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Is there anything in your life that needs restoration?

Introduction

Have your self-restoration attempts left you feeling dissatisfied and unrestored? Have you tried a hair transplant, a facelift, or Botox, bingeing, purging, restricting, over-exercising, or cutting? Have you tried to fulfill your desire for restoration through a smoke, a toke, a drink, a line, or a pop of a pill? Have you purchased a new car, a new house, a new Rolex, a new diamond necklace, a new vacation, a new academic degree, a new wardrobe, or switched to a new spouse solely to make you feel new on the inside? Have you even tried religion and its treadmill of good works to discover rejuvenation of your heart? It's likely that your dissatisfaction has hardened your heart resulting in foolish choices that continually ding your relationships as well as your time, talent, and treasure.

Unfortunately, most of us turn to ourselves for restoration, attempting to fix up our shortcomings on the outside under the guise that it will change us on the inside. We think that if we *go* somewhere and *do* something, then we will *be* somebody. These futile efforts to make ourselves new from the outside in represent two kinds of pride: loose sand-hearted or legalistic stonehearted arrogance that we can restore ourselves. The former requires a storm to be shaped, the latter a severe tool.

Two thousand years ago, Jesus admonished the Pharisees, noting that their attempts at self-restoration from the outside in left them full of pretense and dead inside



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their hearts (Matthew 23:25-28). In the collector car world, we call this a cosmetic restoration. The surface is touched up just enough to fool everyone that the undercarriage is also new, when in reality it is ready to fall apart. Get the picture? But, there's hope in the Restorer.

Authentic restoration occurs in three steps.

(1) Surrender Our Old Lives

First, we surrender the old. When a car collector determines that his vehicle needs restoration, he surrenders his old basket case to the restorer, saying, "I can't. You can. I can't restore this old car. You can." The same is true for our unrestored lives. When we recognize our need for restoration and our unsuccessful self-restoration attempts, we must surrender our old lives to Christ our Restorer, saying the big, "I can't. You can." "I can't" indicates repentance. "You can" communicates faith.

Street Smarts for the Restoration Road

Surrender the old. Do you recognize your need for restoration evidenced by your unsuccessful self-restoration attempts that have left you dissatisfied and unrestored? Whether your heart is characterized by loose sand-hearted or legalistic stonehearted pride, surrender your old basket case of a life to the Restorer with a heart of clay and say, "I can't. You can."

(2) Surrender Our Sins, Piece-by-Piece



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Second, we surrender our sins, piece-by-piece. When he receives a rust bucket, a car restorer's first action is to take it apart, piece-by-piece. Next, the smallest components of the automobile are individually and meticulously restored. The same is true for our personal restoration process. When we surrender our lives to Christ, our Restorer disassembles us, piece-by-piece. Our sins are revealed, followed by our uttering many little, "I can't. You cans."

Street Smarts for the Restoration Road

Surrender your sins, piece-by-piece. As Christ disassembles your life and reveals your wrongdoings, hand each one over to the Restorer, repeatedly saying, "I can't. You can."

(3) Surrender Our New Lives

Third, we surrender the new. After the pieces of the collector car are restored, the rolling sculpture is reassembled, reflecting the original design of its designer. It is ready to be used for its intended purpose. The new triumphs and tragedies are both surrendered to the restorer. When a car wins in competition, the restorer receives the glory. However, as the automotive masterpiece is exercised and judged, the paint will fade, the leather will tear, the tires will wear, and the metal will rust, requiring another surrender to the one who makes things new. When Christ puts the pieces of our lives back together, He uses us for His intended purpose of authenticity, reflecting the original design of our Designer.



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We discover our ultimate value in being His agents to bring authentic restoration to others, as we surrender our new triumphs and tragedies.

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Surrender the new. As Christ reassembles the pieces of your life, surrender your new journey to His intended purpose of authenticity, reflecting your unique design of the Designer. Discover your ultimate value in being used by God to bring His authentic restoration to others. While you travel Restoration Road, surrender both the credit for the triumphs as well as the wear and tear of tragedies to Christ your Restorer.

Conclusion

Our journey unfolds on Restoration Road.

Like every automobile, we began as a clay mold. In the Garden of Eden, God breathed life into the dust to make man in His image. Unfortunately, we all fall short of His original design, proudly pursuing the satisfaction of our desires in self-restoration attempts apart from Him. The Master Key that unlocks the gate to Restoration Road is a humble heart toward Christ the Restorer that is fleshed out in humility toward others. In essence, the Master Key is cross-shaped, a picture of vertical humility intersecting with horizontal humility in the One who was fully God and fully man.

When we humble our clay hearts to the Restorer and say, “I can’t. You can,” He makes us new, authentically reflecting the design of our Designer. Jesus said, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). His



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rest is restoration that gives us satisfying new life from the inside out. In Christ, who we are designed to *be* will determine what we are designed to *do*, which will determine where we are designed to *go*.

Humbly bend the knees of your heart to the Restorer Jesus Christ. Surrender your old life, your sins, piece-by-piece, and your new life to the One who makes all things new as you travel Restoration Road.