



5 DAY DEVOTIONAL

Sermon: The Ministry Of Restoration

SPEAKER: REV. CHRIS SMITH | 1/18/2026 | PAGE 1 OF 5

Day 1: The Potter's Heart

Devotional: Have you ever watched a potter work with clay? When the clay becomes marred or misshapen, a skilled potter doesn't throw it away. Instead, they gently reshape it, working with patience and care to restore it to something beautiful and useful. This is exactly how God works with us. In our world of incredible technological achievements, we've learned to fly like birds and swim like fish, yet we still struggle with the simple act of loving one another as brothers and sisters. When we fall short, disappoint ourselves, or hurt those around us, it's easy to feel like damaged goods - beyond repair or usefulness. But here's the beautiful truth: God doesn't operate a spiritual junkyard. He's not in the business of discarding broken people. Instead, He specializes in restoration. Unlike salvation, which makes us new creatures, restoration is about bringing us back to our original purpose after we've been damaged by sin, poor choices, or life's circumstances. When you feel broken, remember that you're in the hands of the Master Potter. He sees not just what you are, but what you can become again. Your failures don't define your future, and your mistakes don't disqualify you from His love and purpose. God's heart is always bent toward restoration, not rejection. Today, if you're feeling like damaged goods, take comfort in knowing that our God specializes in taking what seems ruined and making it beautiful again. He's not finished with you yet.

Bible Verse: 'Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted.' - Galatians 6:1

Reflection Question: In what areas of your life do you feel 'damaged' or beyond repair, and how might God want to restore those areas for His glory and your good?

Quote: I'm thankful that we serve a God that doesn't throw the clay away. He restores us. He brings us back to Himself.

Prayer: Father, thank You that You don't throw away broken clay. Help me to see myself through Your eyes of love and restoration. Where I feel damaged or beyond repair, work Your healing power in my life. Make me new again according to Your perfect purpose. Amen.

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Day 2: Gentle Restoration

Devotional: There's a stark difference between how the world treats failure and how God calls us to respond. Too often, we've witnessed what can only be described as spiritual friendly fire - Christians attacking their own wounded instead of helping them heal. When someone falls or struggles with sin, our natural tendency is to be sympathetic to ourselves while being judgmental toward others. We make excuses for our own shortcomings but hold others to impossible standards. This reveals something troubling about our hearts. God calls us to flip this script entirely. We should be sympathetic toward others' struggles while honestly examining our own hearts. When we see someone caught in sin, it shouldn't fuel our pride or make us feel superior. Instead, it should humble us, reminding us that we're capable of equal or even greater failures. True spiritual maturity is revealed not in how we handle success, but in how we treat those who have stumbled. The legalistic person uses others' failures as stepping stones to elevate themselves. But the spiritually mature person sees a fallen brother or sister as an opportunity to demonstrate Christ's love through gentle restoration. Restoration work isn't easy. It requires love, courage, and discernment. It means getting involved in the messy, uncomfortable work of helping people find freedom and healing. But this is exactly what Jesus did for us, and it's what He calls us to do for others. Remember, examining others' sins should never make us proud - it should make us grateful for God's grace in our own lives.

Bible Verse: 'Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.' - Galatians 6:2

Reflection Question: When you see someone struggling or failing, is your first instinct to judge and distance yourself, or to gently restore and draw closer?

Quote: Nothing reveals the heart of a legalistic person better than the way they treat someone who has sinned or fallen short.

Prayer: Lord, forgive me for the times I've been quick to judge and slow to restore. Give me a heart that sees others' struggles as opportunities to show Your love. Help me approach fallen brothers and sisters with gentleness, humility, and genuine care. Amen.

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Day 3: Love in Action

Devotional: Love isn't just a feeling - it's a choice that requires courage and action. When someone we care about falls into sin or makes poor choices, it's easy to talk about them to others rather than talk to them directly. But this reveals something important about our motivations. The legalistic person would rather gossip than pray. They'd rather tell others about someone's failures than take those concerns to God in prayer. Why? Because their goal isn't restoration - it's to look better than the person who fell. They use others' shortcomings as a ladder to climb higher in their own estimation. But genuine love operates differently. Love doesn't seek to expose or embarrass. Love doesn't use someone's weakness as an opportunity for self-promotion. Instead, love covers, protects, and works toward healing and restoration. When we truly love someone, we're willing to have difficult conversations. We're willing to get involved in the messy work of helping them find their way back. We pray for them more than we talk about them. We extend grace while still speaking truth. This kind of love requires discernment - knowing when to speak and when to listen, when to confront and when to comfort. It takes courage because restoration work isn't always appreciated or welcomed. But it's exactly what Jesus did for us, and it's what He calls us to do for others. The world is watching how we treat each other, especially when we fail. They need to see that Christianity isn't about perfection - it's about redemption, grace, and the transforming power of genuine love in action.

