

## Getting it Right – Session Ten

### Rebooting During a Pandemic

Philippians 2-4; Romans 12: 1-2; Ephesians 4: 22-23

This week we are utilizing a new approach for our Bible study. Today's lesson is built upon an interview I did with David White about his e-book *Life is Whacked (Un-Whack It)*.

Click the link below to go to the interview:

<https://vimeo.com/449448841>

and use this link to go the e-book site (it's free!):

<https://jcbc.org/event/life-is-whacked/>

In the interview, we continue to focus on the balance between right belief and right living; orthodoxy and orthopraxis. Thus far we have dealt with issues of sin, scripture, how to listen more than speak, pride, humility, fear, forgiveness, how to live right when pretty much all else in life seems wrong and spiritual gifts. Today we will be looking at what a reboot might look like.

Rebooting is a rather new concept, or at least it is a unique addition to the computer era. It's amazing to have a technical issue with a computer or network and the first thing the technician asks is, "Have you rebooted it?" *Yep, got that out of the way first. Still doesn't work.* That said, it actually does work most of the time. A simple turning the power switch off and back on fixes whatever is wrong. Magic? Might as well be for a technology-unsophisticated like me. So, does rebooting work in other areas of life? Kinda, sorta, why not give it a go?

David White's e-book *Life is Whacked (Un-Whack It)* is a study of ways Christians can redesign their lives, which is a fancier, more literary-friendly way to say, "re-boot."

In an interview with David on the subject, I've noted these salient points on redesigning our lives in order to live as righteously as possible and to make the biggest difference possible to the Kingdom.

1. Any book that comes out during this pandemic begs the question “Why this book and why now?” The timing is good as more people will likely pay attention now than pre-pandemic times when we were still living on the proverbial treadmill. If people do pay attention a takeaway would be:

We must speak to God and then look inwardly to ask, “What today, for whom today and what this might look like?” We need to feel called. We need to see ourselves as integral to God’s work on any given day, so approach God and ask for opportunities.

As David says, “All people are a big bundle of human potential.” The key is to actually **want** to be used by God. If that “want” is there, then getting our marching orders is the easy part. We then need to feel “unleashed.”

“In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: *It is more blessed to give than receive*” (Acts 20:35)

“Not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others” (Philippians 2:4)

“Religion that God our father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after widows and orphans in their distress” (James 1:27)

2. David talks about Core Values versus Motivators. Core Values could include all that swirls around our dynamic center, in his words our *epicenter*, our *foundational center*, where the reality of all that is right and all that is wrong are dealt with. This is where we deal with the good versus the not-so-good in life and the choices we make. Core Values would be our beacon, our compass and what moves the needle (in both a good and not-so-good direction). Motivators are our very-inner-needs, habits, routines, beliefs (about ourselves, others and God) that can, and often do, hold us back. Paul would call this our “old selves,” our “former selves.”

The question is: “What are you/me/we trying to satisfy within ourselves with our present choices?”

To reboot is to deal with our deeply held ideas about life and about ourselves that tend to define us. Are we living scared? Are we living with the anchor of unrequited guilt strapped to us? Or are we living as overcomers, conquerors and people with spiritual power?

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship” (Romans 12:1-2).

“Do not deceive yourselves. If any of you think you are wise by the standards of this age, you should become ‘fools,’ so that you may become wise” (1 Corinthians 3:18)

“If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you” (James 1:5)

3. There is also a section on Normal versus Normalize. Lots of people are saying that normal will never be the same after this pandemic. This is probably true, but that’s as much up to us as it is fate, the common will of the people, or any pie-in-the-sky promises made now. If there was something in our former “normal” that needs to be booted, let’s boot it. If we were selfish and myopic before Coronavirus, then let’s pledge and commit to a true new normal. If we were on a spiritual high and roll in February and then the virus hit and we have been going downhill for a few months, reboot and determine that living right through spiritual power is exactly what we want to do.

Pandemic or not, that’s a choice we can make and control. Doing so would be an example of never ceding control of our lives to anyone else and living in covenant with God. It’s victorious, fearless living.

“Throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life which is corrupted by lust and deception. Instead let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes” (Ephesians 4:22-23)

4. We can choose to be less prideful when this is over. Is that important? Uh, yes, in every way possible. The less prideful we live the more we will notice and consider other people and their needs.

“Or do you think Scripture says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in you? But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: ‘God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble’” (James 4:5-6)

“Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will lift you up” (James 4:10)

“Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from His love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interest of the others” (Philippians 2:1-4)

5. And this fits the final piece of the interview and David’s e-book: Life can be simplified to a three-legged-stool signifying a life built upon God, others and ourselves. Note the order. A solid, balanced life (think not-wobbly stool) is built upon placing God first, ministry to other people second, ourselves third.

We have to be O.K. with ourselves to pull this off. Living in guilt and fear will not allow for a balanced life. Plus, we can live out our legacy in the here and now. We do not have to wait until we are dead until our legacy is pondered. Live it now. That’s very Biblical.

“I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:14)

“Whatever you have learned or received from me, or seen in me – put it into practice and the God of peace will be with you” (Philippians 4:9)

“It gave me great joy when some believers came and testified about your faithfulness to the truth, telling how you continue to walk in it. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth” (3 John 1:3-4)

So, what do we do with all this newfound energy?

Well, we can *UnWhack* a Whacked life, or choose your own vernacular, and take full stock of all that is swirling around our dynamic center, the place where our soul resides.

We can ask to be freed from the shackles of our past mistakes, our deeply held ideas about who we are and what we have made of our lives. Freedom is at our fingertips. Freedom to be the people God created us to be rather than the person we felt almost obliged to become.

We can live for God and subsequently for others (what today, for whom today, and what might this look like) and find complete, lasting fulfillment.

We can redesign normal for us. Normal will remain the same for the vast majority, but our “normal” can be a beacon for the eager average who settle easily and quickly. The average person slogging through life is not happy, not fulfilled and will die with regrets. We have the answer to that issue.

And maybe that’s it in a few words: Are you satisfied with how you’re living your life? If the answer is no, then a reboot and a re-embracing of our calling is in order.

None of us can live right if we live scared, or cling to the norm, or do not see God’s bigger picture.

And you know what they say? If you ***ain’t right-living, you ain’t living right.***

Put all of this together with using our spiritual gifts and we have a real shot at doing something really good for this messy, scared world. And I do believe that was God’s plan all along.

Amen and Amen

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