

The "3 R's Concept" for Christian Living

Restoring and Rescuing the Rebel in a Rebellious Society

Who are the rebels of society?

Rebel...to oppose or disobey one in authority or control; to renounce and resist by force the authority of one's government; to feel or exhibit anger or revulsion/

Urban dictionary -A rebel is a person who stands up for their own personal opinions despite what anyone else says. A true rebel stands up for what they believe is right, not against what's right. True rebels know who they are and do not compromise their individuality or personal opinion for anyone.

Rebellion = a transgression against God and an opposition to any person. It is bitter. It is angry. It is stubborn. It is contention. It disputes. It defies God's will. It disobeys. It is violent. It is corrupt. It is motivated by pride and is held in place in one's heart by fear of being controlled by an outside source. **Most rebellious people are self-centered and dedicated to fight the system held together by God (the higher power).**

Rebellion is the enemy's counterfeit (bad) fruit to God's Fruit of the Spirit known as patience (Gal 5:22).

1 Samuel 15:23 informs us...

"Rebellion is as sinful as witchcraft, and stubbornness as bad as worshipping idols."

Why is this? Because rebellion is rooted in deception and does not trust God or wait on God or rely on God for His provision. Rebellion is a deception that serves the self.

Think: Fear over faith. Think: Pride. Think: Idol. Think: Israelites in the wilderness. Think: Agreement with the enemy, whose very nature is an all-about-me (not God) mentality.

Rebellion, uprising, or insurrection is a refusal of obedience or order. It refers to the open resistance against the orders of an established authority. **The rebel is the individual that partakes in rebellion or rebellious activities, particularly when armed.** Thus, the term rebellion also refers to the ensemble of rebels in a state of revolt.

Ultimate Rebel: A reprehensibly low condition or...the lowest or depth of despair as to rebellion and the rebel of society (human sinking to the lowest depths of sin). Example: The prodigal son

Romans 1:18, “The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness,¹⁹ since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them.²⁰ For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

²¹ For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.²² Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles.

²⁴ Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another.²⁵ They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

²⁶ Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones.²⁷ In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error.

²⁸ Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done.²⁹ They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips,³⁰ slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents;³¹ they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy.³² Although they know God’s righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.”

The Rebel must be rescued and restored to be of effective service to mankind!

How do we do that? As a father or mother...We want to know! As a fellow member of this world we want to know!

First, we must realize that all of us are or have been rebels in the past. We have worshiped created things in lieu of the Creator of things.

God is the Creator. He is the *creator of the world* and of every person in it. As such, He deserves our worship. In fact, our creator God demands our worship.

If there is a God and he created everything, there are absolute moral rights and wrongs that apply equally to everyone. If we're God's creation, and he has spoken to us, we need to listen to and obey what he's said.

Yet our world has rebelled against God, not only sinning directly against his laws, but even against the idea that there are moral absolutes. The great Russian author, Dostoevski, wrote that "if there is no God, then everything is justifiable." Here are few more examples of the mindset in our culture today.

- ***"It's right if it's right for you."***
- ***"That may be wrong for me, but it doesn't mean it's wrong for you."***
- ***"To each his own."***

There absolutely IS a God, and he has given moral right and wrongs for us to live by, but we reject them and then essentially reject him.

Failure/Rebellion among GOD'S people is nothing new. Biblical history is littered with it: Samson failed. Abraham failed. Solomon failed. Jonah failed. The Hebrews failed. All twelve of the disciples of Jesus failed; Even King David, who was a man after GOD'S own heart failed; *"But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord"* (2 Samuel 11:27).

- ***So all of these committed willful disobedient sin, aiding and abetting the enemy after having once pledged fidelity to GOD.***
- ***In both Testaments, the evidence of failure is both overwhelming and sobering.***

Equally overwhelming, however, is the evidence that GOD is in the restoration business.

Throughout the "Word of GOD" is the astonishing record of the LORD'S effort to reclaim and to restore those who are eternally HIS, but who in a moment of weakness betrayed their initial allegiance.

The potential for restoration plainly exists. In (Galatians 6) we are told “If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.” There are common scriptural threads that herald restoration, and these threads outline processes and responsibilities that if embraced, has the potential of releasing the backslidden from their bondage and restoring them to the LORD’S enjoyment and employment.

Restoration is not only possible, it is encouraged and hoped for.

What is the process of restoration for the rebellious person?

