

## SERMON TRANSCRIPT

06.28.2026 | The Need for Continual Renewal | Nehemiah 13 | Dr. Ben Day, Senior Pastor

If you have a Bible this morning, I wanna invite you to turn with me to Nehemiah chapter 13. Nehemiah 13 is the final chapter in the book of Nehemiah, and this is the final week of our study of Nehemiah. We've been walking through this book for a few months, and next week, Lord willing, we're gonna start a study in the book of Acts. And so I hope that you will join us as we begin to study that great book. But we come today to the end of the story of Nehemiah. And as I've told you a few times throughout this study, it's not a very happy ending. I don't know if you've ever read a book or watched a movie that just had a sad ending that left you saying, really? That's where we're gonna leave this off? My wife often kinda gives me a hard time for being someone who sometimes likes sad endings or questionable endings at the end of movies. She wants every movie to have a happy ending. Sometimes I like to be left hanging, but Nehemiah really leaves you hanging, kind of really leaves you feeling sad because all that we've been talking about throughout this whole book, all that we've been focusing on throughout this whole series, really seems to come unraveled in the last chapter.

All of the work of rebuilding and renewal, all of the dedication and rededication and recommitment to the covenant, all the worship we saw last week, it all just comes undone in Nehemiah chapter 13. Nehemiah, it's not a fairy tale, it's a very realistic story. In some ways, it's very relatable. Pastor David was talking about this earlier in our time of prayer, but we can really relate to Nehemiah's story, can't we? How often have we rededicated our lives and committed to walking more closely with God, only to walk away from him a few weeks later? How many times have we sworn that we would never again commit that sin only a few days later to fall right back into it?

It's really important that as we come to this story, we allow it to show us ourselves. Sometimes it's very easy in the Bible whenever you're reading about other people's failures to just have some type of judgment on them, as if we should just look down on the people of Israel on this story for how they fell back into sin. Sometimes when we think about sin, we can think of other people, how they fall into sin. But I hope that Nehemiah's story will help us to see ourselves, help us to see that this work of rebuilding and renewal that we've been talking about throughout this whole study is a continual work. I think that's what Nehemiah's story is showing us, is that this rebuilding and renewal that God is doing in his people is a work that he is continuing to do. And there's a reason that we have hope that he is going to continue to do it.

So let's read Nehemiah 13. It's a pretty long passage, so stick with me. It's our last week in Nehemiah, so I'm gonna read the whole passage for us. Nehemiah 13, verses one through 31. Nehemiah says, "On that day, they read from the book of Moses "in the hearing of the people. "And then it was found written that no Ammonite or Moabite "should ever enter the assembly of God, "for they did not meet the people of Israel "with bread and water, "but hired Balaam against them to curse them. "Yet our God turned the curse into a blessing. "As soon as the people heard the law, "they separated from Israel all those of foreign descent. "Now before this, Elias shipped the priest, "who was appointed over the chambers of the house of our God "and who was related to Tobiah, "prepared for Tobiah a large chamber "where they had previously put the grain offering, "the frankincense, the vessels, and the tithes of grain, "wine and oil, which were given by the commandment "to the Levites, singers and gatekeepers, "and the contributions for the priests. "While this was taking place, I was not in Jerusalem, "for in the 32nd year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon, "I went to the king. "And after some time I asked leave of the king "and came to Jerusalem. "And I then discovered the evil that Eliaship "had done for Tobiah, preparing for him a chamber "in the courts of the house of God. "And I was very angry, "and I threw all the household furniture of Tobiah "out of the chamber. "Then I gave orders and they cleansed the chambers, "and I brought back there the vessels of the house of God "with the grain offering in the frankincense. "I also found out that the portions of the Levites "had not been given to them, "so that the Levites and the singers who did the work "had fled each to his own field. "So I confronted the officials and I said, "why is the house of God forsaken? "Then I gathered them together and set them in their stations. "Then all Judah brought the tithe of the grain, "wine and oil into the storehouses. "And I appointed as treasurers over the storehouses "Shemiah the priest, Zadok the scribe, "Padiah one of the Levites. "And as their assistant, Hanon the son of Zechar, "son of Mataniah, for they were considered reliable "and their duty was to distribute to their brothers. "Remember me, oh my God concerning this, "and do not wipe out my good deeds that I have done "for the house of my God and for his service. "In those days I saw in Judah people treading wine presses "on the Sabbath and bringing in heaps of grain "and loading them on donkeys and also wine and grapes, "figs and all kinds of loads which they brought "into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. "And I warned them on the day when they sold food. "Tirians also who lived in the city brought in fish "and all kinds of goods and sold them on the Sabbath "to the people of

