



Refresh.

In the furniture refinishing business, the term “refresh” is used to describe the type of work to be done on one piece of furniture. To refresh something, you lightly sand the existing finish before you give it a nice fresh topcoat. To refinish something, you would strip the old finish right off, get down to bare wood and start from scratch.

In life and in faith when we come to know Jesus as our personal Lord and Saviour, we in a sense “refinish” our lives. We give over to God our old lives and begin a new one, living for Jesus. As we grow in our faith, as we live in a world full of evil and temptation, we need to be refreshed from time to time.

When the Apostle Paul wrote his letter to Philemon he wrote these words, “Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the Lord’s people”. Philemon was a fellow disciple of Jesus and as we read in the opening verses, hosted a gathering of believers (the church) in his home. Paul’s letter describes the incredible love that Philemon had for these people and personally thanks him and encourages him through his words.

There are three other instances where Paul uses the word “refreshed” in the NT, once again in verse 20 of this letter and in Romans 15:32 and 1 Corinthians 16:18. Paul uses this word to describe the taking of time to break away from our busy lives so that our hearts, minds, and spirit can be refreshed. Refreshed in the sense that we take time to reflect, learn and grow in our relationship with Christ.

Philemon was a partner with Paul in sharing the good news of the Gospel, to share everything that is good so that his understanding of who Christ is would reflect in his life and love for others. I do believe that as Philemon took the time to read these words from Paul his own heart would have been refreshed.

As believers, many of us set aside an hour or two each week, typically on a Sunday morning to go to church. This time is a break away from the normal routine and busyness of life. We come together to hear God’s word, learning, and growing in our understanding of who he is so that like the people of the church before us our hearts, our minds and our spirit can be refreshed.

Is once a week for an hour or two in the morning enough to keep you refreshed? NO, we need these moments in our lives every day. So, how might we be refreshed in our hearts, our spirit, and our minds each day? To begin, we all (myself included) need to spend more time in God’s Word and in prayer. These are two of the foundations of our faith, on these things all other things are built.

Consider how each of the following things can help you refresh your heart, mind, and spirit. Rest in the Lord, simply trust in him. Expect that God will work in and through you. Fear the Lord in reverent awe. Read his Word, a gift given to you. Embrace all that he has given to you, count your blessings. Share his love with others. Help those who need help; serve, and allow yourself to be served.

When was the last time you took some time to be refreshed? What did that look like for you? How did it feel?” Pray and ask God to lead you into a time of refreshment today.