Money can be restored. Property can be restored (broken-down cars, stripped painting, old houses). Relationships can be restored. But one thing that can never be restored is time. Time flies and it does not return. Years pass and we never get them back.

Yet God promises the impossible: “I will restore the years that the locust has eaten” (Joel 2:25). The immediate meaning of this promise is clear. God’s people had suffered the complete destruction of their entire harvest through swarms of locusts that marched like an insect army through the fields, destroying the crops, multiplying their number as they went.

Lost Years of Our Lives

What do “lost years” look like for us? Lost years (or locust years) are years that you can’t get back, and they come in many varieties.

- **Lost years are fruitless years.** A lot of hard work was done in the years the locusts had eaten. After everything was destroyed, the people must have thought, *all this work and what do I have to show for it?*
- **Lost years are painful years.** I’m thinking of those who have lost a loved one. You had plans for the future, but now you fear the coming years may be empty.
- **Lost years are selfish years.** A person who says to himself, *“What in the world have I been doing? There’s no substance in my life. I really want it to count for Christ. I want to live in the power of the Spirit. I want to make a difference in the world, but the locusts have eaten half my life! I’ve wasted my years on myself.”*
- **Lost years are loveless years.** A division comes to a family, alienating loved ones. Children grow up, and those years cannot be recovered.
- **Lost years are rebellious years.** Not giving God the time or the glory for your success. You have it all but are not satisfied.
- **Lost years are misdirected years.** Not enjoying your family, your job, and your years of not doing what you really wanted in life. You are left with locust years of an unsatisfied life.

- **Lost years are Christ-less years.** All Christ-less years are locust years. This point is worth thinking about if you have not yet made a commitment to Christ. Ask anyone who came to faith in Christ later in life, and they will tell you that they wish they'd come to Christ sooner than they did: "How much foolishness I would have avoided. How much more good might have been done through my life."

How God Restores Lost Years

There is hope...because God can restore your lost, locust years.

Three (3) Ways God Can Restore Lost Years:

1. **God can restore lost years by deepening your communion with Christ.** Christ can restore lost years by deepening your fellowship with him.

Why not ask him for this? Tell him, "Lord, I have spent too many years without you, too many years at a distance from you. Fill my heart with love and gratitude for Christ. Let the loss of these years make my love for Christ greater than it would ever have been. Restore to me the years the locusts have eaten."

2. **God can restore lost years by multiplying your fruitfulness.**

Why not ask him for this? "Lord, the locusts have eaten too many years of our lives. You have called us as your disciples to bear fruit that will last. Too many fruitless years have passed. Now Lord, we ask of you, give us some years now in which more lasting fruit will be born than in all of our years of small harvests."

3. **God can restore lost years by bringing long-term gain from short-term loss.** The effect of these great trials in your life will be that "the tested genuineness of your faith . . . may result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:7). The praise, glory, and honor go to Christ because his power guarded you and kept you through the hardest years of your life.

Our sins, our grief, our sorrows, were laid on Jesus. Our judgment fell on him. Our locusts swarmed all over him. The life of God's Son (tender shoot) was "cut off." Then, on the third day, the Son of God rose in the power of an eternal life. He offers himself to you, and he says what no one else can ever say: "I will restore the years that the locusts have eaten." And the short-term loss...has been turned into a long-term gain. Heaven for eternity!

- **What does the Bible say about rebellion?**

- **1 Samuel 15:23**, *“For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and presumption is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has also rejected you from being king.”*
- **Proverbs 17:11**, *“An evil man seeks only rebellion, and a cruel messenger will be sent against him.”*
- **Romans 13:1-7**, *“Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience.”*
- **Romans 12:19**, *“Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.”*
- **Numbers 14:9**, *“Only do not rebel against the Lord. And do not fear the people of the land, for they are bread for us. Their protection is removed from them, and the Lord is with us; do not fear them.”*
- **2 Thessalonians 2:3**, *“Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction...”*
- **Isaiah 63:10**, *“But they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit; therefore he turned to be their enemy, and himself fought against them.”*
- **Job 24:13**, *“There are those who rebel against the light, who are not acquainted with its ways, and do not stay in its paths.”*
- **Psalms 5:10**, *“Make them bear their guilt, O God; let them fall by their own counsels; because of the abundance of their transgressions cast them out, for they have rebelled against you.”*
- **2 Timothy 4:3-4**, *“For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.”*