Bible Verse: A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.' - John 13:34-35

Reflection Question: Is there someone in your life who needs restoration rather than judgment, and what practical step can you take today to show them Christ's love?

Quote: It takes love, it takes courage, and it takes discernment when dealing with a brother who has slipped.

Prayer: Jesus, You loved me when I was unlovable and restored me when I was broken. Help me to love others the same way. Give me courage to reach out to those who are struggling and wisdom to know how to help them find healing and hope. Amen.

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Day 4: The Father's Embrace

Devotional: Picture this scene: a young man who has wasted his inheritance, lived recklessly, and ended up feeding pigs finally comes to his senses. As he walks the long road home, rehearsing his apology speech, he probably expects lectures, conditions, and a long probationary period before being accepted back into the family. But that's not what happens. While he's still far off, his father sees him and runs - actually runs - to embrace him. There's no demand for proof of repentance, no lengthy interrogation about where he's been or what he's done. Just pure, overwhelming joy at his return. This is God's heart toward us when we come back to Him after we've wandered. He doesn't meet us with condemnation but with celebration. He doesn't focus on the smell of the pig pen but on the joy of restoration. This is the kind of heart we need to develop toward others who are finding their way back. Too often, we make restoration harder than it needs to be. We create hoops for people to jump through, tests they must pass, and probationary periods they must endure. But God's way is different. When someone genuinely turns back to Him, He welcomes them with open arms. This doesn't mean we ignore sin or pretend consequences don't exist. But it does mean that our primary response to repentance should be joy, not suspicion. It means we celebrate the return rather than dwelling on the departure. There's someone in your life right now who feels like damaged goods, convinced that God could never use them again. They need to hear about the Father's embrace, not His disappointment.

Bible Verse: 'Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.' - Romans 12:10

Reflection Question: How can you demonstrate the Father's heart of celebration and acceptance to someone who is trying to find their way back to God?

Quote: I wish the world could hear that today. I wish the world could understand that. Yes, there's times when we fall short. There's times when we disappoint ourselves. We disappoint our family, we disappoint those around us. But I'm thankful whenever we will come to ourselves and realize, hey, I can receive forgiveness. We serve a God who embraces us with open arms.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for running to embrace me when I returned to You. Help me to have that same heart toward others who are finding their way back. Let me be a source of celebration, not condemnation, for those seeking restoration. Amen.

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Day 5: Becoming a Source of Restoration

Devotional: Want to hear God speak clearly in your life? Pray about becoming a source of restoration for others. Ask Him to show you who needs an encouraging word, who needs someone to reach out, who needs to know they're not forgotten or written off. When you pray this prayer with a sincere heart, God will speak to you. He'll bring people to mind - maybe someone you haven't thought about in a while, someone who's been struggling, someone who feels isolated or ashamed. These aren't coincidences; they're divine appointments. The beautiful thing about being used by God for restoration is that it changes us too. When we focus on helping others heal, we often find our own healing. When we extend grace to others, we experience God's grace more deeply in our own lives. When we become instruments of restoration, we discover that God is still restoring us too. Pride is what fuels conflict and creates a spirit of entitlement that can never be satisfied. But humility - the kind that comes from recognizing our own need for grace - creates opportunities for genuine connection and healing. When we approach others from a place of humility rather than superiority, everything changes. Selfishness never leads to happiness or contentment. But when we invest in the restoration of others, we find a joy and purpose that can't be found anywhere else. We become part of God's redemptive work in the world, and there's nothing more fulfilling than that. Today, ask God to make you a source of restoration. Be willing to be used by Him to bring hope to the hopeless, healing to the hurting, and love to the lonely. This is how we learn to walk the earth like brothers and sisters.

Bible Verse: 'Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.' - 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Reflection Question: Who has God placed on your heart that might need restoration, encouragement, or simply to know that someone cares about them?

Quote: Want to hear God speak? Pray about being a source of restoration. Pray about who it is. God, just speak to my heart who it is that needs an encouragement word. Who is it that I need to reach out to? And let me tell you something. God will speak to you.

Prayer: God, make me a source of restoration in this world. Show me who needs encouragement, who needs hope, who needs to experience Your love through me. Use me to bring healing and hope to those who feel broken or forgotten. Help me to walk this earth as a true brother/sister to all. Amen.

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