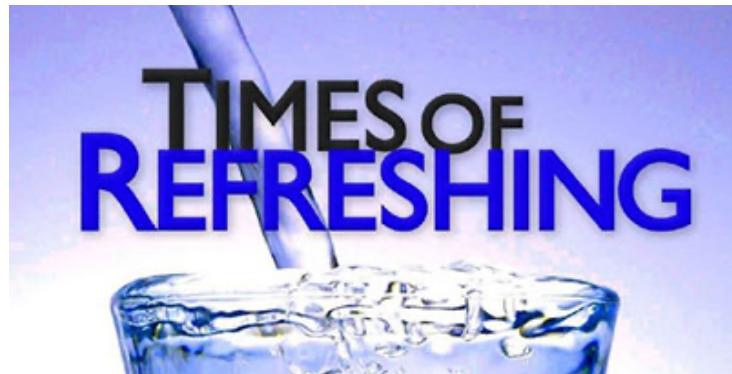


REFRESHING TIME WITH THE LORD

by Gerald Cumby



People need times of refreshing in their lives. "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy."

We live in an era where work is "just another job," a means of providing our family with daily needs, or "an exciting activity where we see productive benefits to help our family and the world which we are living."

Sometimes we get so involved in our work either because we have to/need to, or because we see a need for our services to help others in their daily lives.

Wouldn't the world be a better place to live if the employees would look to their jobs as being a great service to the community.

Whether we work at McDonald's (food service) or in the hospital (medical service needs), we

(the employees of the world) are of value to mankind each and every day.

Working can be stressful...and if not stressful, certainly tiring...as we fulfill our responsibilities every day.

The "stay-at-home mom" certainly fits into that category. She might not be paid for her duties, but without her our family responsibilities and needs could not be met.

Summary: We all need a time of refreshing in our lives.

As we contemplate on this, think and respond:

What is the most refreshing thing you can think of as you work and play hard in life?

What do you do as a time of spiritual refreshing in your life?

Acts 3:19-20, "Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, 20 and that he may send the Messiah, who has been appointed for you—even Jesus." NIV

Acts 3:19-20, "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, 20 and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before,..." KJV

Summary: We can be continually refreshed, if we will live in right relationship with God.

Of all the refreshing experiences we can find, nothing can compare to the renewal of the mind and spirit that is found in the presence of God.

How does a right relationship with the Lord affect our lives?

1. Turning Away from Sin Brings Times of Refreshing

o The Scriptures tell us: First of all, "Repent...."

- To repent means more than to feel sorry for the bad things we've said or done.
- The idea of repentance includes remorse, but also involves turning away from that which is offensive to God.
- It involves more than just an emotional response, but also moves the will into action. True repentance results in change.

When Peter preached to the crowd on the Day of Pentecost,

here was their response in Acts 2:37 "When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, 'Brothers, what shall we do?'" This shows that repentance calls for action: What shall we do about the way we have treated God? Peter gave them the answer: "Repent, let God change your life, and receive His forgiveness."

NOTE: John the Baptist came preaching repentance. Even the religious leaders were drawn to him and wanted to hear what he had to say. John didn't hold back the truth from them, but told them to bear fruit that was worthy of repentance. In other words, be willing to change the way you live, and God will forgive you and help you.

- **Maybe there is something that God has told us to do, but like children sometimes do, we haven't listened very well.** Sometimes we dismiss His word to us so easily. Let's repent of our disobedience and be quick to say, "Yes, Lord, I will do whatever You ask me to do."
- **If we will become quick to listen and quick to obey the Lord, we will find times of refreshing in our lives.** All disobedience is sin! We need to repent and turn away from the sin we have allowed into our lives, and the times of refreshing will begin to flow into our lives like cool refreshing water.

2. Turning to God Brings Times of Refreshing

- The Scripture (V.19) says, "Turn to God." When there is sin in our lives, we do< not want to face the Lord. We don't want to look Him in the eye, because we know< that all is not right.
- Just like Adam and Eve in the Garden, we sometimes try to hide from God, because we don't want to face the consequences of our actions. However, God always knows< what's up! The longer we refuse to turn to Him, the longer we will wallow in the sense of guilt and failure.

3. Times of Refreshing can sometimes be when we know we have been forgiven.

- The Psalms are filled with the language of close relationships with our Creator:

- There are times when the Psalmist asks to Lord to look on him favorably, or to make His face shine upon him.
- God loves us beyond what we can comprehend. Even when we fail and sin against Him, He still loves us. (BUT God hates the sin...don't ever forget it!) However, His love is so strong towards us that He will not smile upon us when we sin against Him.
- The Lord disciplines those whom He loves. If we refuse to turn to God, we can expect some discipline to come our way.
- God's work in our lives is always for the better. At times we may not feel like doing better or turning to God, but He has a way of drawing us back to Himself.

4. Times of Refreshing Can Be Ours When We Have True Christian Joy in Our Fellowship with One Another.

Romans 15:32, "...that I may come to you with joy by the will of God, and may be refreshed together with you."

Philemon 1:7, "For we have great joy and consolation in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed by you, brother."

I think the saddest times for the Church is when there is lack of fellowship and joy in getting together with Christian friends. There is nothing like the Spiritual Refreshment experienced when we can laugh and enjoy each other's company. "Refreshments served doesn't have to be in the food and drink category."

"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, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before." Acts 3:19-20.

SUMMARY: REQUIREMENTS TO GET THE REFRESHING

REPENT.

What does it mean to repent?

1. To review one's actions and feel REGRET for past wrongs.

2. A commitment to PERSONAL CHANGE and resolve to live a more responsible life.
3. Usually means a CONFESSION to God or admission of guilt to the one wronged. Note: You do not have to tell the world...or even family.
4. Normally includes a promise or resolve not to repeat the offense and/or an attempt to make RESTITUTION for the wrong where possible.
5. Biblical repentance starts with a U-Turn. A Christian can't continue to grow without regular repentance. Repentance KEEPS us right (1 Jn. 1:9). Regular repentance is hard because we're busy, we're prideful, and we often overlook holiness.

BIBLICAL TERMS FOR REPENTANCE. Hebrew is "to return" and "to feel sorrow." Greek, New Testament: "change of thinking."

In his book, "I Surrender" Patrick Morley writes that the church's integrity problem is in the misconception "that we can add Christ to our lives, but not subtract sin. It is a change in belief without a change in behavior." He goes on to say, "It is revival without reformation, without repentance." [Quoted by C. Swindoll, John The Baptizer, Bible Study Guide, p. 16.]

There are Three (3) ELEMENTS of Genuine Repentance:

1. **CONVICTION** - This is when the Spirit of God and our conscience tell us, "You're on the wrong road!" Conviction is God waving a red flag of warning.
2. **CONTRITION** or "godly sorrow," as it is called in 2 Cor. 7:10. It's sincere regret over past sins and an earnest desire to walk in a new path of righteousness.
3. **CHANGE** - changing your mind, your attitude, and your ways. If we're truly repentant, we'll make a reversal of direction.

REPENTANCE AND TURNING TO GOD

AND THAT IS WHEN THERE IS SPIRITUAL REFRESHMENT WAITING
FOR US.

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