



Inside This Issue:

Page 2

Your Gift Will Go Twice As Far!

Thank You!

Finding Jesus...
available on Amazon

Page 3

*The Parable of the Dishonest
Manager*

Upcoming Events

Weekly Zoom HeartGroup

Page 4

October's Recommended
Reading

Page 5

Social Jesus blog

Page 6

Social Jesus Podcast

Page 7

Budget Thermometer

Page 8

Welcome to the NEW
RenewedHeartMinistries.com

RHM's Free Resources

RHM's Socials



Follow RHM!

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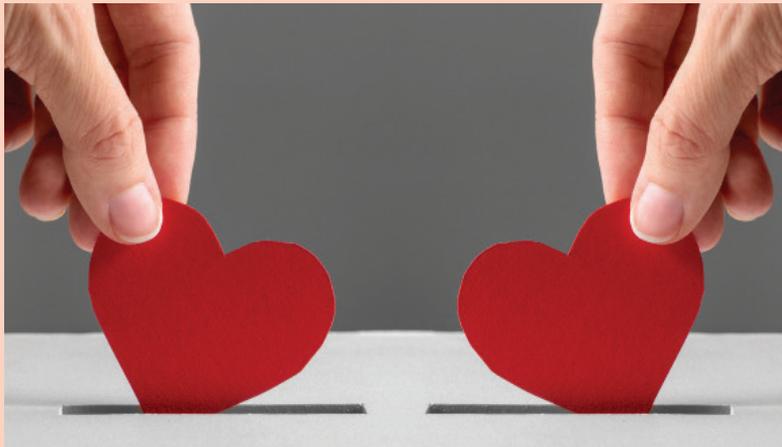
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Big News! Your Gift Will Go Twice as Far!

From now **through December 31st**, every dollar you donate to Renewed Heart Ministries will be **matched dollar for dollar!**

That means your support will have **double the impact** in helping us continue to educate, inspire, and work toward a more just world grounded in love and compassion as we follow Jesus together.

Whether it's \$5 or \$5,000, **your generosity will be doubled** thanks to a matching gift opportunity from generous supporters.

Give today and make twice the difference!

Go to renewedheartministries.com and click on “Donate.”

Or you can mail your support to:

Renewed Heart Ministries
PO Box 1211
Lewisburg, WV 24901

Thank you for being part of this work. Let's finish the year strong—together.



Thank You!

We want to take a moment to express our heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you who supports the work of Renewed Heart Ministries. Your generosity makes it possible for us to continue our mission of love, justice, and compassion—even in a time when ministries like ours are being called to do more with less.

Your support means the world to us. Whether we're speaking into the broader society or engaging within our faith communities, we remain committed to advocating for a world that is inclusive, just, and safe for all. Your partnership helps keep that vision alive.

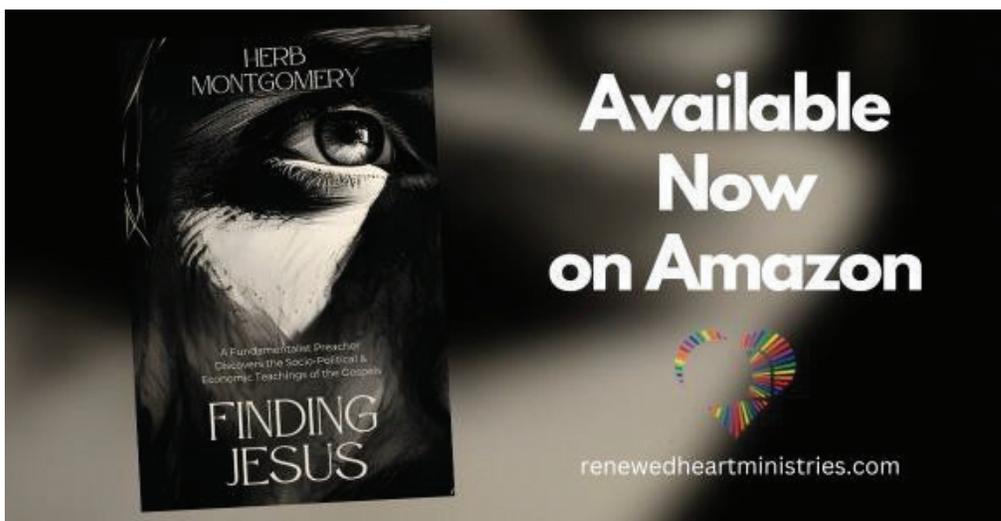
From all of us at Renewed Heart Ministries, **thank you.**

