

Encounter Church
Sunday January 12, 2024

Dreaming....Again
A Fresh Start

INTRODUCTION: Has there ever been a time in life you just wanted to start your life over? Maybe leave out some things that were painful. Maybe do some things over, a better way.

We know, we really can't do that! There's really no rewind! There's really no second take! ***It's behind you now!***

BUT TODAY.... YOU CAN START OVER! GOD IS THE GOD OF A FRESH START!

Psalms 135:13-14- "Your kingdom is a kingdom eternal; you never get voted out of office. God always does what he says and is gracious in everything he does. God gives a hand to those down on their luck, gives a fresh start to those ready to quit."

If you've ever felt like quitting, you're in the right place today! We're going to talk about three things today that will help you get a fresh start with your faith today.

IT'S TIME TO DREAM.....AGAIN

Regardless of your background, regardless of your past, regardless of how you've really messed up, you can make a fresh start and have fresh faith!

One day a large crowd was following Jesus through the streets of Jericho. There was a blind beggar on the side of the road named Bartimaeus.

In Jesus day to be blind meant you couldn't work, you couldn't read or write, and basically you were reduced to begging for a living.

Every day someone brought him to the side of the road and every day Bartimaeus begged for sustenance. It was a miserable life!

Then one day, something is happening, and Bartimaeus thinks, "this is my chance!"

LET'S READ ABOUT IT!

Mark 10:46-52- "Then they reached Jericho, and as Jesus and his disciples left town, a large crowd followed him. A blind beggar named Bartimaeus (son of Timaeus) was

sitting beside the road. When Bartimaeus heard that Jesus of Nazareth was nearby, he began to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" "Be quiet!" many of the people yelled at him. But he only shouted louder, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" When Jesus heard him, he stopped and said, "Tell him to come here." So they called the blind man. "Cheer up," they said. "Come on, he's calling you!" Bartimaeus threw aside his coat, jumped up, and came to Jesus. "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked. "My Rabbi," the blind man said, "I want to see!" And Jesus said to him, "Go, for your faith has healed you." Instantly the man could see, and he followed Jesus down the road."

HOW CAN I HAVE A FRESH START? HOW CAN I HAVE FRESH FAITH?

1. Just Do It

Bartimaeus was saying, "I'm not going to miss my opportunity! I'm going to take advantage of this moment.

I'm not going to delay! **I'm not going to procrastinate!**

That's the key to a fresh start! That's the key to fresh faith! Whatever you're going to do, do it now!

Don't say, "Next year I'll step out or next month I'll step out!"

Have a "it's now or never attitude!" JUST DO IT!

Bartimaeus had no idea that Jesus was going to be passing by that day. But when Bartimaeus heard that Jesus was passing by he took advantage of the opportunity.

Luke 9:62- "Jesus said, "No procrastination. No backward looks. You can't put God's kingdom off till tomorrow. Seize the day."

JUST DO IT!

One word keeps us from stepping out? PROCRASTINATION!

The Bible warns us over and over about presuming upon tomorrow!

Proverbs 27:1- "Don't brag about tomorrow, since you don't know what the day will bring."

Ephesians 5:16- "Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days."

DO YOU NEED A FRESH START, FRESH FAITH? JUST DO IT!

2. Overcome Your Fear

If you're going to have a fresh, fresh faith in your life, you've got to overcome your fears!

DON'T ALLOW FEAR TO CONTROL YOU!

Fear has an incredible ability to paralyze your potential! It keeps us from stepping out! It keeps us from having faith in our lives!

If you choose fear over faith it will make you skeptical. We're afraid to try anything new!

If we choose fear over faith it makes us selfish. We're afraid to commit to God or others.

If we choose fear over faith it makes us short-sighted. We focus on the past and not the future.

Bartimaeus faced a fear that many of us face often. **The fear of disapproval, of rejection!**

He knew when he shouted at Jesus it wasn't the right thing to do. He knew people would look down on him. THEY WOULDN'T APPROVE!

"MANY OF THE PEOPLE SCOLDED HIM AND TOLD HIM TO BE QUIET. BUT HE SHOUTED EVEN MORE LOUDLY!"

The devil often whispers those things to us. "God surely won't be interested in you. What will the people think? Don't make a scene."

Whose disapproval do you fear the most? Whoever that person is, that person is your god!

THEY CAN KEEP YOU FROM STEPPING OUT IN FAITH!

Proverbs 29:25- "Fearing people is a dangerous trap, but trusting the Lord means safety."

God is asking you and me to do something great! DEPEND ON HIM!

Do you need a fresh start, fresh faith to DREAM....AGAIN? **OVERCOME YOUR FEAR AND JUST DO IT!**

3. You Declare Your Faith

Mark 10:51- "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked. "My Rabbi," the blind man said, "I want to see!"

Bartimaeus declared his faith in Jesus! "I want to see!"

Question: Why would Jesus ask a blind man what he wanted him to do for him? Don't you think Jesus knew what Bartimaeus needed?

Jesus asked him for Bartimaeus benefit. He allowed Bartimaeus to publicly declare his faith!

Now you don't ask Jesus to heal you if you don't really believe he can!

When Bartimaeus told Jesus he wanted to see, he was really saying "I believe you are who you say you are, the Son of God."

And two, I believe You have the power to change me!

And number three, I believe you can and will change me!

James 2:14- "What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don't show it by your actions? Can that kind of faith save anyone?"

Do you need a fresh start? Do you need fresh faith? Do you need to dream....again?

1. Just Do it. Seize the moment.
2. Overcome your fear.
3. You declare your faith.

THAT'S JOY!

CONCLUSION: Notice something. Before Jesus healed Bartimaues, Bartimaues was sitting on the side of the road. After Jesus healed him, he followed Jesus down the road.

HERE'S WHAT I NEED TO ASK: Are you sitting on the side of the road or are you following Jesus.

Are you following Jesus and dreaming, stepping out in faith or sitting on the side of the road as life passes by you?

What is the Holy Spirit saying to you today?