewed all the way to the end we need to fight the battle to recognize that we're never just set oh certainly we rest in the grace of God and we know it's not by us that we are renewed but that we are constantly in need of renewal and here's the good news my friends that God is already at work and that God is a God who wants to and is at work renewing his people and as we seek him and depend upon him and remind ourselves that we can't keep ourselves he meets us in this covenant of grace a new covenant in Jesus and this is the great hope that we have this was first promised in fact in the

Old Testament the prophet Ezekiel proclaimed to the very people that the writer of Chronicles was thinking about to encourage them by saying even though the glory of God has departed the temple God has not abandoned his people and so in Ezekiel 36 starting in verse 22 I'm going to read this it's a fairly long passage but it's worth reading in its fullness for this is the hope of the people coming out of the exile therefore say to the house of Israel thus says the Lord God it is not for your sake O house of Israel that I am about to act but for the sake of my holy name which you have profaned among the nations to which you came and I will vindicate the holiness of my great name which has been profaned among the nations in which you have profaned among them and the nations will know that I am the Lord declares the Lord God when through you I vindicate my holiness before their eyes I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land

I will sprinkle clean water on you and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses and from all your idols I will cleanse you and I will give you a new heart and a new spirit I will put in you and I will remove friends this is the hope that we have there is a new covenant that God promised to these Old Testament post exilic people of God that we have now seen the fullness of because this new covenant that God predicted where God would change our hearts where the very meaning of what it means to be God's people would be defined by being renewed in our heart and in our spirit by what he does this is exactly what Jesus has done for us do you remember the words he spoke on the night when he was betrayed he said this cup is the new covenant in my blood for the forgiveness of your sins

By his death he has freed us from the power and guilt of sin by his death he has brought to us a new life and in his resurrection we now live with him in this new life indwelt by his spirit God has already renewed his people and this is the good news of the gospel that by faith as we receive him to do this work of salvation for us we are renewed and by faith we walk with him and he is continually renewing us over and over and over again and so Romans 12 calls us I appeal to you therefore brothers and sisters by the mercies of God to present your bodies as a living sacrifice holy and acceptable to God which is your spiritual worship do not be conformed by this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind that by testing you may discern what is the will of

[44 : 20] God and what is good and acceptable and perfect or in Ephesians chapter 4 where Paul says that is not how we learned Christ assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him as the truth is in Jesus to put off your old self which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through its deceitful desires and be renewed in the spirit of your minds and to put on the new self created after the likeness of God in true righteousness doing in his people he is renewing us and the English translations say renew your mind and we think of that as our intellect but that's not the right understanding of that it is the renewal of all of who we are our minds so we might think rightly and know rightly about who God is and know his kingdom and his ways properly but it is also about our heart to love what bow our knee to no other than that it is

God moving our will so that our hands are moved in obedience to all that he has commanded us to do this is what renewal looks like in the life of a follower of Jesus because he has placed our spirit his spirit in us because he has given us a new heart that is now alive to him so that we can do all of these things friends God will never turn us away when we turn to him and say renew our hearts help us Lord and may we run this race with perseverance to the end fixing our eyes on Jesus this is what we learn from 2nd Chronicles 23 and 24 the importance of renewal in our lives may it be so for us individually may it be so for us as a local church may it be so for the church universal let's pray

Lord God we thank you this morning for this word we thank you for all the ways in which it prompts us and Lord even humbles us and maybe pricks Lord we need renewal we need to be renewed in our devotion in our obedience in our understanding Lord we need to turn away from the ways of this world so that we might turn back to you and live in the new life that you have given us help us Lord to do this we pray in Jesus name Amen Amen