We are so deeply grateful for you—**we couldn't do this work without you.**

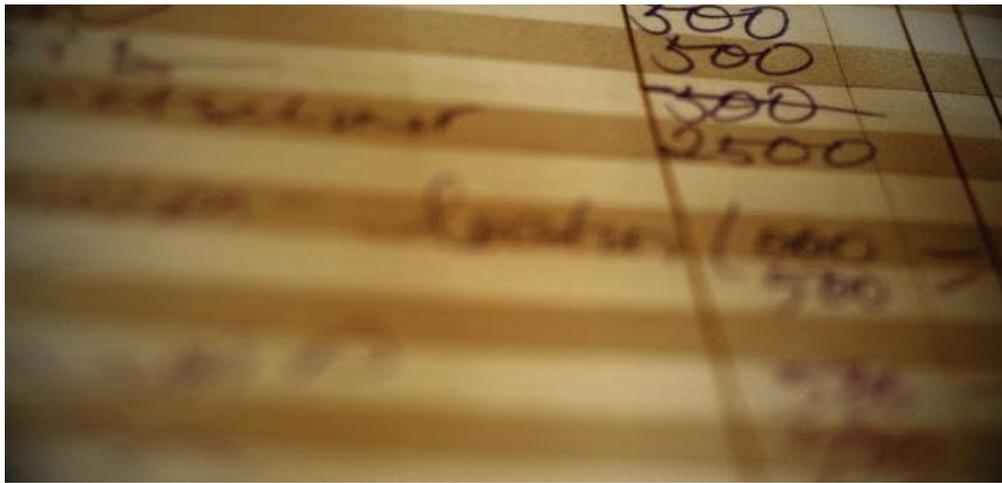
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Front cover artwork by Ali Montgomery.



The Parable of the Dishonest Manager

by Herb Montgomery

Our reading this month is from the gospel of Luke:

Then Jesus said to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. So he summoned him and said to him, ‘What is this that I hear about you? Give me an accounting of your management, because you cannot be my manager any longer.’ Then the manager said to himself, ‘What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. I have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes.’ So, summoning his master’s debtors one by one, he asked the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ He answered, ‘A hundred jugs of olive oil.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.’ Then he asked another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ He replied, ‘A hundred containers of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill and make it eighty.’ And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly; for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone, they may welcome you into the eternal homes.

“Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much; and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. If then you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, a who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? No slave can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.” (Luke 16:1-13)

Our story this week is one that scholars have offered multiple interpretations of. They have spiritualized the story, taken it literally, and sought to apply the story to our context today, but most interpretation give me the feeling that something is being left on the table. One interpretation I find most convincing is by William Herzog in his classic book, *Parables as Subversive Speech: Jesus as Pedagogue of the Oppressed*. Herzog looks at various parables from the gospels through the lens of the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire’s work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

With this lens, let’s begin with the context that the manager in this story would have found himself in. Losing his position as a steward and becoming a day laborer means he had fallen from the class of valued a into the ranks of the expendable poor. With only his physical strength to offer, the former steward would stand little chance against seasoned peasants or the surplus sons of village craftsmen who had long been part of the laboring class. Used to regular meals, he will also struggle with an inconsistent food supply and bouts of hunger. As his strength fades, he will eventually be reduced to begging and, like countless others, die from malnutrition and illness. His dismissal from his job as a steward isn’t a result of