Judah in Jerusalem itself. "Then I confronted the nobles of Judah and said to them, "what is this evil thing that you are doing "profaning the Sabbath day? "Did not your fathers act in this way? "Did not our God bring all this disaster upon us "and on this city? "Now you are bringing more wrath on Israel "by profaning the Sabbath. "As soon as it began to grow dark at the gates of Jerusalem "before the Sabbath, I commanded that the doors "should be shut and gave orders that they should not be "opened until after the Sabbath. "And I stationed some of my servants at the gates "that no load might be brought in on the Sabbath day. "Then the merchants and sellers of all kinds of wares "lodged outside Jerusalem once or twice. "But I warned them and said to them, "why do you lodge outside the wall? "If you do so again, I will lay hands on you. "From that time on, they did not come on the Sabbath. "Then I commanded the Levites that they should "purify themselves and come and guard the gates "to keep the Sabbath day holy. "Remember this also in my favor, oh my God, "and spare me according to the greatness "of your steadfast love. "On those days, I also saw the Jews who had married women "of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab. "And half of their children spoke the language of Ashdod, "and they could not speak the language of Judah, "but only the language of each people. "And I confronted them and I cursed them "and beat some of them and pulled out their hair. "And I made them take an oath in front of me "in the name of God, saying, "you shall not give your daughters to their sons "or take their daughters for your sons or for yourselves. "Did not Solomon, king of Israel, "sin on account of such women? "Among the many nations, there was no king like him, "and he was beloved by his God, "and God made him king over all Israel. "Nevertheless, foreign women made him even to sin. "Shall we then listen to you and do all this great evil "and act treacherously against our God "by marrying foreign women? "And one of the sons of Jehoiada, the son of Elisha, "the high priest, was the son-in-law of Sanbalat, "the Horonite. "Therefore, I chased him from me. "Remember them, oh my God, "because they have desecrated the priesthood "and the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites. "Thus I cleansed them from everything foreign, "and I established the duties of the priests "and the Levites each in his work, "and I provided for the wood offering at a point at times "and for the firstfruits. "Remember me, oh my God, for good."

All right, let's do a little bit of San Francisco trivia, San Francisco history trivia quiz, all right? What major event in San Francisco happened in May of 1937? Any historians in the room? Pretty easy one, probably, to think about San Francisco. What major event happened in May of 1937? Golden Gate Bridge was completed. The construction of the Golden Gate Bridge was finished. May 27th of 1937, people could walk across the Golden Gate Bridge. The next day, May 28th, cars could cross the Golden Gate Bridge. That was after four and a half years or so of construction, years of planning before that, millions of dollars, millions of man hours, 11 people lost their lives, the bridge was completed. All right, one more question. When did they finish painting the Golden Gate Bridge? (Laughing) Some of the people know the answer to this one. In some ways, you could say, well, they finished painting the Golden Gate Bridge, that color of international orange, they call it, there when they finished the bridge back in 1937. But in reality, the kind of well-known answer is that the painting of the bridge is never finished. It's an ongoing work. The bridge is painted continuously. In fact, it's one of the main works of maintenance that happens on the bridge because of the ocean air and the salt and all those things. Corrosion is very likely to come to the bridge. So they're constantly maintaining the bridge, and one of the main ways they do that is through this process of repainting the bridge. And I was thinking about that, I was just thinking about the end of Nehemiah's story.

You know, God had done an amazing work in Nehemiah's day. God had put it on the heart of a Persian king to send Nehemiah to Jerusalem and to fund the rebuilding of Jerusalem. God had worked in the people where they were inspired to do the work of rebuilding the wall around Jerusalem. They overcame obstacles. They were unified amidst their division. Not only did they complete the work of the rebuilding the wall in 52 days, but God brought the people back to himself. They came under the word. God's spirit convicted them. They confessed their sin. They renewed their covenant. We saw last week they dedicated the wall and they worshiped God. I mean, it was an amazing thing that God had done in the story of Nehemiah that we just saw. It's like the Golden Gate Bridge being completed. It was something amazing. But yeah, what we see here at the end of the story is that the work was not yet complete. There's this need for continual rebuilding and renewal amongst the people of God.

