

January 2 & 3

CRAVING NEWNESS

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Introduction

The unsettled feeling that things aren't as they should be points us toward the truth that this isn't how they've always been. Genesis tells the story of humans being created in perfect relationship with God, soon followed by us breaking that relationship because of our sin. Regardless of who we are, the things we've done, our income, race or place in the world, something in us craves a chance to restart to a position of newness. Many people try to do this without Jesus, but He is the only one who can offer satisfaction to this craving in a way nothing else can. Because of Him, we're able to experience, and even participate in, His promise to make all things new. In this week's message, we're reminded of the hope and opportunity we can have as He restores us all from brokenness to something new.

Discussion

1. Read Genesis 1:26-28. Considering this passage and your own understanding of God's character, discuss what this relationship between God and humanity might have been like. Consider and share how sin has changed our attitudes and relationships with God.
2. Read 2 Corinthians 5:17-21. Describe your journey to becoming a "new creation" in Jesus.
3. Sometimes it's hard to believe that in Christ we're a new creation- that the old has gone and the new has come because of the sacrifice Jesus made for us. Are there any parts of your life that are especially hard to believe God can restore? As you're comfortable, briefly share what barriers you find in believing this scripture to be true. Pray for each others' journey toward newness.

Think About It

Sometimes it's hard to believe that in Christ we're a new creation- that the old has gone and the new has come because of the sacrifice Jesus made for us. Are there any parts of your life that are especially hard to believe God can restore? As you're comfortable, briefly share what barriers you find in believing this scripture to be true. Pray for each others' journey toward newness.

Do Something

1. Write down an area God's been faithful to renew in your life on a notecard, along with a verse that sticks out to you from 2 Corinthians 5:17-21. Put the notecard somewhere you'll see it this week, and be reminded to thank God for how He has and continues to make all things new.
2. 2 Corinthians 5 describes the invitation God extends for us to be participants and ambassadors in His ministry of reconciliation. Take some time this week to ask God what areas of brokenness in your life He's asking you to join Him in restoring hope.
3. The gift of a renewed relationship with God is one of grace, forgiveness and love. As followers of Jesus, we're called to hold these same practices in our relationships with each other. Is there a relationship in your life that's been broken and needs to be renewed? Pray for that person this week; then ask for the grace, forgiveness and the love of Jesus to guide you into a next step of reconciliation.