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Upcoming Events

OCTOBER 18, 2025
Good News Fellowship
Toronto, Ontario Canada

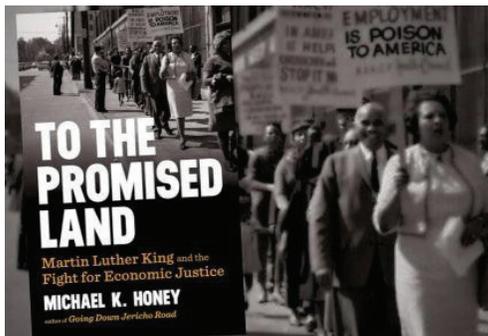
For info or Zoom link, email us at:
info@renewedheartministries.com
or call: 304.520.0030



Weekly HeartGroup on Zoom Every Wednesday Night!

Each Wednesday evening, Renewed Heart Ministries hosts a Zoom-HeartGroup led by Herb Montgomery. Our discussion each week will focus on the content in RHM’s weekly eSight articles and the *Social Jesus* podcast. The time of each Zoom session will be on Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. Pacific/10:00 p.m. Eastern.

To receive the link for the Zoom meeting, email us at:
info@renewedheartministries.com



October's Recommended Reading

To the Promised Land: Martin Luther King and the Fight for Economic Justice

by Michael K. Honey

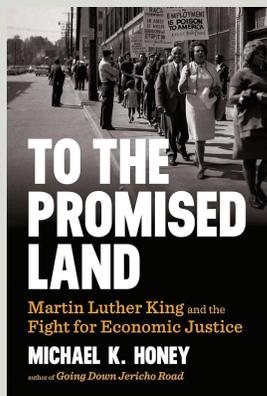
“This is a dangerous book.”
—Robin D. G. Kelley, author of *Freedom Dreams*

Fifty years ago, a single bullet robbed us of one of the world's most eloquent voices for human rights and justice.

To the Promised Land goes beyond the iconic view of Martin Luther King, Jr., as an advocate of racial harmony, to explore his profound commitment to the poor and working class and his call for “nonviolent resistance” to all forms of oppression, including the economic injustice that “takes necessities from the masses to give luxuries to the classes.”

“Either we go up together or we go down together,” King cautioned, a message just as urgent in America today as then. *To the Promised Land* challenges us to think about what it would mean to truly fulfill King's legacy and move toward his vision of “the

Promised Land” in our own time.



...*Dishonest Manager* continued from page 3

refusing honest work; it's effectively a death sentence (see William R. Herzog II, *Parables as Subversive Speech: Jesus as Pedagogue of the Oppressed*, p. 347).

So the manager comes up with a creative solution:

“The rich man expects that the steward will take his honest graft, but he does not care as long as the steward does his job, produces the expected profits, and keeps the peasants under control. The steward always has to balance his greed against its consequences. He will do well, but he cannot become conspicuous in his consumption. One possible meaning of the verb *diaskorpizōn*, translated as “wasting,” is “scattering,” or “dispersing”...Thus the steward may have indulged in forms of status display and conspicuous consumption inappropriate to his social standing. If he had been accumulating too much and spending it in ways that caused a stir, he could have set himself up for his fall. To engage in this behavior is to dishonor his patron by taking advantage of his position and competing with the master rather than acknowledging his own subservient and dependent position.” (William R. Herzog II, *Parables as Subversive Speech: Jesus as Pedagogue of the Oppressed*, p. 361)

So what the manager decides to do is adjust the debts of those indebted to his patron and subtract whatever amount was accounted for his own graft, the manager's profit. The manager is using what Herzog refers to as the weapons of the weak: Peasant resistance and revolt could also take everyday forms such as dissimulation, false compliance, looting, feigned ignorance, slander, arson, sabotage and more. Because one class is virtually powerless, they have to find ways of resisting their oppressors that don't subject them to the dangers of open revolt. This is what we see happening in our reading this week: The manager is exposing the system and betraying the graft built into the system.

