



FAITH



“He saved us . . . through the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit” (Titus 3:5).

Remembering Renewal

There is something about the ever-circling years that brings renewal. As a New Year begins, we are prone to think about our lives and purpose. We renew goals and aspirations, desiring to change our former unsuccessful strivings.

However, renewal in the Christian life is markedly different from the world. For the world, any renewal inevitably slides back into disorder. It is simply a way of lying about the certainty of decay, as all things are making their way toward destruction. However, a believer’s renewal comes with new birth and reminds us that we are remade as a New Creation. We understand that this world is not our home. Our greatest longing will one day be realized when God makes His home upon the New Earth in our midst (Revelation 21:3).

Today is a day to renew our minds and to remember that when we were without hope, Christ appeared (Ephesians 2:12). In His appearing, He saved us through the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5).

Renewal is not a work we can do for ourselves; there is no scriptural regeneration manual. Instead, it is a work of God by the Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ, our Savior (Titus 3:5-6). Renewal is an act of the Trinity in the believer’s life, and it begins with what Titus calls the “washing of regeneration.” It is a spiritual rebirth where man is radically transformed. Without this, life cannot change.

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The word *washing* presents an interesting dichotomy. It means making something clean, while regeneration means creating anew—taking what once was and making something completely different.

My favorite way of picturing God's washing that Titus refers to is to see myself as a dirty pig in the throne room of God. I am out of place, filthy, and unfit for my regal surroundings. But God, who is rich in mercy, kneels and begins to wash me in the blood of Jesus Christ. As He washes me, He not only cleanses but redesigns. When He finishes, I am not a pretty pig but rather re-created royalty.

His blood washes me from the inside out, from all unrighteousness, taking away my heart of stone and giving me a heart of flesh (Ezekiel 36:26)—a new heart that wants to please instead of rejecting Him. He now works within me both to will and to do His good pleasure (Philippians 2:13). The anointing I receive imparts to me all things (1 John 2:27). It teaches me to know the Lord (Hebrews 8:11). Behold, I am a New Creation; all things have become new. He made me alive while I was dead in trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1). Now, I know from where I come, so when I stand before the Lord, I tremble at my Master's call, "Whom shall I send and who will go for us?" (Isaiah 6:8). Because it is only the one who has been reformed by the consuming fire who can present himself as a living sacrifice, I humbly say, "Here am I...send me" (Isaiah 6:8).

So, how do we as New Creations live out our renewal? What is our part in this supernatural work? We commit to consistently renewing our minds to discern the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God (Romans 12:2). Renewal for the New Creation requires that he unswervingly resists conforming to the thought patterns of this age (Romans 12:2), continually exercising his senses to discern good from evil (Hebrews 5:14). It means that the mind of Christ within the New Creation constantly teaches him and motivates him to abide in love (1 John). Hymn writer Kate Wilkinson puts it like this:

May the mind of Christ, my Saviour,
Live in me from day to day,
By His love and power controlling
All I do and say.

As His mind controls all I do and say, it reminds me to cast down every argument that exalts itself against the knowledge of God as I bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5). It means that I discipline myself to think on anything true, noble, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous, and praiseworthy (Philippians 4:8). It means that I constantly redeem the time, lest I slip into the monotony of a wasted moment (Ephesians 5:16, Colossians 4:5).

In closing, the New Covenant believer does not need to fear that God's regenerating work will ever need to be repeated because he is secure in Christ. What is bestowed on us by His great mercy will not be revoked. Instead, we regularly come to comprehend who we are in Christ more fully. The Psalmist wrote: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10 KJV). For now, we see in a mirror dimly, but one day face to face, and when we finally see Him, we will be like Him for we will see Him as He is (1 Corinthians 13:12, 1 John 3:2).



—Pastor Caleb

"As He washes me, He not only cleanses but redesigns. When He finishes, I am not a pretty pig but rather re-created royalty."

—Caleb Schroeder



"Regeneration is something accomplished by God. A dead man cannot raise himself from the dead."

—R.C. Sproul



"We believe that the work of regeneration, conversion, sanctification, and faith, is not an act of man's free will and power, but of the mighty, efficacious and irresistible grace of God."

