



Renewal, Reflection, and Repentance

By Jonathan M., Outpost Director; Used by Permission

“And He who sits on the throne said, ‘Behold, I am making all things new.’” (Rev.21:5a NASB)

There is a lot to absolutely love about that declaration from God! However, I think the present continuous tense that’s used—the “am making” part—is a bit of a challenge for me. To be honest, I would rather God say, “I will make,” or “I have made.” I would rather have God snap His fingers and then everything changes at once. This present and continuous process is tough work! Yet, this is exactly what we ought to think of when we hear the word “renewal.”

Renewal

If you’re like me, renewal usually sounds like something so positive, uplifting, and even fun! It is all those things, but this process of making things new is not all warm and fuzzy feelings. After all, part of “all things” includes you and me—broken, willful, and sinful humans—and all we make and do. Implicit in this idea of renewal is that there are things that are not as they should be. To be made new means something needs to change, and change is almost never easy.

Reflection

One of the silver linings of this last year is the time we have had for reflection. Particularly, I have done my fair share of reflecting on what is truly important for Outpost Ministries, what we could have done differently, and how to prepare for renewal. After all, God is certainly always pro-renewal. As I reflected on renewal, I started to see how one of its mechanisms is another “re-” word, repentance. I am seeing that in this renewing process,

there is going to be a lot of repenting, both on an individual as well as a corporate level.

Repentance

I know that the word “repentance” can conjure up all sorts of images and feelings, but at its most basic, repentance really just means a change of direction. It’s a turning aside from one way and going another way. As an individual, I can confess I have made and will make many mistakes. The lyrics of *Come Thou Fount* summarize this well saying, “Oh to Grace how great a debtor / Daily I’m constrained to be / Let thy goodness, like a fetter / Bind my wand’ring heart to Thee / Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it / Prone to leave the God I love!” As a son,

brother, husband, new father, friend, pastor, director, and president, I am prone to wander—prone to stray from God’s renewing work—and I have needed and will need to repent.

As the leader of this ministry, I can also confess on behalf of Outpost corporately: we have and will make many mistakes. While God has and continues to use this ministry to bless many, I also acknowledge that we have made decisions that have hurt people. I don’t think it will shock anyone for us to say that we have taken wrong actions and handled some situations poorly. As we hear about these hurts and learn from the mistakes of the past, we are committed to repentance and moving in the direction of continual renewal.

God is Faithful

As I heard many times in chapel in my bible college days, “People will fail you. Organizations will fail you. But God is faithful!” As we turn and repent, God brings about the healing and the renewal. It is not something we can do ourselves. While



I wish I could say I lead a perfect ministry, that is not what God has called me to. I am called to beckon people to trust in God alone, not in me nor in this ministry. By the same token, Outpost isn't called to have people trust in us. It is called to point people to trust in God alone.

This trust in God alone **doesn't** mean we don't do all we can to align ourselves more with God's character and plan. It's in that spirit I want to introduce our newly articulated core values meant to foster this spirit of renewal.

Four Core Values—Honor, Humility, Honesty, and Healing

All four of these values relate to each other and must work together in unity in order to foster healthy community and ministry. While I could (and eventually will) write whole blog posts about each of these, for now I'll just give a few sentences of explanation of what I mean by each.

Honor: This concept comes from Romans 12:10 (NIV), "Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves." It's about holding others in higher esteem than ourselves, speaking well of them, and making sure our conversation is aimed at recognizing God's image in each person rather than demeaning or villainizing them.

Humility: The greatest example of this is Jesus. Philippians 2:1-11 shows how the Son of God became a servant, obedient all the way to death on a cross. He wasn't constantly crying out, "You got this all WRONG!" Instead He said, "Father, forgive them..." If Christ, who did no wrong, could act in such humility, how much more should we seek humility as fallible individuals and groups of human beings? Humility for us is an **opportunity** to connect with Jesus.

Honesty: This is more than not lying. It's about walking in the light (e.g. John 3:21, I John 1:5-7). The goal is to be as transparent as possible so that we can have true fellowship with one another. Honesty is risky, and that's why the other values must be present in order for this to be a safe and welcomed value.

Healing: The reason this ministry exists is for the sake of healing. We believe the words in Philippians 1:6, "Being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." Now this verse is not meant to be individualized (this "you" in Greek is a 2nd person plural) and neither is healing. Healing happens in community. Community is messy. Still, we—as wounded healers—press on and see our need for healing not as a limitation or obstacle, but rather as an invitation and opportunity.

