

1. I continue to have multiple conversations with people each week about this being our year of jubilee.
2. Often times those conversations revolve around specific areas where people are believing for restoration and renewal.
3. Other times I get to hear testimonies of how God is bringing restoration and renewal to individuals and families.
4. Part of the reason I continue to talk about this subject of jubilee, and renewal, and restoration is because sometimes **the pathway to restoration is a journey that isn't always immediate.**
5. In the Old Testament, the jubilee was for an entire year. In some cases, it took an entire year for lands and properties to be returned. Because it wasn't just moving back to that original land, but it was also establishing a presence in that original land that would allow that person or family to not go backwards and wind up in the same mess all over again.
6. Others had sold themselves as hired servants and may have been living in that state for dozens of years; and just because they were granted their freedom and release didn't mean they were necessarily good at living a life of freedom. Their thoughts and ways of thinking had to be renewed and restored as well so that the freedom would last.
7. This pathway to restoration and renewal and freedom is sometimes a path that requires perseverance.
8. The word perseverance is this annoying little word that I don't care all that much for. Even though I know that perseverance is a trait the lord is trying to build in all of our lives, I'm just not all that fond of perseverance because of what it means for our lives.
9. **Perseverance: persistence in doing something despite difficulty or delay in achieving success.**
10. I believe it's fairly easy to see why the word perseverance might not be our favorite word. Let's be honest with one another.
11. We don't like difficulty. We like easy.
12. We don't like delay. We like immediate.

13. Jesus, knowing that aspect of our fleshly nature, gave some powerful insight into what will help us persevere in spite of difficulty and delay.
14. I want to read these two verses from the Amplified Bible because I believe the Amplified captures best what Jesus was saying.
15. **Matthew 7:7-8** "Ask *and keep on asking* and it will be given to you; seek *and keep on seeking* and you will find; knock *and keep on knocking* and the door will be opened to you. **8** For everyone who keeps on asking receives, and he who keeps on seeking finds, and to him who keeps on knocking, it will be opened. (AMP)
16. Now. I am able to read. And sometimes my brain functions properly. So, when I read these verses, it is pretty obvious what Jesus is saying.
17. If we are ever going to receive what we are believing for, it is going to often times require perseverance.
18. To ask. Not once. Not twice, not three times, but maybe many times.
19. To seek. Not once. Not twice, not three times, but maybe many times.
20. To knock. Not once. Not twice, not three times, but maybe many times.
21. You might be wondering, why would God make us ask and seek and knock multiple times. If he is really a loving God, then why doesn't he just give us what we ask for that is a part of His will for our lives?
22. Because often times, when we ask God for things, we are focused almost entirely on the thing that we want.
23. But God isn't focused entirely on the thing we want. God is focused on our spiritual growth.
24. Often times we are focused on short term gains, when what God is interested in is long term gains.
25. He doesn't just want to give us what will last for a moment, he wants to give us what will last all the way into eternity.
26. And quite often, that spiritual growth that will last until eternity requires perseverance.
27. That's why it says in **Romans 5:3-5** Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; **4** perseverance, character; and character, hope. **5** And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

28. God's motives are always to pour out his love on us, even if what he allows in our life doesn't feel very loving.
29. And because we are so prone to rely too heavily on feelings, what often times happens when difficulty and delay get in the way of what we are believing God for is that we have this tendency to quit.
30. I don't like to admit it, but there have been times in my walk with the Lord that I have just quit.
31. I didn't quit loving him and serving him, but I have quit asking and seeking and knocking about some things I was believing God for. Because it just seemed easier to quit than to persevere.
32. And so, that's why sometimes the Holy Spirit has to remind me of the command and the promise contained in **Galatians 6:9** *Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.*
33. Another translation says you will be rewarded when the time is right, if you don't give up.
34. What I want to talk about for the rest of today is the timing of the reward.
35. Now. I don't know the timing of your reward. I don't know when you are going to reap the harvest, or receive the reward, or experience the miracle you have been believing God for.
36. But what I do see in the bible is that there are times in our lives where even though what surrounds us seems to indicate that we are a million miles away from God's fulfillment. The fact is we are standing in the middle of that fulfillment and don't even know it.
37. I want to encourage you to persevere today in asking, seeking, and knocking for what you are believing for in your life, because at this very moment, you might be...

