



THE REDEEMED CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF GOD

CHRIST THE LORD PARISH

1 - 5 Admiralty Road, Lekki Phase 1, Lagos

DIGGING DEEP OUTLINE

THEME: A FRESH START

TUESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2025

TOPIC: A FRESH START WITH GOD – BACK TO BETHEL (A CALL TO REVISIT AND/OR REPAIR OUR PERSONAL ALTAR WITH GOD)

TEXT: Genesis 17:1-8; 35:1-15; I Kings 18:30-39; I Cor 9:26-27; Phil 3:12-16

INTRODUCTION: Brethren, we are pilgrims, on a journey to heaven. Thank God for God's gift of Salvation, Thank God for His gift of Grace and what Grace is meant to do for us (Titus 2:11-13). But Phil 2:12b-13 says to work out our own Salvation with fear and trembling, and to allow God to work in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Apostle Paul in Phil 3:12-14 said he never counted himself to have attained or become perfect. He never saw himself having arrived, but he kept pressing on, and in I Cor 9:26-27, he continually subjected himself (to constant check), lest after preaching to others, he, himself will become a castaway. It was same Apostle Paul in II Cor 13:5 that said we should constantly examine ourselves....

God loves giving His children opportunity for a fresh start, a new beginning. New beginnings that begin with God, are marked by obedience to His word and adherence to the leading/guidance of the Holy Spirit, which leads to a life of godliness, victory and a life of an overcomer.

Similar to God's call to Abraham in Genesis 17 (15 years after God first appeared to him in Genesis 12), God is calling on us to have a fresh start with Him in this season. A fresh start in our relationship with Him, our devotion and commitment to Him etc. He is inviting us to start anew with a clean heart, to repair the altar of devotion, and to live a life that is increasingly Godly, because when we truly obey and prepare for a fresh start, God visits, He empowers, and He heals as we see in Genesis 17:1-8; 35:1-15 and I Kings 18:30-39.

Outline 1: A fresh Start begins with an inner desire and hearing God's clear instruction

- God first met with Jacob in Genesis 28:10-22, and Jacob continued into Laban's house where God blessed him. But at a time, despite being blessed of God, life's situation around him was not pleasant:
 - He lost favor with his Uncle Laban, which led to his departing with his family from Laban
 - His dramatic meeting with Esau, and the initial fear from that encounter
 - The family problems involving the defying of Dinah, and the resultant slaughter of the Canaanites
- God speaks with clarity to Jacob - Arise, go to Bethel, and dwell there; make there an altar to God. Clarity from God precedes renewal, and we can only hear from God when we are turned to God's channel
- We too can begin a fresh start with God by listening attentively to God's word and His leading
- What is God calling you to begin, or start afresh, or recommit to today?

Outline 2: Obedience begins in the heart and is expressed in the open

- Jacob's immediate response: he calls his household to purification and dedication - "Put away the foreign gods....be clean and change your garments".
- He leads by example, and he leads his family into consecration and preparation for meeting God at Bethel.

- Our desire for renewal should be followed with taking practical steps, actions to put-off things that hinder us (Hebrews 12:1). Question is: what the “the foreign gods” or those things competing with God in our lives today?
- We cannot expect God’s presence without first dealing honestly with “idols” things that distract us, that hinder our relationship with God

Outline 3: Encounter with God and empowerment come after faithful obedience

- They arrive at Bethel, where God appears to Jacob again and blesses him, reaffirming His covenant promises.
- God revalidates the name change (Gen 32:28), signifying a renewed relationship with Him - “Your name is Jacob; no longer shall your name be called Jacob, but Israel” (35:10), and then pours upon him, His covenant promises upon Abraham and Isaac, blessings of fruitfulness and multiplication and land.
- Jacob builds an altar for worship again at Bethel, naming the place El-Bethel meaning God, the God of Bethel. The act of building and raising altar to God is indicative of a truly changed heart, rededicated to God.
- True fresh starts are authenticated by God’s visitation, empowerment, and blessings, not merely by human effort.
- Let’s note the sequence: obedience and true worship paves the way for God’s gracious identification and blessings

Conclusion:

- **Key words:**
 - Hearing from God – Clarity from God precedes renewal
 - Purification/cleansing is a pathway to experiencing God’s presence
 - Worship is a cornerstone for renewal
 - God’s visitation and blessings follows from faithfully obeying His word.
- **Questions for Self-Reflection:**
 1. What is the current state of my altar with God today? Is there an urgent need for repairs? David in Psalms 51 cried out to God for mercy and for a renewed spirit. This season of “A Fresh Start” is the opportunity God has given us for that renewed spirit and fresh zeal for God
 2. What are the modern idols that I have allowed in my life that have become source of hindrance to my relationship with God, idols that are competing for space with God in my heart?
 3. What practical steps must I take and commit to? Read Psalms 51:16-17

Prayers:

Dear Lord, search my heart, purge me with hyssop, that I might be clean, wash me that I might be whiter than snow, please remove every idol from my heart, idols that distract me from staying focused on You. Lord, purify my heart and multiply Your grace upon me that I will continually live in the newness of life in Christ Jesus my Lord.