continued on page 6



Social Jesus

Recent Social Jesus Blog Posts on Patheos:



Justice Today or a Great Reversal Tomorrow (Part 1 of *The Rich Man, Lazarus and Justice*)

This story uses the then-popular belief of a great reversal coming to all in the afterlife, connected to the justice we practiced now.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/09/justice-today-great-reversal-tomorrow/



Economic Justice and the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus

(Part 2 of *The Rich Man, Lazarus and Justice*)

Details of this story also offer a powerful message about economic justice, critiquing wealth inequality and disregard of the poor.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/09/economic-justice-parable-rich-man-lazarus/

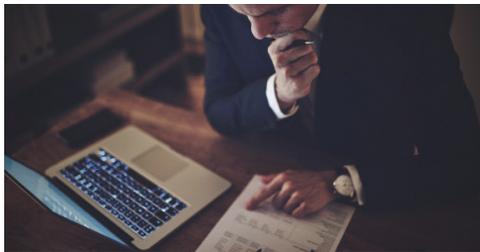


While Lazarus Starves: A Gospel of Economic Injustice

(Part 3 of *The Rich Man, Lazarus and Justice*)

The Lazarus story doesn't ask us to care about our experience in an afterlife, but what kind of human do we want to be today.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/09/lazarus-starves-gospel-economic-justice/



Wealth Redistribution in the Gospels

(Part 1 of *The Parable of the Dishonest Manager*)

Spiritualized this story of wealth redistribution gives off the impression that something is intentionally missing.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/09/wealth-redistribution-gospels/



The Dishonest Manager and the Tools of the Powerless

(Part 2 of *The Parable of the Dishonest Manager*)

The manager is using a weapon of the powerless. They must find ways to resist that don't subject them to the dangers of open revolt.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/09/dishonest-manager-tools-powerless/



Community Through Redistribution of Wealth

(Part 3 of *The Parable of the Dishonest Manager*)

This was a community built through redistribution of wealth. It was about forging bonds through shared resources and mutual aid.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/09/community-through-redistribution-wealth/



The Lost Sheep Metaphor in a Fragmented Society

(Part 1 of *Sheep, Coins, and a Preferential Option for the Marginalized*)

It can lead to the marginalization of those who are different all while absolving the perpetrators of responsibility.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/09/lost-sheep/



A Lost Sheep, A Lost Coin, Lost Justice

(Part 2 of *Sheep, Coins, and a Preferential Option for the Marginalized*)

The lost sheep and the lost coin both challenge the notion that social justice can be achieved without addressing the root causes.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/09/lost-sheep-lost-coin-lost-justice/



A Preferential Option for Justice

(Part 3 of *Sheep, Coins, and a Preferential Option for the Marginalized*)

In contrast, the lens of a preferential option for the marginalized provides a nuance that prioritizes those who in need of justice.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/09/preferential-option-justice/



The Social Jesus Podcast

A podcast where we talk about the intersection of faith and social justice, and what a first-century, Jewish, prophet of the poor from Galilee offers us today in our work of love, compassion and justice.

Find The Social Jesus Podcast at:
<https://the-social-jesus-podcast.simplecast.com/>



Listen & Subscribe



...Dishonest Manager continued from page 4

“He reduces the contracts held by the debtors. Assuming a Jewish setting, the reductions represent the difference between the ostensible value of the contract and the hidden interest contained in it. The hidden interest on oil is 50 percent because oil is a commodity susceptible to adulteration and therefore less secure. The interest rate on wheat is lower (20 percent) because the commodity is easier to assess.” (William R. Herzog II, *Parables as Subversive Speech: Jesus as Pedagogue of the Oppressed*, p. 366)

The indebted merchants begin to talk among themselves and realized the advantage they’ve gained, something the steward likely claimed credit for. By agreeing to the reduced contracts, they’ve put themselves in the steward’s debt and will owe him a favor in return. In public, however, they will only express gratitude and admiration to their noble and generous patron. When they do, the patron faces a choice: he can accept their praise and keep the steward in his position with the newly negotiated amounts, or he can reject the revised agreements and turn the steward into a martyr.