So it is in our lives. God has done amazing things in your lives. I know many of you personally. I know a lot of the amazing things that God has done. God has rebuilt you and renewed you in so many different ways. But yet, the work is not complete. There's still a work of rebuilding and renewal that needs to happen in your life. God has done amazing things of rebuilding and renewal in our church. I mean, church buildings of our church, burning down, being destroyed, having to be rebuilt. The church facing many different crises, spiritual, physical, financial, in so many different ways, God has

continued to rebuild and renew our church over its long history. And yet, the work is not completed. God needs to continue to rebuild and renew our church. See, this work of renewal is a continual process, and that's what Nehemiah 13 is showing us. And what I wanna do just by looking at this chapter is I just wanna show you why this work is needed, why the work of renewal is continually needed, how we play a part in it, or what God is calling us to do, and then why we can have a hope that will actually work. So why renewal is continually needed, what part we can play in it, and then why we can have a hope that rebuilding and renewal will actually work in the people of God. So first, why do we need renewal continuously? And the answer I think that Nehemiah 13 gives us, and the Bible gives us time and time again, is because of the persistence of sin. The work of rebuilding and renewal is so needed in our lives, in our churches, because sin is so persistent.

Because of the fleshly desires that we have within us, because of the temptations that exist in our world, because of the enemy who is always at work, sin is so persistent in our lives and in our world. Sometimes I found that I myself as a Christian, or we in general as Christians, sometimes we'll only talk about the sins of the past, as if it's just something God has brought us through, and we can talk about as if it's not part of us anymore. But the reality is, sin is persistent. It is always around us, it is always part of our lives. And I don't say it like that so that we can excuse ourselves and we can just say, oh, you know, I'm always going to sin, let me just keep falling into sin. No, I actually say it for the opposite reason, that we would be on guard against sin, that we would see why does God need to keep rebuilding and renewing? Because sin is so persistent in our lives. We're not gonna walk through this whole chapter and see all the ways that people had sinned, but what's really striking when you read Nehemiah 13, is that what you find is that all those commitments that they had just made in the previous chapters, they specifically sin in those exact ways. It was like all the ways that they had recognized that we need to change, they fall right back into those sins again.

All the ways that they had committed to God, they had renewed the covenant, they fall right back into those same sins again. I mean, they had said, we're not gonna have our children marry people that are not part of the people of God, because we recognize that it takes us away from what we're supposed to be doing. And what happens? Their children start to marry people that aren't part of the people of God. They specifically said, you know, we're not going to work on the Sabbath, and we're not gonna try to find those loopholes of getting around work on the Sabbath. We're gonna honor the Sabbath day and keep it holy. And what do we see? We just break the Sabbath again, continuing to work, continuing to buy from others who work on the Sabbath. We saw that they said, we're gonna give of our tithes and of our offerings to support the house of God, to support those who are leading the ministry, the worship of God. What happens? They start withholding. They stop giving their tithes. They stop giving their offerings. Those who are leading are now having to go and work in other places because the people are not giving like they had promised. Almost in every way that they had committed to live for God, they had fallen away by Nehemiah chapter 13.

This is what happens so often in our own lives. So often we fall away from specific ways that we had promised that we were going to live for God, sins that we would never commit again. The sin is so persistent in our lives. It's so persistent amongst the people of God. It worked its way right back in in such egregious ways too. Let me just show you from one example from the beginning of the chapter how egregious it had gotten amongst the people of God. Nehemiah says in verse four, "Now before this, Elijah shipped the priest "who was appointed over the chambers of the house "of our God and who is related to Tobiah." Now I don't know if you can think back over the story of Nehemiah because it's been a few weeks that we've talked about him, but Tobiah was one of those guys that was constantly working against the people of God. Tobiah was often hanging out with Sanbalat and the two of them were making threats against the people of God and trying to stop the work of rebuilding the wall.

Now we find that one of the priests who was in charge of overseeing the chambers in the house of God is related to Tobiah and look at what he does. Verse five, "He prepared for Tobiah a large chamber "where they had previously put the grain offering, "the frankincense, the vessels, and the tithes of grain, "wine and oil, which were given by commandment "to the Levites, singers and gatekeepers, "and the contributions for the priests. "He takes the house of God "and specifically the areas where they stored offerings "to God and to the people of God, "and he clears them out so that a man "who had been living as an enemy of God "could stay there and make it his own house. "He'd taken the house of God and made it a house "of one who had been an enemy of God "throughout this whole process."