TITLE: **Standing in the middle of your miracle.**

1. There is a really good reason why we are commanded to walk by faith and not by sight, because what we see can sometimes be deceiving.
2. What we see in any particular moment may be limited. We might not be seeing the whole picture.
3. But our heavenly father, our savior, our Holy Spirit does see all things clearly. The God we serve is a God who has perfect 20/20 vision.

4. And what may seem to us to be the darkest moment ever, could just be what happens right before the light of God breaks through on our behalf.
5. I want to share three stories from the Old Testament that illustrate what I'm talking about.
6. And in each of these cases, what the person was seeing was limited and anything less than ideal. In some cases, downright impossible. When in fact they were standing in the middle of their miracle all along.

Standing in God's presence.

1. The first story introduces us to a young man by the name of Jacob. His story is found in **Genesis 27**.
2. Jacob's name actually means deceiver. And Jacob lived up to that name.
3. Jacob and his brother Esau were twins. And when their father Isaac becomes very old and almost blind, he decides he is going to give his blessing to his oldest son Esau.
4. In bible times, when a father passed on an inheritance, the estate was divided in such a way that the oldest son got a double portion.
5. In our day it would be customary for two brothers to split their father's inheritance 50/50. But in the bible, if there were two brothers, they would take the estate and divide it by three. And the oldest brother would get two-thirds, and the youngest would get 1/3.
6. So, when the estate was to be divided, if the father was still alive, he would bless the firstborn not only with the inheritance, but he would pronounce blessing over his life.
7. But Jacob, with the help of his mother, deceived his nearly blind father into thinking he was the oldest, so that his father would bless him and give him the double portion.
8. Upon hearing that his double portion has been stolen from him, Esau begs his father to reverse his decision, but his father did not.
9. And as a result, Esau became furious with his younger brother, to the point that there was fear he would kill Jacob when he got a chance.
10. So, Jacob is sent away to his uncle's home a long distance away.

11. And on the journey, he stops at a place for the night to rest and sleep. And while he was sleeping, he has a dream.

12. Genesis 28:12-16 He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. **13** There above it stood the LORD, and he said: "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. **14** Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. **15** I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." **16** When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he thought, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I was not aware of it."

13. Jacob was in the presence of God. God was right there with him, but Jacob was not aware of it.

14. Before this dream, what might Jacob have been aware of? In other words, what might he have been thinking and feeling?

15. He probably felt alone.

16. Fearful that his brother would chase after him and try to kill him.

17. Scared of being on a journey to a place he had never been.

18. Possibly ashamed of what he had done.

19. Convinced that he would never see the blessing or the double portion that he had deceived his father out of.

20. I don't believe it is a stretch to say that he was not experiencing peace and joy and contentment. The life that he knew was being turned upside down.

21. But it was also true that he was literally in the middle of God's presence. God was with him, and Jacob had no clue.

22. Let's apply that to our lives.

23. You have been asking, you have been seeking, and you have been knocking. And all you have experienced since the moment you started believing for the fulfillment of that miracle is difficulty and delay.

24. My guess is you don't feel all that great about it. And it's possible the longer you have waited and the more time that has transpired since you started asking, the more impossible it seems that you will ever see the fulfillment of that dream.

25. I would venture to say that a few times along the way the enemy has whispered in your ear that you don't matter to God and that the delay is proof that God has left you high and dry.

26. But I'm here to remind you that you are right in the middle of God's presence. He is all around you. In fact, if you know Him as your savior, he is in you.
27. You are standing in the middle of the miracle presence of God.
28. Where else might you be standing? You might be...

Standing in the middle of your breakthrough.

