

Title: THE POWER TO RENEW, JOHN 12:20-33.
(Chatham, NJ; 03/29/09, AM) [D – Topical]

Theme: The cross empowers us and renews us by forgiving us, by conquering death, and by triumphing over evil.

Purpose: To remind us of the good things that the cross has done to renew our lives.

Introduction:

1. In Revelation 21:5 God says, “Behold, I am making all things new.”
2. The previous verses speak of a new earth, God’s presence, and of God wiping away sadness, death, and pain.
3. God’s plan to do this runs directly through Calvary.
4. Renewal becomes a real thing for us in three ways: forgiveness, conquering death, and triumphing over evil.

I. Forgiveness.

- A. Christ had to confront the issue of our disobedience.
 1. He became sin for us, 2 Corinthians 5:21.
 2. He is the “atoning sacrifice” for our sins, 1 John 2:2.
 3. In him we have complete forgiveness, Hebrews 10:1-4.
- B. Forgiveness heals and gives new life.
 1. Forgiveness demands that some wrong has been committed.
 2. Paul will speak of putting off the old self and putting on the new.
 3. Forgiveness provides the transition from one to the other.
 4. When was the last time you were on the receiving end of someone’s forgiveness?
 5. How did you feel when you hurt someone else or made some big mistake?
 6. What was it like when reconciliation took place?
 7. I suspect that in some circles needing forgiveness appears as weakness.
 8. Perhaps it is! The prodigal son reached the bottom of his life before he realized he had erred, but he swallowed his pride and received mercy from his father.
 9. Only then did all things become new for him.

II. Jesus Conquered Death.

- A. Why is death destroyed?
 1. We have become slaves to our fear of it, Heb. 2:14-15.
 2. Jesus abolished death, 2 Timothy 1:10.
 3. Death is thrown into the lake of fire, Revelation 20:14, and thus destroyed.
 4. When we speak of death as a natural part of life, we recognize that we all must face it. However, death is an enemy that entered our existence because of sin.
 5. Death affords us the opportunity to get right with God before we meet him.
- B. The raising of Lazarus, John 11.
 1. “Your brother will rise again,” Jesus says to Martha, John 11:23.
 2. Christ is the resurrection and the life.
 3. Why the tears for Lazarus? (Explain.)
 4. The shout heard in the next world: “Lazarus, come out.” (John 11:43)
 5. No human messiah has done such a thing.

6. Death is overthrown at Calvary.
7. It is the hindrance to all things being made new.

III. Triumph over Evil.

A. Powers and authorities.

1. Christ triumphed over rulers, Colossians 2:15.
2. We struggle against rulers of darkness, Eph. 6:12.
3. Yet Christ has triumphed over them and has been given dominion over them.

B. Demons fear him.

1. An unintended consequence of our scientific thinking has been to squeeze out any thinking of transcendent powers—good or evil ones.
2. As a result we fail to see the war going on around us.
3. Not so with the demons; they recognize him, Mark 1:24.
4. James 2:19 reflects their fear.
5. Satan fell; your names are written in heaven, Luke 10:18.
6. Can we draw some comfort from this?
7. Can we derive power from this?

Conclusion:

1. Returning to the Book of Revelation where we began, we see battle going on in heaven.
2. Earth is the battlefield, and we are participants.
3. More importantly God's forces triumph.
4. It is with this expectation of victory in mind that Paul can write 2 Corinthians 4:16-18.
5. In the unseen realm Christ has provided us with forgiveness (redemption, salvation, etc.), hope of eternal life (he is the life), and the victory over evil (no power stands above his).
6. Avail yourself of the hope and assurance of these things.
7. By faith we look beyond this life to the next awaiting the culmination of redemption founded at Calvary.