With these moves, the steward reminds the master of his skill. He is responsible for the master’s accumulation of wealth. I’m not convinced that giving the steward temporary housing is the real goal here. It would only have been a temporary solution. What the steward is aiming for is to preserve his position. To preserve his social status, the master needs a steward who is willing to engage in these kinds of practices, and the steward has done that. Whatever faults he may have, he’s not lazy about looking after the master’s concerns. By his actions, therefore, the steward reminds the master of his value (see William R. Herzog II, *Parables as Subversive Speech: Jesus as Pedagogue of the Oppressed*, p. 369).

The author of Luke’s gospel takes this story from Jesus and applies another narrative lesson: “Make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone, they may welcome you into the eternal homes.” Again, I’m not convinced that housing was the steward’s goal in the story, but I can see how it could have been the point of Luke’s gospel. Using wealth created by taking “necessities from the masses to give luxury to the classes” and then using that wealth to create relationships for the kingdom would fit the tactics of the early Jesus movement. This is one of the central themes of the book of Luke as well as its companion book of Acts:

Sell your possessions, and give them to the poor. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Luke 12:33-34)

All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. (Acts 2:44-45)

There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need. (Acts 4:34-35)

The early Jesus movement built community through what was called ‘dishonest wealth.’ It was about forging bonds through shared resources and mutual aid. Even now, this parable whispers through time, urging us to transform the riches of the few into a wealth shared by all, to redistribute wealth not to the few, but for the good of all, and to create a robust common wealth rooted in compassionate, empathetic care for everyone’s needs.

Discussion Group Questions

1. Share something that spoke to you from this week’s podcast episode with your discussion group.
2. What “tools of the powerless” do you use in your own justice work today? Share and discuss with your group
3. What can you do this week, big or small, to continue setting in motion the work of shaping our world into a safe, compassionate, just home for everyone?

Thanks for checking in with us today.

continued on page 7

The work of helping people find life-giving ways to live out their faith through love, compassion, and justice are needed now more than ever. At Renewed Heart Ministries, we provide resources of faith and healing with the aim of renewing hope and inspiring action as we allow the Jesus story to inform each of us as we work together to shape our world into a compassionate, just and safe home for everyone.



Renewed Heart Ministries is a 501(c)3, grassroots ministry on the margins that prioritizes the needs of marginalized communities, especially those who have been the recipients of misinformed, faith-based harm. Your support enables us to be a life-giving, healing light in our faith communities and continue to be a voice for desperately needed change.

You get to decide what shape our faith communities take and what voices get to be heard.

You can support Renewed Heart Ministries with a one-time gift or by becoming one of our monthly contributors. Your donation can be made online at: renewedheartministries.com or by mail at:

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**Whether you give \$5 or \$5,000,
every amount helps us to continue our work.**

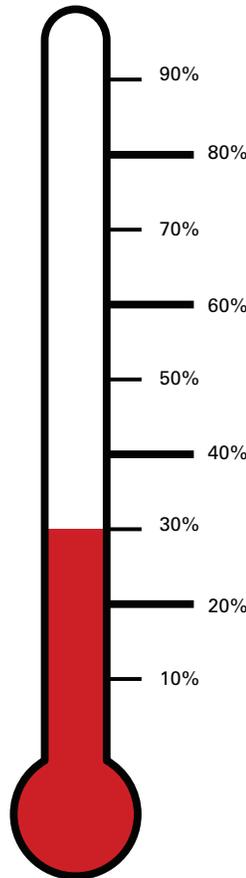
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And **THANK YOU** for reading, listening to, sharing and supporting RHM's work. Thank you for the decisions you make every day to make our world a safer, compassionate, just home for everyone. Thank you for your dedication to engaging our world and the care you demonstrate, and for being such an important part of our community.

