

Beauty for Ashes | Part 1

Fire & Future

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Worship Video

- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ORd9YYFfxLD4WfrfB1hovs5jdFC4NWOK/view?usp=sharing>

TODAY: Fire & Future

A BURNED LIFE?

Ashes: the powdery residue left after the burning of a substance

Ashes: the worthless remains after something valuable has been destroyed

What is the ash in my life?

What do I do with the ashes?

What do I do with the future when all I see is ashes?

Nehemiah 1:3-5a

3 They said to me, “Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have

been burned with fire. 4 When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. 5 Then I said:

1. We mourn the ashes

- Mourn the thing of worth that has been burned

Nehemiah 1:3-4

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- Emotionally Healthy Spirituality - Pete Scazzero

2. We fast and pray and go to God

Nehemiah 1:3-4

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What do we do in times of trauma & pain?

Tribulation & Trials drive us TO HIM or FROM HIM

Jesus on the cross - two thieves:

- **1. Question God - Get Bitter with Him**
- **2. Humble yourself**
 - I can't control this - I need Him

We are on a spinning ball of rock hurtling through space - There is no safe place other than Him. - Dave Patterson

ILL. Tim Keller tells a story about his professor Dr. Leech.

Two women in college become Christians and decide to be missionaries, they go home and one girl's parents are upset, "oh you had a religious experience... if you want to do that, whatever fine, but first get your Master's Degree, get some work experience and get some money in the bank for some security." The next fall, the girl asks Dr. Leech, "what should I say to them?" Dr. Leech responded "I would tell them, 'We're all on a little ball of rock spinning through space called earth that's rotating on axis @ 17.21 miles per minute, circling the sun @ 67,000 miles per hour, while our solar system, including the sun, rotates around our galaxy at 490,000 miles per hour, this is one planet within one solar system within one galaxy in a universe with 2 trillion galaxies, so who knows if we are going to run into something, but even if we don't, someday, under each one of us is a trap door called death that is going to open and we are going to fall off the rock into the everlasting arms of God or absolutely nothing at all and you think a master's degree will give you some security?'"

The world swallows ash like dust - worthless

The Kingdom uses ash like dirt - God Creates worth out of Dirt

- Genesis 1
- Created humans out of the dust of the earth

2 Corinthians 1:8-12 MSG

We don't want you in the dark, friends, about how hard it was when all this came down on us in Asia province. It was so bad we didn't think we were going to make it. We felt like we'd been sent to death row, that it was all over for us. As it turned out, it was the best thing that could have happened. Instead of trusting in our own strength or wits to get out of it, we were forced to trust God totally—not a bad idea since he's the God who raises the dead! And he did it, rescued us from certain doom. And he'll do it again, rescuing us as many times as we need rescuing...

12-14 Now that the worst is over, we're pleased we can report that we've come out of this with conscience and faith intact, and can face the world—and even more importantly, face you with our heads held high. But it wasn't by any fancy footwork on our part. It was God who kept us focused on him, uncompromised.

In the world ash is worthless, in the Kingdom God blows into ash and creates worth and beauty.

3. Choose to say what He says about your future

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Ecclesiastes 3:11

He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

2 Corinthians 2:16

For, "Who can know the LORD's thoughts? Who knows enough to teach him?" But we understand these things, for we have the mind of Christ.

In Jesus we can UNDERSTAND WHAT GOD IS DOING!
RESURRECTION IS THE GREATEST MESSAGE!

NO MATTER HOW MUCH ASH YOU HAVE, IT'S NOT OVER!

What do you do, when all you see is ashes?

You say what He says!!

Luke 4 - Jesus Quotes...

Isaiah 61:1-4, 7

The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me,
because the Lord has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners,^[a]

2 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor
and the day of vengeance of our God,

to comfort all who mourn,
3 and provide for those who grieve in Zion—
to bestow on them a crown of beauty
instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning,
and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
a planting of the Lord
for the display of his splendor.
4 They will rebuild the ancient ruins
and restore the places long devastated;
they will renew the ruined cities
that have been devastated for generations.
7 Instead of your shame you will receive a double portion,
and instead of disgrace you will rejoice in your inheritance.
And so you will inherit a double portion in your land,
and everlasting joy will be yours.

God is a God of Resurrection.

He creates out of dirt (Genesis).

LUKE 4 - Today this is fulfilled in your hearing (2,000 years ago)

I'm GOING TO SAY WHAT HE SAYS!

What are your ashes?

- Mourn it
- Go to Him
- Say what He says
 - Beauty for ashes
 - ...

COMMITMENT TO JESUS?

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