



Refreshment

The word “refreshment” in the English language usually denotes food and beverage. The New Testament Greek word has a much greater meaning. It means to restore the strength of the soul. It means to actually revive the divine viewpoint of life in an individual and to do this apart from the pastor's function of teaching the Word of God. This soul restoration is actually an individual believer providing blessing to the life of a fellow believer without sitting them down and teaching them Bible doctrine. We are to possess unconditional *agapao* love toward everyone and conditional, personal *phileo* love toward our few loved ones and friends. As we possess this type of caring, compassion, and consideration, we become a stimulant, a blessing, and a source of refreshment to others as we continue in our spiritual advance. The meaning of the biblical word for refreshment denotes supplying what is necessary in spiritual blessing during a time of adversity and disaster in the life of another individual.

In 2 Timothy 1:16, the Greek verb for “refresh” is ἀναψύχω (anapsuchō) and means to breathe again and again or to revive the soul. Our lives as Christians should be a source of revival to individual souls in our periphery. Our lives as spiritually maturing believers can be and should be a source of blessing to others without getting into any competition. This means to do so without feeling superior to them, without putting others down, without becoming upset and fretting over people, and without that terrible sarcasm which has become so natural and so characteristic today.

"The Lord grant mercy to the house of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains;" (2 Timothy 1:16, NASB)

We should possess a true and honorable friendship with others, which is a relationship based on our strength of character. This is what characterizes a sincere friendship relationship. We must remember that in our own day and age, sincerity has been misused by those believers who equate Christianity with ecstasies and are always involved in some reaction from emotions controlling their souls. These charismatic Christians, as they call themselves, have eliminated rationalism and common sense in favor of emotions controlling the soul. When the believer is growing spiritually under the influence of Bible truth, they should never overreact. In fact, the intake and application of Bible truth stabilizes the soul and actually provides the basis for communicating warmth, friendship, stability and encouragement to others. We have the opportunity to utilize all these things under the ministry of refreshment. As it concerns our friendship with fellow believers, refreshment must always be a two-way street. This means that your true and sincere friends are those who are positive to the intake and application of Bible doctrine.

The Ministry of Refreshment Through Music

Music can be used in the ministry of refreshment. We must realize that there is nothing wrong with tapping our feet to some up-beat rhythm or song. However, we should remember that the most important thing in Christian music is not the melody or the rhythm, but the lyrics. The lyrics or the words to the song should convey an accurate doctrinal message or testimony, word of praise, or thanksgiving. Modern day sacred music is totally out of line by presenting songs in the medium of heavy metal, hard rock, punk rock, and other forms of rock and roll music that emphasize the music over the lyrics. Those who emphasize a lot of body-swaying rhythm and music and neglect the words to the songs are superficial or erroneous! When we are Spirit-filled and ministering or being ministered to in song, we can experience a great sense of refreshment, encouragement, and blessing.



Refreshment through music is seen in 1 Samuel 16:23 where King Saul experienced a temporary alleviation of his psychotic condition through the ministry of refreshment in music. Apparently, King Saul had a psychotic condition which erupted from time to time when he was under any kind of extreme pressure. Apparently, this condition was triggered by jealousy from Saul's reversionistic state. It seems there was very little that could be done. But we see that a spiritually mature teenager by the name of David came into the life of Saul and was able to help. Whenever an evil spirit from God (this is permissive control of history by Jesus Christ, permitting, demon influence in the life of arrogant reversionistic Saul) came to Saul, David would take his harp and play it and Saul would be refreshed.