Isn't it so often what happens in the church? We take the house of God and we use it to worship people. We worship things rather than God. We take the resources that have been given to support the work of the church, the ministry, and we use them for our own benefit, for our own comforts rather than to bless those in need or to continue on in the ministry. I mean, you have here a priest who is just blessing somebody who is in his own family rather than what he should actually be doing. Same thing happens in our lives, in our churches so often. I think one of the main reasons that we tend to fall into sin, the reason that sin is so persistent is because really at the root of sin is a lack of trust in God.

You think back to the very beginning of when sin enters our world, whenever Satan is speaking to Eve and to Adam and makes them question if what God has said is true, and if it is true, is it good that they would not eat or is God just withholding something from them? Really, I think at the root of sin is not trusting God. In our pride, we don't trust that God knows better than we do. In our fears and in our doubts, we don't trust that God will provide like he has promised. The people here, I think they begin to work on the Sabbath because they don't trust that God's gonna be good enough to provide when they take that one day off of work. The people, they start to withhold their tithes and their offerings because they think they know better what to do with their resources and their money than God does. They begin to marry foreign women because they think they know how to seek satisfaction, better than God knows how to provide satisfaction.

At the root of sin is a lack of trust in God. That's why sin is so persistent in our lives, is because so often we don't trust God like we should. We're greedy, we want more money because we don't trust that God's going to provide what he's given us. We think we need more to provide for ourselves. We lust because like the people of Israel, we don't believe that God knows how to rightly satisfy us. We wanna seek satisfaction in our own way. We're workaholics because we find our identity and our accomplishments and in our careers rather than what God says about us. Sin is so persistent in our world, so sin is so persistent in our lives. It's why the work of renewal is continually needed. That's something we need to just be honest about. We need regular times of confession. We need regular times of repentance. Because if we say we have no sin, as was read for us earlier in 1 John, we're only deceiving ourselves. But if we confess our sins, that is when God is faithful and just to cleanse us, to forgive us, to renew us, this work of renewal is continual. And this leads us to the second part is how do we join in with this work of renewal? This is the second part of what we learned from Nehemiah 13.

We not only see the persistence of sin, but we see the necessity of reform. If you wanna choose an easier word, you can just write the need for reform. But we see here in this chapter that because sin is so persistent in our lives, in the people of God, in churches, that there is this need for continual rebuilding, renewal. There is this necessity of continual reform. So one of the things that Nehemiah wants you to know as he writes chapter 13 is that he was not there when all of this was taking place. He says that he had to go back to, King Artaxerxes, he had to go back to his role of being a cupbearer. And while he was away, the people fell away. And when he returns, he begins to bring this reform back to the people. He begins to call them back to what they should have been doing all along. And as Nehemiah brings this reform, he gives us an example of what it looks like for us to bring reform into our communities. Specifically, there's three things that he does throughout this passage that I just wanna point out to you that we might follow Nehemiah's example.

Because sin is so persistent, we need to continually be reformed as God's people. And Nehemiah shows us that it involves three things. First, reform involves cleansing. One of the things that Nehemiah does throughout this chapter, he highlights it at the beginning and at the very end, is that he cleanses from the people of God those things that should not be there. He does it in the temple where Tabiah was living. He says in verse eight, "I was very angry "and I threw all the household furniture of Tabiah "out of the chamber." Tabiah just set up his own house in the house of God. Nehemiah comes in and he cleanses the temple. Verse nine, "I gave the orders and I cleansed the chambers "and I brought back the vessels of the house of God "with the grain offering and the frankincense." For reform to happen, for rebuilding and renewal to happen, there must be cleansing. We must remove from our lives, from our churches, those things that draws back into sin, those temptations that cause us to fall away. Hebrews chapter 12 talks about the fact that we run a race. And the author of Hebrews says, "Let us lay aside every sin, every weight, "that so easily entangles us." What Nehemiah is doing here is he is cleansing from the people of God those things that should not have been there in the first place. Those things that are causing the sin to take place. For reform to happen, there must be some cleansing. We must remove from our lives, from our churches, those things that lead us astray, those things that lead us to worship people and things other than God. There's a cleansing that must happen.

