

Revitalize...Again

We are halfway through 2016! Unbelievable.! Back in the dark of winter, we sat in the office and talked about 'Revitalize' as our word for the year. The dictionary defines revitalize: to make (someone or something) active, healthy, or energetic again. To give new life or vigor to.

We were talking about revitalizing activities and areas of ministry of the church. Synonyms of revitalize include; freshen, recharge, refresh, regenerate, repair, restore, resuscitate and revive. Little did I know that I would personally need to hold onto the word revitalize this year. The Bible doesn't use the word revitalize, but renew and restore are commonly used synonyms.

Grief takes a toll, and we don't know how to mourn and grieve anymore. The attitude of the world is 'we love you-but get over it.' In Colorado terms, "Pull your hat low, but cowboy up!" So you take a few days off of your normal routine and then get back to it, but you find yourself crying or stopping in your tracks at random times. So I was going through that process early this year after my mom died. Then my dad fell and broke his leg. We spent a lot of weekends sleeping at his house so that he wouldn't be alone at night. We spent a lot of time driving back and forth to Fort Collins.

This isn't a poor, pitiful me devotion, this is about how I am in the process of revitalizing. My depression really kicked in after dad's injury. I hope that I wasn't wearing my sackcloth and ashes. I did my best to battle and wash my face and do my hair. (Read Matthew 6:16-18) In April I bought a book and Bible study and signed up for an on-line Sheila Walsh Bible study, 'The Longing in Me'. The on-line part didn't work so well, but I enjoyed reading the book and part of the reason I enjoyed it was because as I read I could hear the voice of the author. Sheila Walsh is one of my favorite speakers from the Women of Faith.

As I was reading that book, God reminded me of all the Women of Faith devotionals I have. So each night I began reading a few devotional essays and hearing the voices of the speakers, those gifted sisters in Christ. As I heard those voices in their written words, I heard the voice of my heavenly father, and I began to feel revitalized. I cling to the part of Romans 12:2 that says, 'but be transformed by the renewing of your mind'. I felt my mind being renewed by the compassionate and funny words that I read. The healing began and I continue to seek ways to refresh and renew and revitalize.

Because it's summer, many of us naturally take that deep breath of fresh air and seek to revive in the sunshine. How do you revitalize? Do you garden, swim, play tennis, take longer walks, eat meals outside, head to the mountains, fish, go on vacation? All of these activities can help with personal revitalization. But, so many of these activities are temporary. Remember that a daily refreshing (just like taking a shower) is vital for your spiritual and emotional health. Psalm 23 reminds us that God plans for us to revitalize. Verse 2b-3a says, 'He leads me beside the still waters, he restores my soul'. Genesis 2:2 tells us that God rested on the seventh day. We all need to rest and revitalize. Remember as we continue to revitalize things at the church with the sanctuary remodel, the nursery update, new committees, etc. that you may need to revitalize/renew/refresh/restore yourself.

Nancy