1. Now let me introduce you to Joseph. His story begins in **Genesis 37**.
2. Joseph too has dreams, only in his dreams he is elevated above those around him, and they are bowing down to him.
3. Joseph makes the mistake of telling his parents and brothers and things don't turn out well.
4. His brothers plan to kill him but then decide to make some money off him.
5. They sell him as a slave in Egypt. He is wrongly accused of rape and is sent to prison.
6. In prison he interprets dreams but is forgotten about and left there alone in bondage.
7. But while he was there in that prison, unknown to him, God was preparing for his breakthrough.
8. The breakthrough comes when one day he is summoned to stand before Pharaoh. While in front of Pharaoh, Joseph is filled with God's power to interpret the dream of Pharaoh. And immediately his life changes.

9. Genesis 41:39-43 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one so discerning and wise as you. **40** You shall be in charge of my palace, and all my people are to submit to your orders. Only with respect to the throne will I be greater than you." **41** So Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I hereby put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt." **42** Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his finger and put it on Joseph's finger. He dressed him in robes of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck. **43** He had him ride in a chariot as his second-in-command, and people shouted before him, "Make way!" Thus he put him in charge of the whole land of Egypt.

10. Because of a verse I am about to read you, we don't have to guess what Joseph had been feeling.
11. Joseph gets married and is blessed with two boys, and the boys' names tell the real story.

12. Genesis 41:51-52 Joseph named his firstborn Manasseh and said, "It is because God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father's household." **52** The second son he named Ephraim and said, "It is because God has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering."

13. What had Joseph been experiencing for many years? Pain and suffering. But after the fact, Joseph was able to recognize that the very place where he experienced suffering was the very place where he experienced breakthrough.
14. Let's be real. Asking, seeking, and knocking, especially when it is accompanied by suffering, can engulf your thoughts and emotions. And when it does it is not a pretty picture.
15. But again, today I want to encourage you. The very same place where you are experiencing suffering could be the very place where breakthrough will occur.
16. You may feel like you are in prison, but like Joseph you might just be on the edge of breakthrough.
17. So, don't stop trusting. Don't stop believing. Breakthrough is coming.
18. And finally. Be encouraged because you might be...

Standing in the middle of your victory.

1. Lastly, let me introduce you to a guy by the name of Gehazi. Gehazi was the right-hand man of a sometimes unpopular prophet by the name of Elisha.
2. I say unpopular because Elisha was so in tune with God that he could tell things no one else knew, which made the enemies of Israel angry.
3. In 2 Kings chapter 6, the king of Aram sent soldiers to arrest Elisha.
4. So Gehazi wakes up the next morning to find that the army had them surrounded and there was no way of escape.
5. So, he runs into Elisha and says, what are we doing to do.
- 6. 2 Kings 6:16-17** "Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them." **17** And Elisha prayed, "Open his eyes, LORD, so that he may see." Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.
7. These horses and chariots of fire were heavenly beings, probably angels, that had been sent by God to protect Elisha and Gehazi.

8. But when Gehazi woke up that morning, all he could see was that they were surrounded by the enemy and were about to be defeated.
9. But the army of Aram wasn't the only army present that day. Gehazi just didn't see them right away.
10. What was Gehazi thinking? We know he was afraid. Afraid of being captured, tortured, and probably killed. All he could see around him was defeat.
11. But God had already secured the victory. In fact, Gehazi was standing in the middle of the victory and didn't know it.
12. I don't have to ask if you have ever felt defeated. We all have.
13. I don't have to ask if your circumstances told you, you were done for and had already been defeated. We all have.
14. But what you may not know is that God already has your victory planned out. Put into place. And ready to be unleashed in your life in a moments notice. It's just that you can't see it yet.
15. Don't stop trusting. Don't stop believing. Victory is coming.

Conclusion:

1. What you feel and what you see are not the end of the story.
2. Aloneness and lack of freedom and defeat are not the end of the story.
3. **Your story is not over until God says it is over**, and if you still have blood flowing through your veins and breath flowing through your lungs, your story isn't over yet.
4. You are in the presence of almighty God.
5. And in the presence of God there is breakthrough and victory.
6. So, let's trust in God this morning. Not in what we see and feel.
7. Stand and worship the Lord.
8. Tell Him you trust him, and you still believe in him.
9. Continue asking, seeking, and knocking for breakthrough and victory.
10. Teresa lead "Won't Stop Now".