Embracing the Process

I share all of this because I really desire to see this specific renewal process come about at Outpost and TCJHOP. We do not need to fear honor, humility, honesty, and healing. Instead, we need to embrace these values and continually live them out. I am asking you all to keep us accountable in this work.

There are so many who are trapped in their sexual and relational brokenness with no hope for a way out or for transformation. Our work as a ministry is so important in this time, and in order to continue to do this, we need to continuously and consistently be on the path of renewal. Consistently humble in seeking the face of God. Continuously honoring of God and His image in others. Ever honest about our successes as well as our failures, and constantly



Outpost Ministries was formed in 1976 to meet the needs of men and women seeking freedom from unwanted same-sex attractions. We offer teaching, encouragement and support to individuals, families and churches in the Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN area and throughout the Upper Midwest.

Outpost emphasizes obedience to God's Word, which begins the healing process. For over 40 years, we have been proclaiming the transforming power of Jesus Christ for the same-sex attracted, the gay-identified and the broken Body of Christ.

Outpost News is published 11 months a year and is sent free upon request. An annual donation of \$30 is appreciated to cover printing and postage costs. An electronic version is available through our website.

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growing in healing. Thank you for encouraging, forgiving, holding us accountable, supporting, and praying for Outpost and those it serves. My hope is that you will continue to walk with us as we consistently seek after true renewal for ourselves individually, as well as for our ministry and our world.

—Jonathan M. became the Student Ministries Coordinator at Outpost in July 2018 and Director in September 2019. Jonathan also works as a youth pastor in a church. While living overseas, he has had diverse ministry experiences at churches in Beijing and Singapore. He loves spicy food, traveling, and almost anything "nerdy."

NEWS FROM THE FRONT

Financial Update

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for your continued support!

Our year-to-date revenue is lower than budgeted, and even with lower than expected expenses, we are seeing our financial reserve depleted. This is the time of year that we expect a dip in giving, but with a smaller-than-budgeted Winter and Spring, we are behind where we need to be to stay out of a deficit.

I share this with you all, not to create guilt or obligation, but to present you with our need and an opportunity to support us. Would you help us get through this lean season with your financial gift toward continued ministry? Would you pray for God's provision for us? We trust in God alone, for He is Faithful!

Thank you once again! We could not do the work of ministry without the consistent prayers and gifts from all of you!

With Gratitude,



Joy
Communications Manager

Fall Fundraiser

REGISTRATION OPENS AUGUST 1



9.11.21

Fall Brunch Gala and Auction Event
Saturday, September 11
9:00 am – 12:00 noon

Plan to join us in person for our 3rd annual fall fundraising auction event. We'll have a variety of experiences, items, and services valued from \$30 - \$300, along with a fantastic brunch. Cost to attend will be \$20 per person, and also includes access to an online auction starting on September 4th.

If you would like to help us gather items and services, check out our list of needs on the event page of the website. Registration will open on August 1st via the website. We hope you can join us!

Calendar of Events

May-Aug: Summer Internship

Jun-Aug: Summer Programming for all groups

Sept 9: Living Waters starts (see below)

Sept 11: Fall Auction

Oct 9: Called Out of Darkness

Prayer Requests

Praise God for repentance and renewal here at Outpost.

Pray that the staff, leaders, and participants are enjoying their summer social events and travel, and that they are finding rest in God in the midst of their recreation.

Pray that God's provision would be tangible in this slow summer giving season.



Looking for a group where you can find healing and freedom from life issues? Know someone who is?

Please consider our upcoming Living Waters Program!

Living Waters is an 18-week Christ-centered program for those seeking healing and freedom from fear, shame, insecurity, self-hatred, boundary issues, unforgiveness, abuse, sexual addiction, and other relational brokenness. Each evening includes worship, teaching, prayer, and small groups—all designed around helping people work through the pain still impacting their lives today. The Living Waters curriculum is produced by our partner ministry, Desert Stream Ministries.

The program will run on Thursdays from Sept 9-Jan 27. The meeting times are 6:30 to 8:30pm. The cost is \$220 (includes book). Applications are due by August 31st.

The application is currently available on our website:

<https://outpostministries.org/get-involved/living-waters/>

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