—Charles Spurgeon

Join me in reading through the Bible in 2022.

2022 Scripture Reading Plan
Faithtoyou.com/scripture



Diane McNett is the Interim Executive Director of Care Net. Her experience includes many years at the

Lancaster facility working in a variety of capacities.

Care Net Women's Resource Center is part of a national organization founded in 1975. According to the national website, its mission is to "empower women and men considering abortion to choose life for their unborn children and find abundant life in Christ." During Covid lockdowns, because of the type of services Care Net provides, it remained open.

"In 2021, the workers at the Lancaster venue shared the gospel with 464 clients," Diane said. "That's

exciting. And 42 of those clients prayed to accept Christ as their savior. Another 42 rededicated their lives. In addition, sixty-one family members heard the message."

Care Net provides many resources to women and men who come through the doors. One of the biggest is the educational component, where clients receive parental training for two years.

"Our mentoring program for fathers is also expanding and meeting in the evenings," Diane said. "I am excited to have the opportunity to present the gospel to each client who comes through our door. Last week, I shared the message with a Buddhist woman and her husband. God is good!" Care Net is regularly looking for men and women volunteers in many areas, including facilitating classes, helping with the baby boutique, serving as a mentor, and more. Please talk to Diane McNett or call (661) 729-4277.



Does God forgive abortion? Yes!

The answer is found in the Bible, from those who have had abortions and those who have survived abortions.

Being post-abortive comes with waves of complicated thoughts and emotions for many men and women. Some claim to have life-long feelings of regret and guilt.

Scriptures overflow with evidence that our past choices are no match for the long-suffering love and all-encompassing forgiveness that God has extended to us through Christ.

For post-abortion care, one online resource is the Focus on the Family website – search "post-abortion care." There are online counselors available. CareNet in Lancaster also offers post-abortion counseling.

Contact a pastor at Faith for other resources.

"For I will forgive their wrongdoing, and I will never again remember their sins" (Hebrews 8:12).



Making It Real

At 17, Rebecca Pencille talks the talk and walks the walk. A 10-year-attendee of Faith, she shared her heart about loving the Lord and her family and looking forward to her future.



When my mom and dad were married, they decided they wanted to raise their kids in a church. So, I've been in one since birth.

When I was eight years old, I attended Sunday School at another church. There was a baptism class, and Mom asked if I wanted to go. I understood about Jesus, so on Easter Sunday, I was baptized. Our family gathered afterward, and I received a new Bible. It was exciting.

But more recently, I understood a much deeper knowledge of sin and the Lord's sacrifice, so I rededicated my life to the Lord, and I went forward at an outdoor church gathering one year ago and was baptized again. When Jesus comes back, it will be incredible. Because I know Him, I am not fearful at all; I'll be with Him forever.

I am working on my Awana Citation Award. That's many verses, but my

favorite is still Philippians 2:3-4. I spend time with Sparks on Thursday nights, and I sing on the worship team.

I love the beach—the water, the sand, the sun. It reminds me of God; He's deep and full of mystery. What I enjoy most are the sea animals. I picture myself working in marine biology one day.

In 2019, my family experienced the passing of my great grandpa, my grandma, and my great aunt.

After my grandma's death, I discovered that she practiced reading one Proverb a day. I have decided to carry on that discipline. I also read my Bible, journal, and attend youth group. I play the piano, run in a cross country club, and sketch.

Pastor Caleb's Joy series this month has been a blessing. When he said, "Jesus is joyful," I was thankful to hear that since so often we think of Him only as a "just judge." Jesus is joyful, and he wants us to enjoy Him in every aspect of our lives.

"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility consider others as more important than yourselves. Everyone should look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others" (Philippians 2:3-4).

"The key to continual and deeper spiritual renewal and revival is the continual rediscovery of the gospel."

—Timothy Keller (theologian and author of *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism*.)



"God became man to turn creatures into sons: not simply to produce better men of the old kind but to produce a new kind of man."

—C. S. Lewis (apologist and author of *Mere Christianity*)



"While others still slept, He went away to pray and renew His strength in communion with His Father. He needed this; otherwise, He would not have been ready for the new day. The holy work of delivering souls demands constant renewal through fellowship with God."

