

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **1Corinthians 6:8-11**.
- B. From Roy H. Enoch (8-1-93).
- C. Katherine Cooper compared refinishing and restoring furniture to restoring one to X.
- D. Our lives sometimes also deteriorate like that old furniture:
 - 1. We also have been made of high quality materials and loving workmanship.
 - 2. We may have covered our quality of materials with habits in the style of the times.
 - 3. When fads changed, we changed colors to blend in with the new fashion.
 - 4. Eventually, the worldly pursuits take a toll on life, like the layers of paint building up so that the doors and drawers do not fit or function.
 - 5. The worldly life is no longer attractive and one cannot even like one's self.
- E. We need someone to see our real worth, hidden by worldliness and neglect.
 - 1. Not only one to see worth, but one w/the skills and love to restore.
 - 2. Jesus is the master restorer, and "those who are spiritual" are used by him.
- F. May we fully recognize how pure lives are defiled by sin and need to be restored. May we develop the care, skill, and desire to bring them back to the master Carpenter.

I. IT IS EASIER TO GET INTO TERRIBLE CONDITION THAN TO BE RESTORED.

- A. With furniture it is much easier to put on a coat of paint than to get it off.
 - 1. It is much easier to start a bad habit than to stop it.
 - 2. It is much easier to spread gossip than to stop it or correct it.
- B. With people it is much easier to rationalize what we want to do, than to try and make amends.
 - 1. It often seems expedient to compromise principles.
 - a. People often rationalize sin by claiming that it is for a good purpose.
 - b. Lying, gambling, drinking, prostitution have all been "justified" by saying it was to help someone. This is "sin for a good purpose."
 - 2. The error in this is not recognizing how terrible sin really is (Rom. 6:23).
- C. Restoring that which has been damaged is more difficult than the original construction.
 - 1. With furniture, sometimes the damage goes deep "into the grain" and hardens, and strong, harsh chemicals are needed to soften it. It also takes hard scratching with steel wool or a wire brush to clean even the softened paint out of the grain.
 - 2. With people, it is similar, when sin becomes a habit our heart hardens: It takes strong love and the truth to soften the heart and correct the behavior.
 - 3. The restoration process is painful, difficult, and sometimes embarrassing.

II. THERE ARE ALWAYS SCARS LEFT BY THE DAMAGE AND BRUISES.

- A. Old pieces of furniture show the scars of abuse even when lovingly restored by experts.
 - 1. Dents can be raised but the bruise still remains in the grain.
 - 2. Paint can be removed, but it may still be seen deep in the grain.
 - 3. Joints may have been loosened by moisture or harsh chemicals.
- B. Likewise, sin leaves signs of physical and mental stress resulting in chronic problems.
 - 1. We receive forgiveness for our sins, but have to live w/the consequences.
 - 2. Sometimes the damage cannot be repaired in the lives of others that were affected.
 - 3. Death can result. Broken marriages sometimes cannot be restored.
 - 4. Even when there is forgiveness/restoration, there are still the memories of the sin.
- C. Restoration never equals the original, it certainly is better than deteriorated condition.
 - 1. There is often greater value placed on a restored piece than when it was new.

2. A restored life may be more fruitful and dedicated with a gratitude that did not previously exist.
3. The apostle Paul showed greater gratitude in the grace shown him as a persecutor than the others who had not opposed Christ or His church (1 Tim. 1:12-17).
4. There seems to be a tendency for self-righteousness among those who have not grievously erred (Gal. 6: 1-3).

III. WE NEED HELP WITH OUR RESTORATION.

- A. We cannot restore ourselves.
 1. Paul praised Jesus for having mercy on him and extending the grace of forgiveness, though he was the chief of sinners.
 2. The sinner often does not think he is worth restoring.
 3. The sinner needs to know the love that God and his children have for him.
 4. Paul emphasized his forgiveness as an example to encourage to others.
- B. It takes about as much patience and skill to restore as to build.
 1. It is quick and easy to destroy and to hurt.
 2. A donkey can kick down a barn door, but it takes a carpenter to build another.
 3. Any fool can crack a man's skull, but sometimes even a brain surgeon sometimes cannot repair the damage.
 4. Satan can destroy with sin, but only X can purchase forgiveness.
 5. Sinful fools can lead the innocent to sin, but only those with the word of God can bring them to repentance.

IV. RESTORATION IS THE ONLY HOPE FOR HAPPINESS.

- A. When we despise what we have become, and deplore our lives, then living does not seem attractive.
 1. In depression, we can see no prospect for anything better.
 2. The rising' suicide rate shows how hopeless self-gratification and pleasure is.
 3. Self-centeredness is self defeating and depressing.
- B. Only X can restore our worth and give us hope. It is not based on what we can do but on what He did for us (Rom. 5:6-11).
- C. The restoration begins with our recognizing our need to be restored.
 1. Some think they are all right in sin and continue "wallowing in the mire."
 2. There must be the desire to have our life restored. This is godly sorrow and repentance.
- D. The process includes a washing off of the paint or sin that defiles the natural beauty.
 1. The layers of paint or worldliness and sin must be washed away by the blood of Christ.
 2. This is when we are baptized in the likeness of the burial (Rom. 6:3-5).
 3. The result is restoring the natural beauty of purity and holiness that God designed us.
 4. We are now lovely and loved members of the family of God, the Church of the Lord which He purchased with His blood.

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. Who will recognize a need in your life for a restoration to original beauty and purity.
- B. The longer we wait, the more difficult restoration becomes.
- C. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.