

## Going Deeper – 7/25/2021 – Pastor Jon Cobler



Pastor Jon Cobler spoke on renewal. He began speaking from Luke 5:36. He gave a vivid example from the winemaking process of that day on how wine skins were renewed. He challenged the church (us) to consider how our lives and practices need to be changed/renewed. To sum up, he said we need to consider how to renew all the religious “stuff” of our lives, the human traditions we’ve memorialized, and how we approach our source of life.

The two scriptures, Mat 17:3-4 and Mk 6:41, were for me the heart of the message. First the transfiguration story. There are few stranger accounts in the Bible. Place yourself in this scene: Jesus shape-shifts with glowing skin, long-dead Moses and Elijah show up, and a booming voice speaks from an ominous cloud. Heaven overlaps with earth for a moment. An otherworldly, supernatural event. I doubt any of us would know how to react. Peter suggests making some tents for everyone; but the voice of the father speaks and says profound words, “Listen to Him. Obey and yield to Him” Listen to Jesus. The story is simple but God’s words to us are profound.

- One way I interpret God’s instruction to us regarding the transfiguration is: don’t be dazzled by the supernatural. Are there other ways you can understand God’s interruption of Peter’s plans?
- If you were a Jewish male familiar with the Torah and Moses & Elijah appeared, to whom would you be inclined to listen?
- Listen to Him. Obey Him. There’s nothing much supernatural about these words, right? Or is there?

The second story of feeding the hungry crowd is implicitly related to the first. Pastor John memorably illustrated this with two loaves of bread. The disciples always returned to Jesus literally and figuratively for their source for food. If Jesus is our source of strength, we continually return to him, listening to his word, obeying him.

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Renewal and newness are both themes in the Bible. David, king and psalmist, several times said to sing a new song to the Lord. Jesus said (Rev. 21%), “I am making all things new.” God wants to take the church from where it is and move it into the future rather than to return it to where it was. When I want to groan and complain about change in my life, I center myself with these texts.

Consider the three areas Pastor Jon suggested need continual renewal:

1. “Religious stuff” – What does the word “church” mean to you? What does a healthy church look like? In your experience of church, how healthy is it? What needs to be renewed for church to be healthy?
2. Our longing – Do you have expectations of God based on the past? What human traditions have you memorialized and how does that affect your view of the future?
3. The source – When we are full and hydrated it is easy to try to function on our own strength. How do you renew yourself with the Bread of Life and the Living Water?