



**Refresh – Relationship with God
Exodus 35:4-36:7**

At times in life we need to stop, reflect and have God refresh our souls. The metaphor of God as the good shepherd in Psalm 23 depicts a scene where the sheep are well provided for lying in a green pasture by still waters with renewed life and strength. With the global events of the last two years, together with the events in your life you probably want to feel like that sheep right now. Our society and our church need a time of refreshing and renewal. We've talked at Olive Branch for a year about refreshing our worship space. Before we do that, I want us to spend some time with God allowing Him to refresh our souls.

Purpose of a Place of Worship

God commanded Moses to tell the people to build a tabernacle so that God could "dwell among them" (Ex 25:8). In Revelation 21:3,4 after God creates the new heaven and earth God's dwelling is finally with His people for eternity. God wants to commune with us! Of course, we don't need a building to commune with God, but when we do create worship spaces they must be for this purpose.

A Relationship with God is Primary

We can't commune with God unless we have a right relationship with God. When God commanded the Israelites to build the tabernacle, it was three months after God had freed them from slavery in Egypt. In that time, he had destroyed the pursuing Egyptian army, provided water and food in the desert, and given them a military victory over the Amalekites. Most importantly God and the people made a covenant (Ex 19:31-8; 24:1-18). Examine your relationship with God. Are you redeemed and a child of God?

We Lose our Patience with God to Easily

The people agreed to be God's people. They agreed to obey the commands that God had given Moses. God ratified the covenant and the promises that were made with a solemn ceremony. When God asked Moses to come up Mt. Sinai to receive more instruction, Moses left Aaron and Hur in charge. Moses remained on the mountain for 40 days, but in the meantime the people got impatient and wanted Aaron to make an idol for them to worship. It took less than 40 days for them to forget Moses and the God they had pledged to obey. As a result, God judged them and about 3,000 men died.

God Forgives Sin and Brings Blessing When We Obey

Moses interceded on behalf of the people so that God didn't destroy the people. God's covenant with the people was renewed, yet there were slight differences in the people's relationship with God after their sin. Likewise, when we sin, we don't cease to be God's people, but our fellowship with God does suffer. The Israelites eventually did obey God and build the tabernacle as God instructed Moses. The people gave so generously to the offering that Moses had to tell them to stop. God filled builders with the Holy Spirit who completed the work. When the tabernacle was finished, God's glory filled it (Ex 40:34). God was dwelling with His people!