

RENEWED FAMILIES



Introduction

Car shows are one of the largest hobbyist industries in the United States. Each year, millions of people attend them to see new models premiered and classic cars restored to their “former glory.”

The cost of restoration varies widely. The more neglect a car has seen over the years, the more costly it is to restore, with full restoration easily costing between \$20,000 and

\$60,000. To be considered restored, a car must meet specific qualifications.

First, the car must use original, new old stock, or factory-correct reproduced parts. Second the paint must match a factory-available color for the exact year, make, and model of the car being restored. Third, the interior materials must match the original factory specifications. Fourth, the engine must be the original or a factory-correct replacement and the supporting components must match what the car originally came with. Finally, there can be no technological or feature improvements. Essentially, the car can only be as good as when it first rolled off the assembly line. It can be repaired, polished, and even brought back to “like new” conditions but it can never go beyond its original man-made specifications.

✚ **What's something you've tried to fix or restore to like new conditions?**

Session Context

About 300 years has passed since David sinned by having Bathsheba's husband, Uriah, killed. His household experienced years of turmoil and instability with Israel feeling the pain until his son, Solomon, became king. Solomon brought decades of peace, prosperity and international respect before ultimately committing idolatry that tore the kingdom apart after his death.

The years after Solomon's reign were marked by division, political instability, and exile. The northern kingdom, Israel, had 19 kings before it fell to Assyria and the southern kingdom, Judah, had 20 before it fell to Babylon.

God raised up multiple prophets and leaders to guide the Israelites throughout their turbulent history, but none were able to reunite them as the family they had once been. They needed and began to seek a savior.

Scripture Exploration

Isaiah 49:1-13

¹ Listen, islands, to me. Listen, you peoples, from afar: the LORD has called me from the womb; from the inside of my mother, he has mentioned my name.

² He has made my mouth like a sharp sword. He has hidden me in the shadow of his hand. He has made me a polished shaft. He has kept me close in his quiver.

³ He said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified."

⁴ But I said, "I have labored in vain. I have spent my strength in vain for nothing; yet surely the justice due to me is with the LORD, and my reward with my God."

⁵ Now the LORD, he who formed me from the womb to be his servant, says to bring Jacob again to him, and to gather Israel to him, for I am honorable in the LORD's eyes, and my God has become my strength.

⁶ Indeed, he says, "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel. I will also give you as a light to the nations, that you may be my salvation to the end of the earth."

⁷ The LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, says to him whom man despises, to him whom the nation abhors, to a servant of rulers: "Kings shall see and rise up,

princes, and they shall worship, because of the LORD who is faithful, even the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you."

⁸ The LORD says, "I have answered you in an acceptable time. I have helped you in a day of salvation. I will preserve you and give you for a covenant of the people, to raise up the land, to make them inherit the desolate heritage,

⁹ saying to those who are bound, 'Come out!'; to those who are in darkness, 'Show yourselves!' "They shall feed along the paths, and their pasture shall be on all treeless heights.

¹⁰ They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun strike them, for he who has mercy on them will lead them. He will guide them by springs of water.

¹¹ I will make all my mountains a road, and my highways shall be exalted.

¹² Behold, these shall come from afar, and behold, these from the north and from the west, and these from the land of Sinim."

¹³ Sing, heavens, and be joyful, earth! Break out into singing, mountains! For the LORD has comforted his people, and will have compassion on his afflicted.

VERSES 1-3

Isaiah wrote the prophetic words of the savior God commissioned to renew all nations as God's children. Though the savior did not appear until centuries later in the form of Jesus Christ, the savior explained his purpose and nature to Isaiah in advance. He was an Israelite and servant chosen, prepared, and empowered to bring salvation.

VERSES 4-7

The savior openly shared how he felt about his assigned work. It required all his strength, didn't immediately produce the intended results, and caused people to despise him; but he trusted God to vindicate and reward

him. God responded to his chosen servant's frustration by explaining the power he had given him. The savior had so much power he could not only save the nation he was born into, he could save the entire world. God encouraged the savior by letting him know kings and princes would worship him as God's chosen one.

VERSES 8-12

God continued to comfort his chosen servant by delivering a promise. God promised to use the servant to symbolize his covenant, rebuild his kingdom, re-establish his presence in broken communities and people, and improve people's lives by guiding them to a better way of living.

VERSE 13

After hearing the savior's words, Isaiah told all creation to sing and rejoice because God's prophetic word comforted his people and God had a plan to address their affliction.

Life Application

+ God has a plan to renew you and your family.

Isaiah prophetically quoted a savior whom God called from the womb, identified by name, and commissioned as God's servant. The servant was sent to renew God's family, so it had a fresh start.

God's plan for you and your family is to renew you, not restore an old version of you. Your renewed family is designed to include more people than you originally had, thrive in places previously considered uninhabitable, and enjoy a richer life than you could have thought possible. It's a complete reset.

+ Even the Savior felt frustrated with his results.

Isaiah recorded God's chosen servant as saying, "I have labored in vain. I have spent my strength in vain for nothing." These words represent a feeling of failure or frustration. But God reminded his servant he was more powerful than he thought and his impact would be greater than he could see in that moment.

When we're working hard to align with God, we can face moments of feeling like our work is in vain; but it's not. God has given us more power than we think and a future that's more impactful than we currently see. We must stay the course to see ourselves and our families renewed according to God's plan.

+ **God decides when it's time to step in and save.**

The Savior was despised by man, hated by nations, and a servant of others. He endured a lot of hostility, ridicule, and unfounded accusations. God could have stopped it at any time, but he waited until the right time to step in – the day of salvation.

You and your family may be suffering through hard times, experiencing situations that seem impossible to handle, or feeling moments of total despair. God isn't ignoring you; he's preparing you for your day of salvation. God knows the exact time to answer your prayers so that your labor can reach its full reward.

Session Reflection

- What areas of your life have you been trying to restore instead of letting God renew?
- Where do you feel like you're working hard but seeing little fruit?
- How can you trust God to revive your sense of worth when you feel overlooked, rejected, or ineffective?

- How can you participate in God's work of renewing broken communities, families, and relationships?
- What does it look like to rejoice about God's promise while you wait to see the full results of his work in your life?

