

**“Jesus, Reset My Heart” – Psalm 24**  
**September 11, 2016**  
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Welcome to Mt Olive on the Rally Sunday as we begin a new series, *Reset: Jesus Changes Everything*. To “reset” something is to restore it to its original design, its original purpose, its original intent. It is literally “to set again.” To reestablish. To reengage. To rearrange. To reorganize.

We “reset” something *back* to how it was supposed to be all along.

- When your computer is sluggish and it takes forever to do anything you ask it to do, it needs to be shut down and its power rebooted. My brother always told me when I called him with my computer issues, “When in doubt, reboot.” *It needs to be reset.*
- When your marriage devolves into a series of misses and misunderstandings, it needs an infusion of effective communication, of creativity, of quality time, and of enthusiasm. *It needs to be reset.*
- When the team you’re on at work fails to hit its numbers yet again . . . excellence has slipped, client issues have gone unresolved, agreed-upon goals haven’t been met . . . it needs shored-up accountability, fresh ideas, new incentives, perhaps. *It needs to be reset.*
- When you return to your normal rhythms after the summer is over with its parties and trips and the State Fair, and you realize you’re five pounds heavier and officially suffering from the ill effects of having rekindled your romance with sugar and grease, what your health regimen needs is a little structure, some boundaries for a change, something *green*, for heaven’s sake. *It needs to be reset.*

We can all relate to these types of “resets,” these common, everyday needs to have our connections reestablished, our systems restructured, our routines reimaged, and our relationships retooled. And we know that these can be powerful, even *life-changing* interventions.

What we may not be as quick to realize is that there is a type of reset that is far *more* powerful, vastly *more* life-changing than even these. There are times when not just the *externals* of our lives but the *inner workings of our world* need to be reset too. There are times when what we need more than anything else in life is a total and complete, full-on *reset of our soul*.

We are going to spend this entire month working through four key resets that promise to reinvigorate the core of who we are—who *you* are, really. Who *I* am, really. Who we are, *really*, when we go God’s way instead of our own. The resets we will look at are actually four one-line prayers.

1. [Today, Week 1] “Jesus, reset my heart.”—This is the resetting of our *faith*, where all other resets begin. (We’ll talk more about this idea here in a moment.)
2. [Week 2] “Jesus, reset my mind.”—The resetting of our *thoughts*, the center of our belief.

3. [Week 3] “Jesus, reset my voice.”—The resetting of our *words*, what we say, why we say it . . . and, more specifically, how often we seize opportunities to talk about God.
4. [Week 4] “Jesus, reset my hands.”—The resetting of our *work*, the motivations for what we do, as well as how we do things.

Now, to this week’s theme: “Jesus, reset my heart.” Turn in your pew Bibles to Psalm 24 on page 582. We are going to focus our attention on verses 3-5:

“Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully. He will receive blessing from the Lord and righteousness from the God of his salvation.”

David wrote this psalm as a song to commemorate the occasion of his bringing the Ark of the Covenant to the place he had prepared for it, the tabernacle. An “ark” is just a fancy word for a box—in this case, a box made of acacia wood and gold. But because this was the *Ark of the Covenant*—of *God’s* covenant, no less—and because the building of it had been commissioned by God himself, this was far more than just a box. The Ark of the Covenant represented God’s solemn pledge to his people, that if they would obey him and his laws, he would bless them all

So, here is what we have so far: David is returning the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, to the special place he had prepared for it. As he brings it back to its rightful place, he is singing a song—a psalm—to God about God’s goodness and power throughout the earth, about the importance of having clean hands and pure hearts before God, and about the foolishness of trusting in an idol or swearing by a false god.

What was true for the Israelites is true for us here today. God created them in his own image. He purposed them to love him. He set them apart for his glory and equipped them for every good work. He established a covenant arrangement with them—for them, really—whereby God would provide for them, protect them, and lead them into a soulful satisfaction, a deep-seated sort of fulfillment they could never contrive on their own in exchange for . . . for what? Do you remember what all of this was in exchange for, according to the covenant? It was in exchange, simply, for letting God be God in their lives.

In response to God’s offer of goodness and grace, provision and peace, the Israelites didn’t say “yes,” and they didn’t exactly say “no.” What they said was . . . “*maybe*.”

God said, “Will you let me be God in your life? Will you let me love you and lead you, protect you and provide for your life that is really life?” And in response, the Israelites said, “*Maybe*.”

*Maybe*. Do we ever say “maybe” to God?

To be sure, some of us say “yes”—a resounding, wholehearted, overjoyed “yes”—to God’s offer of faith that leads to fulfillment. We know we make for a sorry god, and we can’t say “yes” fast enough.

There are surely some of us who have said, and maybe continue to say, “no” to him. “No, thanks, God. I got this. I’m good. All set.”

But if I were a betting person, you know what I'd put my money on, in terms of how most of us respond to God? You got it: "Maybe."

Here's how I think it works: To God's lavish invitation of grace and purpose and acceptance and love and fulfillment, we say, "Wow! Great. I'm in." Then, moments later, when we want something that "people who love God" aren't meant to want, we decide we would be better off on our own and promptly revoke the power and authority we ever so recently granted to God. We find sinful and harmful substitutes.