2025 Projected Budget Goal:
\$150,000.00

YTD Donations Received:
\$45,920.02

Thank You!



...Dishonest Manager continued from page 6

I want to say a special thank you to all of our supporters out there. And if you would like to join them in supporting Renewed Heart Ministries' work you can do so by going to renewedheartministries.com and clicking donate.

My latest book *Finding Jesus: A Fundamentalist Preacher Discovers the Socio-Political and Economic Teachings of the Gospels* is available now on Amazon in paperback, Kindle and also on Audible in audio book format.

As always, you can find Renewed Heart Ministries each week on Bluesky, Facebook, Instagram and Meta's Threads. If you haven't done so already, please follow us on your chosen social media platforms for our daily posts.

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If you'd like to reach us here at Renewed Heart Ministries through email, you can reach us at info@renewedheartministries.com.

Right where you are, keep living in love, choosing compassion, taking action, and working toward justice. ■



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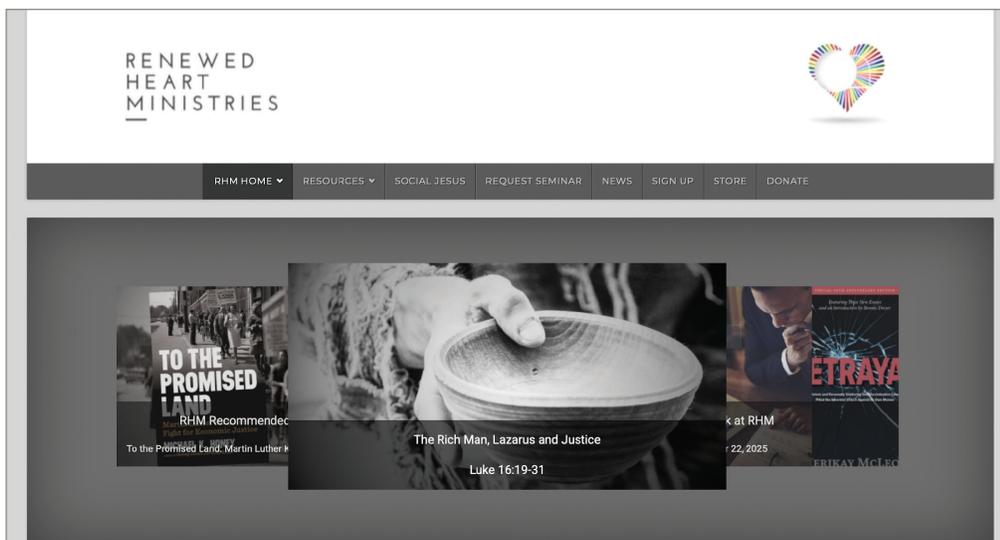
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Welcome to the *NEW* RenewedHeartMinistries.com!

We're excited to share that **Renewed Heart Ministries** has a brand-new look online!

Our updated website is designed to better serve you—our community of justice-seekers, peace-makers, and Jesus followers. We've made some important changes to help you more easily access our resources, teachings, and tools for social justice rooted in the teachings of Jesus.

Here's what's new:

- » A cleaner, more modern design
- » Improved navigation to help you find what you need faster
- » Mobile-friendly experience for learning on the go
- » Updated resources and content
- » A more intuitive layout for blogs, podcasts, and teaching materials

Whether you're looking for our latest podcast, exploring our library of articles, or just discovering who we are, we hope this refreshed space will be a helpful and welcoming place for you.

Visit us at RenewedHeartMinistries.com and take a look around.

And if you like what you see (or have suggestions), we'd love to hear from you!

Thank you for continuing to journey with us as we work for a world shaped by love, justice, and compassion.

“It will be the task of our generation, not to ‘seek great things,’ but to save and preserve our souls out of the chaos, and to realize that is the only thing we can carry as a ‘prize’ from the burning building.”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer
Letters and Papers from Prison p. 158