Secondly, there is confronting. Nehemiah not only cleanses from the people the things that were causing them to sin or the objects of their sin, but he also confronts the people in their sin. Specifically, he talks about confronting people in a few different places. He mentions it in verse 11. He mentions it in verse 17. I'll just read this one for you. It says, "I confronted the nobles of Judah. "I said to them, what is this evil thing "that you are doing profaning the Sabbath day?" "Talks about confronting them "and specifically calling out the fact "that they were doing something evil." Now, Nehemiah takes a pretty extreme form of confrontation. I don't know if you call it that. We're reading all those verses. But Nehemiah not only speaks to these people and tells them that they're doing something evil. He not only takes furniture and throws it out of the temple, but he says that he curses people. He beats people, pulls out their hair. I mean, at one point, he just threatens them that he's gonna lay hands upon them, but then at some point, he actually does.

I just wanna assure you, I don't plan for that to be our approach at First SF. When we think about confronting sin and sinners, I think it's a needed work. I think we not only need to cleanse from within us the things that make us sin or the temptations that draw us away, but we need to also confront each other in our sin. But Nehemiah's example is a very contextual one in that historical context and the position, the role that he has. Rather, I think let's follow Paul's advice in the New Testament. This is what he says in Galatians 6.1, "Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, "you who are spiritual should restore him "in a spirit of gentleness. "Keep watching yourself lest you too be tempted. "For reform to happen, "we must confront people who are caught in sin. "I don't think we need to curse them, "beat them, pull out their hair. "We don't need to judge them "because we recognize how easily we fall into sin, "how likely we are to fall into probably the same sin. "But in a spirit of gentleness, we should restore." This is the whole goal of reforming. This is the whole goal of confronting. It's not to embarrass, it's not to punish, it's not to judge. The whole goal is to restore, to see people freed from those chains of sin, see people set loose as we were just singing earlier, no longer captives, but to live in the freedom that God has for them. This is why we confront people in their sin. So Nehemiah cleanses those objects of worship, those sinful things. He confronts people in their sin and he corrects.

For true reform to happen, it can't just be pointing out the bad, it also has to be pointing to the good. Not just saying what's wrong, but what should be done right. Nehemiah does this time and time again throughout this passage. He not only confronts the people, but he begins to appoint people to certain stations, people who are trustworthy. He begins to remind the people of the commandments of God and how they are supposed to live by them. Verse 22, he says, "Then I commanded the Levites "that they should purify themselves "and come and guard the gates to keep the Sabbath day holy. "Remember this also in my favor, oh my God, "and spare me according to the greatness "of your steadfast love." For true reform to happen, we need to be able to correct each other. We need to speak the truth in love. We need to not only point out people's faults or where they're falling into sin, but also point them to the way forward.

Cleansing, confrontation, correction. These are things that should happen amongst the community of God. And I keep trying to say we, because I think we should be doing this for each other. The thing that we have here is just one man trying to kind of bring reform to the community. If that's how it works, if you're just depending upon the pastor or a certain church leader, or even just your community group leader, to be the one who calls things out or brings reform, then anytime that person is away, sin is gonna work its way into every corner of your life of our church. That's what happens in Nehemiah's day. Rather than depending upon one person to bring reform, together we should be doing this. I've tried to say from the beginning of this study that rebuilding and renewal is a community project. We need each other. Together, as brothers and sisters in a family of faith, we should be doing this work of reforming together.

You know, sometimes you do the work of reforming, do what God has called you to do, and yet in your own life you fall back into sin. And yet you see in your church and in other churches, people continuing to fall back into sin. And at some point you just have to wonder, is it ever going to really stick? Is it ever really going to work? Sometimes you might seem to lose hope in all of the work and rebuilding and renewal and reform. Kind of maybe like the end of Nehemiah, sometimes maybe you feel a bit hopeless. This is where I wanna draw our attention as we close to the hope of redemption. Sin is so persistent, the work of reform is always needed in the church. Should always be confessing, always be repenting, always be cleansing, correcting. But our hope is that God has redeemed us and will continue this work of rebuilding and renewal.

