

# “Renewing Our Vows By Brother Kenneth Ray Sunday, July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012

Last Sunday, we touched on the process of two people being in a relationship that results in wedlock. We looked at our relationship of coming to be a Saint from a sinner; that its journey is similar. It is the end of a short (or long) process that ends in joy and happiness for one’s self and is felt and shared by all who witness the event.

The Christian Honeymoon: For a time, it is different for each. Not everyone travels the same road; we have different backgrounds, different cultures, different languages. But, during this period, we are on fire; we have glee, joy to the fullest. You and I have never felt so good; the weight of the world and our burdens are gone. We want to tell everyone who will listen (and even some who won’t) of God’s move upon our lives.

At this point, we really are just getting into the starting blocks. Did you ever watch athletes getting ready to run a race? They do a lot of stretching, try to loosen up their “hammies,” etc. then they get into the starting blocks. They are hoping for a clean start, but the unknown is what’s before them. It is exciting and scary at the same time.

Let me ask a question: How many here are human? We all have human nature; this is the ongoing struggle. How many of you, this past week, had your human nature get in the way of your Christian walk?

My way, or God’s way? I need to self-check to see if it is my way, and, if so, first I have to recognize, and remember what I promised to God the day I took on His name. Second, I have to be willing to yield to the Spirit of God. This is something that we have to do on a recurring basis. In the military, we have certain checks that we have to do periodically, some of them are annual checks, semi-annual, monthly, but this is a daily check, and more often if required. Allow God to take away what doesn’t please Him, and put in what does please Him. There’s a brother in San Diego that a lot of times will listen to what you have to say, and he’ll say, “That’s interesting.” And then he’ll repeat back to you what you said, and then he’ll say “But what does the Bible say?”

*2 Timothy 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God ...*

The Holy Spirit has control. We need to learn the Word of God, so that it teaches us, it guides us, it directs us, and it corrects us. It does.

In marriage, we hear of something called “the itch.” Sometimes our emotions will cause us to be attracted to someone other than our spouse. Character issues can lead to divorce. In the Christian walk, temptations are when you desire things that are harmful to your relationship with God. When we put the flesh into subjection, and the Spirit of God is leading, that is when we can live a life of peace, harmony, and victory. It’s NOT about works; it’s not about doing good things or being a good person, but living a life that is pleasing to God. This brings unity to the community, and by ‘community,’ I mean the body of Christ.

*Proverbs 6:16-19 ...A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood...*

You don't want to be on this list. If you're not careful, if you don't check yourself regularly, you could be, right here in the body of Christ; this causes division. The truth is we all fall; we all come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). Today we have the opportunity to unmask the devil and start getting it right, so that we can begin to create the unity in the community where God has placed us. We can begin to have the victories that God wants us to have.

Character Issues: Human relations often start with physical attraction, but many times ends because of character issues. The same holds true with our relationship with God; sometimes we like the way a church looks, or everyone is friendly (at least on Sunday morning). In human relations, over time, we lose romance for one another and just have a relationship. Passion has become past tense. You may say, "Jesus is my Savior," and someone may look at you and say, "Really?" If you want an honest assessment of your walk with Christ, ask a bystander. If you want your ego stroked, ask a church-member, they'll tell you that you're doing great.

*Psalms 51:10 ...renew a right spirit within me.*

*Romans 12:2 ...not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing...*

You know, in the parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32), when the Father saw the son coming, he told his servants to say the fatted calf, and to make ready for a celebration. He could have walked out to meet his son, and said, "You and I need to have a talk." He could have demanded an explanation, but He said, "I love you." When Jesus met up with the adulterous woman (John 8:3-11), He didn't tell her that adultery was okay. He just told her, "Go and sin no more."

The Bible tells me that if I am bringing a gift before the altar, and remember that my brother has something against me, that I should leave my gift, and go make it right with my brother (Matthew 5:23-24). Now I'm worthy to bring a gift to the altar.

*Titus 3:5 Not by works or righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy...*

We all matter. The person who opened the door this morning, the sound people, the people who set up chairs, those who worship... Can you imagine if the doors hadn't been unlocked this morning? or if there were no P.A.? or if there were no chairs? What if no one came to deliver the message? We all matter.

Make today the start to renew our hearts to God. Make today the start of forgiveness and service. Let burn again the fire of our first love toward Jesus. Renew His victory in our lives.