He gave us every need we possess. And then he promised to meet those needs in supernatural, super-consistent, super-mind-blowing ways. To which we said, "Uh. Let me get back to you on that." But then we *didn't* get back to him, did we? Not until we found ourselves in a real pickle, needing some serious strength from on high. Sure, *then* we come running home. "God! Help! Do something!!"

I can't pay this bill! My parents found my drugs! My girlfriend says she's pregnant! My husband is threatening to leave! My teenager flunked . . . again! The company is doing more layoffs! The test results were positive! The IRS is onto me!

I wonder, what does independence from God look like, for you? What does your "maybe" look like? How does it show up in your life?

Friends, God is inviting us into something more than "maybe" faith today. Today, Jesus offers us a heart reset, a reset from "maybe" faith to faith that is *full-on*. He says, "Listen, this is how this is going to work: You draw near to me, and I will draw near to you. You first. But once you take that step of faith, I *will* draw near to you, and then you *will* be sealed—forever, for always, for your good."

Believe. Come. Draw near.

Let me say this, as plainly as I can: If you are weary of running away from God, if you are tired of going it alone in life, if you sense that there is something more for you than what you've experienced thus far, if you long for a mission that matters, if you are sick of the sores and the rats and the dampness and darkness and drudgery of a sin-streaked life, then what you're craving is a reset. And the good news is that you can be reset today. Right here. Right now. Before you get into your car to head home. And listen, you will not be the first!

When we draw near to God—when we "ascend the mountain of the LORD," as Psalm 24:3 says—we are named among those who have "clean hands" and "a pure heart."

The purity we have been longing for? It is found in Jesus alone. We come to him and he comes close to us, and he begins to impart his thoughts, his ways, his responses, his desires to us. And we begin to *resemble* him. We begin to be *transformed*. *Purified*. *Made whole*.

Draw near to God! Your hands will be cleansed. Your heart will be made pure.

There are three by-products of a reset heart that David declares in Psalm 24:

First, those with reset hearts reject impurity.

Second, *those with reset hearts trust in Jesus alone.*

And finally, *those with reset hearts stand in God's holy place.*

This is what it means, after all, to “ascend the hill of the LORD.” *We come into the presence of God.* Do you understand what this means? We don't have to spend our days standing in a desperate place. Or standing in a depressed place. Or in a fearful place. Or in a sinful place. We can plant ourselves in the presence of God. We can stand in a *holy* place all of our days—near to ultimate power, near to ultimate victory, near to ultimate love, near to ultimate grace. We can stand firm despite the howling winds around us when we are standing on faith in Christ.

**Closing Illustration** - Why is this reset life so important? What can happen with a heart and soul that has been reset? Let me leave you with an image of what this reset life looks like.

I have here a fun-size package of plain M&Ms. Any M&M lovers in the house? You're not alone. These things are *good*. Addictively good.

Now, if you needed one of these M&Ms that I have here, I'm going to be honest with you and tell you that I'd have to think about that for a minute. There are only seven in a pack this size, you know. You would be asking for one-seventh of my entire stash. That's a big commitment for me to make.

This here is a regular grocery-store-aisle pack. Now, this package has fifty-seven candies in it—I counted. And so here is what I want to say to you: If you “need” a plain M&M from me, and I'm in possession of this particular package, nine times out of ten, I'm going to give you one. The tenth time out of ten, I'm just in a bad mood and don't feel like sharing, no matter how many M&Ms I have.

I have another bag up here, which is a one-pound bag of plain M&Ms. Some of you are having to employ a lot of restraint just to stay in your seat. These look good, don't they? If you needed an M&M from me, and I had this bag at my disposal, which, by the way, includes a full *five hundred candies* inside, you'd better believe I'd give you one. I wouldn't have to pray about the decision or anything. Just *bam*, one M&M for you, right away. I might even give you two.

**Reveal large container** - What you're looking at, my friends, is a very large container filled to the brim with plain M&Ms. Now, I haven't counted these up, but there has to be, what, eighty thousand M&Ms in here? At *least*? If you needed an M&M, and I had eighty thousand M&Ms in my possession, I would scoop out a giant handful of the suckers and hand them over to you, no questions asked. In fact, who in here needs a few M&Ms? Anyone? You do? You, [Pastor, pick out the person—In the yellow shirt? With the long hair?], come on up and get some.

Friends, listen carefully to what I'm about to tell you. Do you want to know what life with Jesus is like, in terms of having resources adequate to the needs we discover, the needs he hopes we will help meet? Do you want to know what abundance is all about, the quality of life that John 10:10 promises we are meant to have in Jesus Christ?

In the context of our little M&M analogy here, it's not having a fun-size pack, a grocery-store-aisle pack, a one-pound bag, or even a ten-gallon aquarium full of them. It's like having *the master key to the M&M production plant*. And guess how many M&Ms are produced in this

country *every single day*? Four hundred million. *Four hundred million* of these little guys. You need an M&M from me, and I have four hundred million of them in my possession—every single day? Well, now I'm actually *searching* for people to give them to. I'll know you need one before you even *ask*.

And *that's* exactly the point. In Jesus, Paul wrote in Romans 8:32:

He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?"

*All* the M&Ms you could *ever* need, *forever*. All the strength. All the creativity. All the stamina. All the money. All the determination. *All the resources we ever will need*, in order to meet the needs Jesus asks us to meet—*that's* what you have in Christ. That's what I have in Christ. The gracious giving of "all things," Paul reminds us—*that's* what we have in Christ.