



Hello, My Name Is Restoration

September 13th, 2026

LEAN IN

- “How do I get back what I lost?”
- Have you ever experienced a season where you looked back and thought, “I wish I could get those years back”?
- What is something people often wish they could “get back” or have restored?

LOOK UP

Read Joel 2:12–14 and Joel 2:25–27

Joel 2:12–14

“Even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning. Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity. Who knows? He may turn and relent and leave behind a blessing—grain offerings and drink offerings for the Lord your God.”

Joel 2:25–27

“I will repay you for the years the locusts have eaten—the great locust and the young locust, the other locusts and the locust swarm—my great army that I sent among you. You will have plenty to eat, until you are full, and you will praise the name of the Lord your God, who has worked wonders for you; never again will my people be shamed. Then you will know that I am in Israel, that I am the Lord your God, and that there is no other; never again will my people be shamed.”

O — OBSERVATION

What does the text say?

Take a few minutes and simply observe the passage before trying to explain it.

- What words or phrases stand out to you?
- What do you notice about God's invitation in verses 12–14?
- What does God ask His people to do?
- What does God say about Himself?

- What does God promise to do in verses 25–27?
- What connection do you see between **returning to God** and **restoration**?

I — INTERPRETATION

What does the passage mean?

What do you learn about God's character from the way He responds to His people?

- What does it mean that God is “gracious and compassionate”?
- What does “slow to anger and abounding in love” tell us about God's posture toward His people?
- Why do you think God wants their **hearts**, not simply their outward religious behavior?
- What does this passage teach us about the relationship between repentance and restoration?

What do you learn about humanity?

- Why do you think people tend to hide from God when they have experienced failure?
- What makes genuine repentance difficult?
- Why is it tempting to try to restore our lives through our own strength, success, relationships, money, or achievements?

A — APPLICATION

What is my response?

- How are you encouraged, challenged, or convicted by this passage?
- Is there an area of your life where God may be inviting you to “**return**” to Him?
- What would it look like for you to “rend your heart” rather than simply change an outward behavior?
- **Where are you currently tempted to find restoration somewhere other than God?**
- **What is one step of obedience that would move you toward God's restorative work in your life?**

1. Where do you need restoration?

- Think about the phrase: “**I will repay you for the years the locusts have eaten.**”
- What comes to mind when you think about the “years” in your own life?
- You don't have to share anything deeply personal with the group unless you want to.
- **Where do you most need to experience God's restoring presence right now?**

2. What if restoration begins with returning?

- Read Psalm 51:10–12: “Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.”
- David doesn't begin by asking God to fix his circumstances. He asks God to **restore him**.

SCRIPTURE

Joel 2:12–14; Joel 2:25–27; Psalm 51:10–12; Acts 2:17

PRAYER

Use these prompts to guide your group prayer:

1. RETURN

“God, show me where I have wandered from You.”

Give people a moment of silence to confess anything God brings to mind.

2. SURRENDER

“God, help me stop trying to restore myself through my own strength.”

Ask God to reveal where the group has been looking for ultimate restoration outside of Him.

3. RESTORE

“God, bring Your healing and restoration into the broken places of our lives.”

Pray for marriages, families, friendships, finances, work, grief, regret, and any other areas where people need God's restoring presence.

4. REDEEM

“God, take what has been broken and use it for Your glory.”

Pray that God would redeem past mistakes and painful seasons rather than allowing them to define the future.

5. SEND

“God, make us agents of restoration.”

Ask God to use the people in the group to bring hope, forgiveness, encouragement, reconciliation, and the gospel to others.

STEP OUT - Put Restoration Into Practice This Week

1. RETURN TO GOD

Identify **one area** where you know you have been drifting from God.

2. TAKE ONE STEP TOWARD HEALING

If there is an area of your life where you need help, don't remain isolated.

Consider taking a step toward restoration through **prayer, a 1-to-1 spiritual coach, a Gateway group, Restore, Re-Engage, or professional counseling**

3. BECOME AN AGENT OF RESTORATION

Think of one person who may be experiencing a broken or difficult season.

Reach out. Send a text. Make the phone call. Offer to pray. Invite them to coffee.