"So it came about whenever the evil spirit from God came to Saul, David would take the harp and play it with his hand; and Saul would be refreshed and be well, and the evil spirit would depart from him." (1 Samuel 16:23, NASB)

Why did Saul become refreshed? It was the music David played on the harp with the doctrinal lyrics which he sang. Whenever David sang and played that music, it reached right into Saul's soul and brought his soul back to reality and temporarily relieved the psychotic condition. In other words, refreshment came to Saul's soul and the refreshment alleviated the suffering and caused him to calm down. Refreshment from doctrinal music, both the melody and lyrics, can be used for soul recovery from an adverse condition whether it's caused by being reversionistic, psychosis, or any influence of Satan's world system of evil. This may apply when we are just under a period of minor depression. We all get "bummed out" from time to time. The words and melody of a hymn or a gospel song can bring such refreshment and blessing that we experience a revival or recovery within our soul from the adverse condition. We must remember that the thing that brings the refreshment is primarily the lyrics of the song, the doctrinal message - not the melody or the rhythm.

The Message of Refreshment

Proverbs 25:13 is actually a proverb on biblical refreshment. We should think of refreshment here from the standpoint of the one who teaches the Word of God resulting in the message of the Word providing encouragement and refreshment to its hearers. This verse is a short 3-line poem and in this 3-line parable - the first line is the illustration of the next two lines.

"Like the cold of snow in the time of harvest Is a faithful messenger to those who send him, For he refreshes the soul of his masters." (Proverbs 25:13, NASB)

The first line gives us the illustration: "Like the cold of snow in the time of harvest." The time of harvest is a time when the farm workers get very hot and it is a warm autumn day and they are very uncomfortable. So they often had water boys sent to some near place where there was snow. They would bring this snow down to the workers, but by the time they got it down the hillside it was cold water. The snow referred to in this verse is melted snow that is still cold and refreshing. The water boys would bring it down in containers and the farm workers would all stop and take a drink of this very, very refreshing water. This becomes the illustration for the next two lines: "Is a faithful messenger to those who send him, For he refreshes the soul of his masters."

In the analogy, the communicator of the Word, like a pastor-teacher, is a "water boy." He refreshes the souls of his masters or his congregation that hears and applies the Bible doctrine in his messages. You see, the water boy worked for everyone else. The refreshment to the Christian comes through the one who is faithful and loyal in communicating Bible truth. It's like cold water that is refreshing. Refreshment in the Scripture is always connected with the individual's soul. The teacher of doctrine is the key to the ministry of refreshment. The point of total refreshment for the pastor is when believers



reach spiritual maturity while in his congregation. A mature believer is always going to be a source of refreshment to those in their life. This is a part of the blessing by association which overflows to other believers.

Refreshment and Misery to the Nation

Rejection of refreshment brings divine discipline upon a nation. Isaiah explains why the nation is in such horrible trouble. It is not because of the children, but the adults. The adults had become negative to the Word of God that provides for their national blessing. Those adults could take in the Word of God, or they could neglect and reject it. They chose to neglect and reject Bible truth.

"To whom would He teach knowledge, And to whom would He interpret the message? Those just weaned from milk? Those just taken from the breast? "For He says, 'Order on order, order on order, Line on line, line on line, A little here, a little there.'" Indeed, He will speak to this people Through stammering lips and a foreign tongue, He who said to them, "Here is rest, give rest to the weary," And, "Here is repose," but they would not listen. So the word of the LORD to them will be, "Order on order, order on order, Line on line, line on line, A little here, a little there," That they may go and stumble backward, be broken, snared and taken captive. Therefore, hear the word of the LORD, O scoffers, Who rule this people who are in Jerusalem," (Isaiah 28:9-14, NASB)

In Isaiah 28:10, “Order on order, order on order” refers to teaching of Bible doctrine categorically. “A little here, a little there” refers to the daily intake and utilization of Bible doctrine. In Isaiah 28:12, “rest” refers to the Bible doctrine being taught that Israel has rejected and also means refreshment. Doctrinal teaching gives rest or refreshment to the weary, but cannot to those who reject the refreshment of Bible truth.

In Isaiah 28:13, “That they may go and stumble backward, be broken, snared and taken captive” means that they might go negative to the teaching Bible doctrine and fall into apostasy. In view here also are the many citizens of the nation who are in reversionism and have turned from the laws of divine establishment and/or Bible doctrine and they are disciplined by their enemies taking over their land.