—Andrew Murray (minister and author of *Humility: The Beauty of Holiness*)



Check out The Dawning of Joy on Faith's YouTube channel. Hear the artists speak about their Advent Joy creations.



Marriage Renewal *by Bill and Toon Sie.*



Like a garden and a baby, marriage takes time to grow and develop. In the beginning, it is blissful. But life gets messy, dirty, and complicated. Somewhere along the way, we wonder if it will survive the seasons of difficulty, unresolved conflicts, and hardships. Still, applying biblical truths, we can renew and restore this God-designed sacrament.

REDEEM — David, in Psalm 90:12, asks God to “teach us to number our days carefully so that we may develop wisdom in our hearts.” In our media-saturated society, where we often feel alone even when we’re with others, couples need God’s wisdom to make quality time instead of squandering it. We need to REDEEM our time. When we focus our time on spiritual growth, we can build a vibrant life together, meeting each other’s emotional, physical, and spiritual needs. Then we will experience rest and renewal.

RECONCILE — A quality marriage rests on the ability to RECONCILE. Unresolved conflict is detrimental. We need to admit our mistakes, ask forgiveness, and learn to restore the relationship. We do this by seeking biblical counseling, finding support from others, and attending marriage classes. When we follow Jesus’s model of forgiveness and reconciliation (Eph. 4:31-32), our marriage is renewed and grows stronger.

REINFORCE — It’s essential to practice what we learn from scripture. For marriage, as in life, daily we need to REINFORCE communication through love, kindness, care, humility, and patience (1 Corinthians 13:4-6). When we dated, we spent hours building intimacy with one another. It takes work by both partners. Renewal doesn't happen. It is hard work.

RESIST — Too many activities take our focus off God and our spouse. Sexual temptation for men and women is prevalent today. We must resist believing lies and thinking badly about our spouse, especially when we’re hurt or angry. We must RESIST. The best way to fight temptation is for couples to pray together. It is the most potent weapon we have against the enemy in the struggle to preserve our marriages. It is God’s tool to help us restore and renew our commitment. (James 5:16).

REAFFIRM — Finally, because of the love and affection for Christ and His truths which we have stored in our hearts, we can offer encouragement and show affection to one another. This helps REAFFIRM our love and commitment. The fourth-century theologian Richard Sibbes states, “knowledge and affection mutually help one another. It is good to keep up our affections of love and delight by all sweet inducements and divine encouragements; for what the heart likes best, the mind studies most.”

Tiny seeds grow and bear abundant fruit with time and care. The unborn child miraculously develops in its mother’s womb until it’s time for birth. And the marriage that applies God’s truths learns not just to survive but to thrive!

Marriage Matters

How’s your marriage? Do you want to make it better? Learn ways to communicate and experience conflict resolution according to God’s design. Sharing God’s truth, experiences, and situations will help your marriage thrive. Stop striving. Learn what God says about husbands and wives and discover ways to implement His truth into your marriage. Info: Bill and Toon Sie Sietoon@gmail.com



“Let all bitterness, anger, and wrath, shouting and slander be removed from you, along with all malice. And be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving one another, just as God forgave you in Christ (Ephesians 4:31-32).”



RENEW

“Do not be conformed to this age but be transformed by the renewing of your mind...” (Romans 12:2).

RESOLVE

“Honor belongs to the person who [resolves] a dispute, but any fool can get himself into a quarrel” (Proverbs 20:3).

REFRESH

“He will rejoice over you in gladness. He will [refresh] you in his love” (Zephaniah 3:17).



DONKEYS FOR JESUS

by Rey and Seventhly Sadorra

While still in the Philippines, my wife Lily and I read "Is Life so Dear?" by Brother Andrew (Andrew van der Bijl). It challenged us to take Bibles to the underground church in China. Asian Harvest, Inc., a local mission group in Manila, helped facilitate our trip to Hong Kong, our base.

The Revival Church of China provided Bibles, processed our tourist visas, and showed us how to pack 40-60 Bibles and other Christian literature in our suitcases and around our stomachs. (These would go undetected because of Chinese law forbidding pat-downs of tourists.) Revival also instructed us on how to cross borders unnoticed.

