WOW: Word Of the Week

Restored!

September 30, 2026

I want to take us back to 1 Peter 5:10 and last week's WOW! Do you remember it? (Not a fair question unless you are a regular viewer of this WOW series.) Last week's WOW was topple. God will keep you from toppling! The text of 1 Peter 5 mentions four things God does to keep us from toppling! This week, I expand the first of those four verbs.

God will restore you (ESV). I will unpack some of what our world entails in a minute, but first, an explanation. I chose RESTORED as our WOW. Not restore, not restoration (which could have caused some to incorrectly anticipate where I would go, since my religious roots are in the American Restoration Movement). This week's WOW is much broader, deeper, more meaningful than human efforts to restore something gone awry. This week's WOW is about God's work in our lives to continually change, remake, remold us. God declares us "Restored!"

Our hymnody is not rich with this theme, but Jan and I thought almost immediately about the song, "Restore My Spirit." *Restore my spirit, Lord, I need restored; My heart is weary, please help me, dear Lord. I stand in need of more strength from Your Word. Renew my love, rebuild my faith, O, restore my soul.*
Revive the fire, Lord, deep in my soul; Stir my desire to work in Your fold. Light in my heart, dear God, Your zeal grown cold. Renew my love, rebuild my faith, O, restore my soul.
Renew my courage, Lord, it needs restored; My cup is empty, refill it, dear Lord. Replace all doubts and fear with faith so bold. Renew my love, rebuild my faith, O, restore my soul. (copyright, R.J. Stevens Music)

What does it mean that God restores us (ESV)? The basic meaning of the word is to mend, as a net or a broken bone (the first we encounter in Scripture, the second in first century Greek). God makes us ready. He prepares us. Whatever is awry, he fixes. We are made ready for service. Whatever we need, God provides.

The word "restored" has two possible applications. To be restored may mean the reestablishment of the broken relationship, that is forgiveness of sin. That is, In Christ God declares us forgiven, redeemed. To be restored may also refer to the fact that God empowers us to move ahead in our life without dwelling on past sins, problems, challenges, failures. I see that as the meaning in 1 Peter 5. In Christ, God declares us forgiven, rehabilitated, recovered from our flawed past.

In Christ, we are declared both redeemed and ready for Kingdom life. In Christ, we are declared forgiven and fixed. We focus on forgiveness. We too rapidly pass over and fail to appreciate God's fixing work. Because of Christ, shame does not define us, regret does not control us. Think of Peter. Poor Peter. He was so downhearted about denying Jesus, even after hope was declared certain by the resurrection, he went back to fishing. He probably doubted that restoration was possible for him. He was likely ashamed. Feeling disqualified. He decided he would just go back to his former life. Jesus restored him. Jesus recommissioned him. Mercy, grace, newness, made possible because of Jesus.

In Jesus is forgiveness – we are redeemed. But Peter's promise is equally sweet. In Jesus, we are restored! Forgiveness redeems, reclaiming us as God's own possession. Forgiveness remedies our past, empowering us anew for life in Christ.

Two important truths. Forgiveness pointing toward eternal life and forgiveness making us fit for kingdom life and work. I say it almost every week: "a word for life here, and a word for the life to come." Our word this week certain qualifies. Restored!