The Apostle Peter referred to the same principle in Acts 3:19. Peter is challenging those of the nation of Israel to change their minds about what the Word of God says about Jesus Christ being their Messiah. In other words, they should stop rejecting Him and they should receive Him. Their returning to the Lord would be tantamount to recovering from national reversionism. Their sins would be forgiven by God and a great time of revival would come to the nation.

""Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord;" (Acts 3:19, NASB)

These “times of refreshing” is the only thing that can save a nation as far gone as the Northern Kingdom in Isaiah's day or the Southern Kingdom of Judea in Peter's time, or the USA today. “Times of refreshing” refer to a revival in the souls of believers. It refers to a revival of doctrinal intake and doctrinal living in the lives of those who are born again. We must always remember that revival within a country comes about as a result of a spiritual awakening and/or a revival in the souls of believers.

Refreshment From a Growing Congregation

Refreshment comes from responding to the Word of God. In Romans 15:32, Paul was anticipating returning to Rome and he had joyous anticipation of coming by the will of God to teach these believers in Rome and to refresh them. Because refreshment is a two-way street, the believers in Rome will refresh Paul by their response to his teaching of the Word, their love for God and others, and their



faithfulness and loyalty to the plan of God. All of this will be the basis for encouragement and refreshment to Paul.

"so that I may come to you in joy by the will of God and find refreshing rest in your company." (Romans 15:32, NASB)

Also, in 2 Corinthians 7:13, Paul informs us that he has been encouraged and comforted by the encouragement and comfort that Titus has received from the congregation. The Christian should always rejoice over the happiness of fellow believers. This is what he did concerning Titus because the mental attitude of Titus was revived and refreshed by the Corinthian congregation. Not only did Titus straighten out the Corinthians, but he made some lifetime friendships. Many of these people were a source of refreshment to Titus who was probably the greatest "troubleshooter" of the early days of the Church Age.

"For this reason we have been comforted. And besides our comfort, we rejoiced even much more for the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by you all." (2 Corinthians 7:13, NASB)

Refreshment and Spiritual Maturity

The mature believer has a ministry of refreshment. This is a part of their blessing by association. In their association with other believers, they become a source of encouragement and refreshment. In 1 Corinthians 16:17-18, the Apostle Paul refers to three men who he enjoyed as lifetime friends and were a source of great blessing to him. In 2 Timothy 1:16, Paul refers to God continually extending mercy to the family of Onesiphorus. This believer was a great source of encouragement to Paul and was one of those great believers who refreshed Paul. In order to be a refreshment to the great apostle, you really have to be something great in the spiritual life.

"I rejoice over the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, because they have supplied what was lacking on your part. For they have refreshed my spirit and yours. Therefore acknowledge such men." (1 Corinthians 16:17-18, NASB)

"The Lord grant mercy to the house of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains;" (2 Timothy 1:16, NASB)

In Philemon 1:7 and Philemon 1:20, Paul refers to his dear friend Philemon and the joy, encouragement, and love that they shared with each other. Paul referred to the great source of encouragement and refreshment that Philemon had been to fellow believers as well as to Paul himself. In Philemon 1:20, he challenged Philemon to revive his encouragement by receiving back into fellowship and good graces, his runaway slave, Onesimus.

"For I have come to have much joy and comfort in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother." (Philemon 1:7, NASB)

"Yes, brother, let me benefit from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in Christ." (Philemon 1:20, NASB)

Refreshment as a Mainstay

The thinking of our Lord imparted to every believer by learning and applying Bible doctrine provides respite and refreshment in our times of pressure and adversity. The key word here is mainstay. A mainstay is the confidence that we have in the God that we love and the stability and security that He imparts to us through His Word which is such a blessing and refreshment. During times of continued trial and tribulation, God's grace, through the power of His Word, gives us respite and refreshment which enables us to keep pressing on in our spiritual growth. Psalms 138:7.



"Though I walk in the midst of trouble, You will revive me; You will stretch forth Your hand against the wrath of my enemies, And Your right hand will save me." (Psalms 138:7, NASB)