In May 1996, our pastor prayed and asked our Lord to close the eyes of the Red Guards and Customs Police so the Bibles would get through to the Chinese believers. As God says: "I tell you, in the same way, there is joy in the presence of God's angels over one sinner who repents" (Luke 15:10).

After landing in Hong Kong, we rode the bus and train to the border and then walked into Shenzhen, China.

My wife and I separated to go through Customs. Without a hitch, she walked straight through the checkpoint,

her bag full of Bibles. She meditated on Psalm 20:7, "Some trust in chariots and horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God." She watched the woman behind her, not with our group, to see if it was that easy. As the woman attempted to walk through, the inspector called her back to scan her luggage. Truly God had protected Lily.

There were no problems when my luggage was scanned. However, one of our pastors was detected, which led to interrogation and a \$500 fine. I was riddled with goosebumps, knowing I was in communist China—a godless nation.

Fortunately, I was able to bring two Mandarin Bibles home. Later, Pastor Roa from New Tribes Mission visited us. We gave him one of the Bibles to use when the occasion arose. While visiting some local Filipinos, he met a Chinese businessman. After the man agreed to read the Bible, Pastor Roa gave it to him. Later Pastor discovered that the man had accepted Christ and attended church. God is good!

Despite some Bibles being confiscated, this short-term mission trip was successful because of answered prayers. We were donkeys for Jesus, carrying His good news to a lost people in need of eternal salvation and soul renewal.



When asked: "Is smuggling Bibles unethical?" Rey answered: "I would rather obey God than the law of men. Our motive for this trip was obedience to the great commission: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20).

Rey and Seventhly continue to serve the Lord by sharing the Gospel in many settings.



Statistics show that a Chinese house church is about 60 people who memorize scripture because they only have one Bible to share. Bibles are now printed in China and exported. The Chinese can buy them, but owners are registered and tracked, putting their lives at risk for surveillance, arrest, and imprisonment.





Please join us...

On January 13, 1984, President Ronald Reagan issued a proclamation designating January 22 as the first National Sanctity of Human Life Day. (In 1973, January 22 was when the U.S. Supreme Court legalized abortion on-demand in all 50 states.)

Churches continue to recognize the third Sunday in January as Sanctity of Human Life Sunday. In 2022, that date falls on January 16, although some churches will mark it on the 23rd because it's closer to the anniversary. Either day is fine.

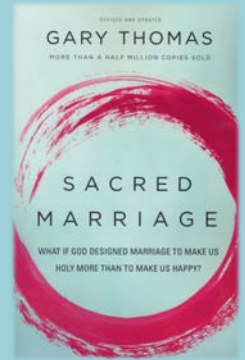
On Sanctity of Human Life Sunday, churches throughout the United States celebrate God's gift of life, commemorate the lives lost to abortion, and commit to protecting human life at every stage of development.

...on Friday night, January 14, as we gather at the church for an evening of worship and prayer. One of the topics of focused prayer will be the Supreme Court Case *Dobbs vs. Jackson Women's Health Organization* which was argued before the court on December 1 but will not receive a ruling until June, at the earliest.

Sanctity of Life Sunday, January 16, Samuel Green will deliver the sermon in all three services. Samuel is a lawyer who has dedicated his life to helping end the murder of unborn children. He wrote one of the amicus briefs for the *Dobbs* case, and he spoke at our church last November on a Friday evening.

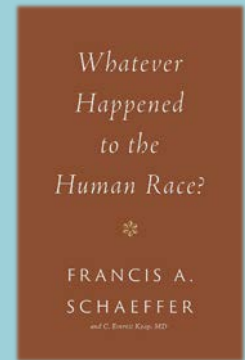
One of the darkest stains on the morality of our nation is the unfettered killing of the most vulnerable among us. Since the 1973 *Roe vs. Wade* decision, our nation can condemn this barbaric practice for one of the first times. If you cannot join us on the fourteen or sixteenth, please dedicate yourself to praying to end abortion.

READ ANY GOOD BOOKS?



