

Jan 30, 2022

## SOUL RESET – Love God Reach People Serve All

### SCRIPTURE READING Romans 12:9-18

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

RESET is a word floating around our culture today.

We can reset our computers, we can reset our attitudes,

Reset our relationships, our clocks, our jewelry and even a bone!

But over these past weeks as we've begun a New Year,

A RESET has taken on a new meaning.

Making a RESET can mean a rearranging of priorities,

a reshaping of purpose and dreams, goals and values.

Rev. Junius Dotson, author of the book "SOUL RESET",



which we have been journeying with

throughout the Sundays of January & in small groups,

Says, "Calling a reset means we're taking a time out,

surveying the situation, and charting a new way forward." (p 9)

Rev. Dotson challenges each of us to apply this to our own souls,

And both Pastor Jess and I believe this challenge of a "Soul Reset"

Also applies to us as a church family.

What does it mean to get all the way back, to the beginning settings

In our hearts, in our souls, and in our minds—

To clear away clutter and old ways of doing things  
Things that were not only perhaps inefficient,  
but also stealing our ability to function at our best.

FRIENDS...

\*A SOUL RESET is a hardstop of chronic busyness; a deep look inward;  
An intentional look to GOD; AND a new, more holistic journey forward  
that more closely resembles an abundant life into which Jesus  
calls each of his disciples AND His church.

\*A SOUL RESET is the pouring out of one's self to God;  
engaging with passion...spiritual disciplines to fill those  
empty margins of our lives, to feed our souls, our minds, our hearts,  
our church & YES our community.... To feed and fill ALL  
with the power & presence of the Holy Spirit.

\*A SOUL RESET is finding and claiming our WHY—so that as disciples,  
& as the church, we can live abundantly, passionately,  
with purpose and direction...becoming something more,  
something greater for Christ.

\*A SOUL RESET includes finding new & meaningful ways to connect with  
Jesus, the lover of our souls; as well as new ways, unexpected ways,  
to express our love for Jesus, for each other & for our neighbor.

Oh friends, THIS is the foundation for healthy & whole living as a disciple,  
THIS is the foundation for creating, becoming, and sustaining  
A healthy, vibrant faith community.

**Now** you know why I love today's reading from Romans 12:9-18.

If you look in your Bibles, some have this passage listed  
with a subheading entitled: "Marks of the True Christian."



In these 10 verses...

Paul reminds us HOW to live out our "WHY" of being a disciple of JC,  
And if we can do these foundational things, behaviors, acts, decisions,  
Like: Love genuinely, hate evil, hold what's good close, show honor,  
Serve the Lord, rejoice, be patient, persevere in prayer...

To name just a few from Paul's list... IF WE DO THIS...

We lay a foundation for health, wholeness and well-being—  
For ourself, our church family AND our community  
in which we live, work, play and serve.

O Friends THIS...this is why we as a church have developed new  
Mission and Vision Statements.

Honoring what & who have gone before us, we have claimed a Spirit-breathed **SOUL RESET**, as  
articulated thru our new Mission Statement: **GOVE GOD ~ REACH PEOPLE ~ SERVE ALL**

Six simple words to help us RESET our hearts, our ministries And our life together.

As Rev. Dotson said, making a RESET can mean rearranging priorities,  
Reshaping purpose, dreams and goals,  
ALL to chart a new way forward in and through Christ.

Here at FUMC we have asked ourselves WHY do we exist?  
Well, we as a Spirit-filled faith community exist to  
**LOVE GOD ~ REACH PEOPLE ~ SERVE ALL**

THIS is our WHY, this is our SOUL RESET as a church  
that began Tuesday night when our elected leaders  
unanimously approved it.  
**LOVE GOD ~ REACH PEOPLE ~ SERVE ALL**

As Pastor Jess shared with our kids during Young Disciples Time  
These SIX WORDS need to be remembered, they need to be claimed  
AND then repeated through our words, our motions, our actions,  
Deeds...by our lives.

I love how Pastor Jess is helping our kids AND US remember this and claim it!  
So again...Right now...Will you join with Pastor Jess and I...  
at home and all who are here today? Let's name it 2 times:

**LOVE GOD** (*Create Heart with Hands over my our heart*)

**REACH PEOPLE** (*Reach out & wide with palms down*)

**SERVE ALL** (*Cup hands palms outward moving out to front*)

Oh my siblings in Christ this is a day of new beginnings! Praise the Lord!

I am SO stoked to be serving alongside this church and her leaders  
As God is doing a new thing among us and through us!

7 mos ago I preached these words in my 1<sup>st</sup> sermon as your Lead Pastor:

I said: "FEAR NOT! God's Doing a New Thing!"

Fear Not! Why? God's doing a new thing!

God said to the prophet Isaiah, "Fear not I am about to do a new thing;

NOW it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" (Is:43)



They were and are **today** such powerful words of hope and possibility!

And so here we are this morning,

after many vision team meetings and planning retreats,

much prayerful discernment,

informational meetings & the unanimous vote by council—

Here we are with a new mission statement & a new vision statement

that dreams God-sized dreams for the next 5 years.

As I said on my first Sunday with you,

There is nothing to fear in the act of beginning...of doing a new thing...

or as we've learned this month, there is nothing to fear

in a Soul Reset for ourselves and for the church.

When the heart, soul and mind is ready for a fresh beginning, amazing, unforeseen things can emerge. This has happened to us individually as disciples...many times throughout our faith journeys, and occurs in our life together as a church family.

Celtic Spiritual author John O'Donohue speaks to the heart of this

in a powerful way. (*To Bless the Space Between US*, p 3-5)

He writes: "Beginnings are new horizons that WANT to be seen..." WANT to be revealed...

"I am about to do a new thing" God whispers excitedly...

A RESET for First UMC...Well, now it springs forth!

Beginnings are not regressions or repetitions.

Beginnings in and through the power and work of God's Holy Spirit

Find clearance and release from regressions or repetitions...

And become free from the grip of the past...

To find & become God's hope, love & light to a hurting & needy world.

Friends, our new Mission Statement, our communal SOUL RESET...  
Challenges us to LOVE GOD, REACH PEOPLE and SERVE ALL.

Today's Romans passage gives us plenty of Biblical examples and suggestions on HOW to do that!

Bless others; Extend hospitality to strangers; Hangout with the lowly; Rejoice with those who rejoice; Weep with those who weep; Live peaceably with all; Persevere in prayer; don't lag in zeal; Contribute to the needs of the saints; Hate what is evil; Live in harmony with one another; outdo one another in showing honor; Love one another with mutual affection; serve the Lord!

Oh friends, can you hear our Mission Statement coming alive in Romans 12? I can!

Friends, we are being challenged to leave behind our fears,  
our comfort zones, and some former things of old...  
And RISK...trusting in God who is about to do a new thing  
In and through our lives, our church & our new Vision.

So let us get ready for this new adventure  
God is calling us to begin together!

- As we claim and embody our Mission Statement
- As we set goals and dreams for the next five year Vision Plan
- as we find our way across new virtual frontiers as the church
- as we reach out to the community to the least and lost
- as we love the broken, the hurting and wounded
- as we welcome and embrace ALL to the church of Jesus Christ

Let us fear not and trust that We've got this...  
We've got this...because God's got us!

Let us RESET our hearts, minds and souls as we:  
LOVE GOD REACH PEOPLE And SERVE ALL

Lets get busy church! Lets get busy as we LOVE, REACH AND SERVE...  
Amen and amen!