You kinda get a sense of hopelessness from Nehemiah as you end this story I mean he could have left it off in chapter 12 with just the dedication of the wall. He could have just ended on a high point with a time of worship, but he includes

chapter 13. And specifically throughout chapter 13 there's these prayers that Nehemiah lifts up. Just to give you one, in verse 14 he says, "Remember me, oh my God concerning this. "Do not wipe out my good deeds that I have done "for the house of my God and for his service." It's almost like Nehemiah recognizes this probably isn't going to stick. He recognizes the people are probably going to fall away again. And so he's just asking God, God would you just not forget all the good things that I've done, even if they fall away again? Even if they start breaking the law again, would you remember the work that I've tried to do here? Nehemiah almost feels kind of, it seems hopeless at the end of this story.

But there is a hope in one who is greater than Nehemiah. There's a hope that we have in God's rebuilding and renewal because we have a God who turns curses into blessings. You know at the beginning of this chapter there's these first three verses that I don't have time to really dive into. People are kind of divided on if the people of God are actually doing the right thing in those three verses or not. But there's just this phrase that's given to us in verse two. It's talking about the Ammonites and the Moabites and why they weren't part of the people of God because they didn't meet the people of God with help, but rather they sent Balam to curse them. Verse two it says, they hired Balam against them to curse them, but then it says this, yet our God turned the curse into a blessing.

You know the Bible says God turns curses into blessings. Bible says that God works all things together for good. You know the story of Nehemiah doesn't have a happy ending. But the Bible has a happy ending. The story of Nehemiah does something that it's supposed to do and that is it points us to something outside of the story of Nehemiah or to someone outside of the story of Nehemiah. The Bible says that all of history will have a happy ending. That God will take all the curses and turn them into blessings through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. And specifically what we see as we study the Bible is that God turns curses into blessings because he himself came down and took the curses upon himself that we might receive the blessing.

We end the book of Nehemiah longing for one who is even greater than Nehemiah and thankfully he has come in Jesus Christ. I mean you can't read Nehemiah 13 and not see some parallels between the two. You think about Nehemiah and Nehemiah 13 there cleansing out the temple, throwing out the furniture of the house of God. Don't you think back to when Jesus was in the temple? And how he was turning over tables and driving people out cleansing the temple. We think about Nehemiah's anger, righteous anger against sin, rightfully being upset that the people of God are living in sin. Don't you think of the way that Jesus got angry against sin? We rarely see Jesus angry but when he does it's a righteous anger against sin.

There's certainly connections and parallels between the two but we also see that Jesus is far greater than Nehemiah because Nehemiah and his anger against sin curse people. Jesus and his anger against sin took the curse upon himself. Nehemiah shows how much he hated sin by pulling people's hair out. Jesus shows how much he hated sin by having his beard pulled out and a crown of thorns placed on his head. See, Nehemiah gives us an example but Jesus gives us hope. Nehemiah confronted people in their sin but Jesus carried our sin in his body on the cross. When Jesus bore our sin on his body on the cross and when he rose from the dead, conquering sin and death, he gave us a hope. A hope that doesn't rest in our ability to reform ourselves. Our hope is not in our ability to see our sin and to fix it ourselves. Our hope is not in our ability to see the sin in your neighbor and point it out and correct them and reform their lives. Our hope is then the fact that God is doing a work of rebuilding and renewal. God is redeeming a people for himself in Jesus Christ and he is continuing that work at all times and one day he will do that work in such a way that renewal will never be needed again because all things will be made new.

Nehemiah 13 leaves us with a sad ending but it does what it's supposed to do. It points us to one outside that story. Nehemiah 13 points us to the table that we come to this morning. We come to the table, let us recognize the persistence of sin in our own lives. As we already did in our time of congregational prayers, you come to the table this morning, would you spend time in confession of your sin? Do you recognize that God needs to continue the work of rebuilding and renewal in your life and in our church because sin is so persistent? Would you also come recognizing the hope that is in Jesus Christ and what he has done? That our hope is not in our ability to reform ourselves but in Jesus who has redeemed us. His body broken, his blood shed, that we might be redeemed. The work of rebuilding and renewal might continue in us throughout our time here on earth. And Paul says, as you eat the bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes again. As you come to the table and as you eat of the Lord's supper, you are saying you have a hope that Jesus will one day return and he will make all things new. And then the work of continuing renewal will

stop because you will be made new completely. God will no longer need to tear down things in your life because you will have been rebuilt completely. No longer will you need to confess and repent of sin because sin will be removed completely from our world and from your life. Oh, we long for that day but we wait for it with hope. Hope because of who God is, a God who continues to work rebuilding and renewing his people. A hope because of what Jesus has done redeeming us and saving us from our sins. A hope in what he is coming back to do.