Sacred Marriage. The subtitle says it all: "What if God designed marriage to make us holy more than to make us happy."

—Gary Thomas



Today, practices once considered unthinkable are now acceptable: abortion, infanticide, and euthanasia. The destruction of human life, young and old, is being sanctioned by the medical profession, courts, parents, and silent Christians. In *Whatever Happened to the Human Race*, Schaeffer and Koop examine the sanctity of life as a social, moral, and spiritual issue. (This is also available on DVD.)





"Pray at all times in the Spirit with every prayer and request, and stay alert with all perseverance and intercession for all the saints" (Ephesians 6:18).

Pray as the Spirit leads:

- *Lynn Grandinetti is bedridden with lung and heart issues.
- *Jeannette Isles' husband died.
- *Nick Ford has stage 4 cancer and chooses not to do chemo.
- *Charles Groth is recovering from a stroke.
- *Sheila Carle's family member Barry Smith has heart issues.
- *Ramona McCaslin met a woman who asked for prayer for her marriage.
- *Natalie Lewis continues her therapies.
- *Roxie Reinholdson continues to heal from knee surgery.
- *Jan Smith's brother-in-law's father needs prayer for his anger toward God.
- *Mary Smith has heart issues.
- *Melissa Oliver asks prayer for her unsaved family members.
- *Hector is on his last deployment in Virginia.
- *Jacque Beery's brother died suddenly. Pray for the family, especially his daughters, who do not know the Lord.
- *Sheila Carle's grandson Josh needs prayer.
- *The Beery's son has an addiction.
- *Trevor Pencille continues to have back pain and is waiting for MRI results.
- *Robert has Stage 4 lung cancer.
- *Baby Jordan Ludwig has ongoing health challenges.
- *Dee Anne Jones' continues recovery from cancer surgery.

- *Baby Emmerit Porter healing.
- *Nicole Kornoff continues recovery.
- *Kalli Reader has extensive injuries from an auto accident.
- *Dianna Romero's family lost a brother and son in a motorcycle accident.
- *Sara Butler is struggling with chemo and needs wisdom with medical paperwork.
- *Natalie Kidman's husband David has a brain injury from a bike accident and needs salvation.
- *Sharon Dison is recovering from recent brain surgery.
- *Sue Barker broke her tail bone.
- *Kim Alvarez has Covid.
- *Shane Speer's mother is in hospital with Pneumonia. Her father, a lay pastor, wants to honor God through this trial.
- *Caesar Coons, Sr. has liver cancer and had a heart attack.
- *The Supreme Court makes the right decision in the Dobbs vs. Jackson Women's Health case.
- *There are many ministries at Faith. They each need prayer to reach people for Christ.
- *Carole Meitler praises God that her husband's blood clots are not deep vein clots.
- *Ray Hubbard gives praise that Evan is off the ventilator.
- *Praise God for many answered prayers.

If you would like your prayer needs to go out to church members immediately, contact Laura Cox:
chozengr17777@aol.com

UPCOMING

Tuesday, Jan. 11
12 Noon
Primetimers Lunch*

Wednesday, Jan. 12
6:30-8:30 p.m.
Mom to Mom*

Friday, Jan. 14
7 p.m.
Worship and Prayer*

Sunday, Jan. 16
Sanctity of Life Sunday
Guest Samuel Green*

Friday, Jan. 21
Serve at Grace Resources*

Saturday, Jan. 22*
9 a.m.
Gideon's Conversations
Training*

Tuesday, Jan. 25, 6:30 p.m.
Wednesday, January 26,
9:30 a.m.
Saturday, Jan. 29, 9:30 a.m.
Women's Bible Studies*
Bev@faithtoyou.com

Beginning early Feb.
Marriage Matters*
Resolving Conflict
sietoon@gmail.com

Monday, Feb. 14
Valentine's Day
Reflect on God's love

Friday, Feb. 18
Serve at Grace Resources*

Saturday, March 19
10 a.m.
Lancaster March for Life*

June 25*
Anthem Growth Year*
Application Deadline

*For more information:
Faithtoyou.com/info
661-267-2200

The Christian Standard Bible is used
unless otherwise indicated.



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