

****Bumper Video –**

Title

Greeting

Welcome to the Final week of our Orthodoxy Orthopraxy series.

We need a correct belief – that's **Orthodoxy**

We need a correct action – that's **Orthopraxy**

What kind of Church is this?

We want to be the same original Church that we read about in the Book of Acts.

We have the same **MISSION**

To declare the good news of Jesus and see others become followers of Christ.

We will do this by having the same beliefs and actions of the 1st Century Church.

Our **Vision** is to be a 1st Century Church that connects with the 21st Century World.

When we look into the book of Acts we see values that show up over and over in the lives of 1st Century Christians. We want to live out these **6 values**.

1. Jesus Centered
2. Spiritual Transformation
3. Community

4. Mission
5. Connecting with Culture
6. Willingness

We want you to join us on this exciting mission. We want you to bring your passion, your ideas, your energy and talents into this vision. We want the same result that the book of Acts church had – They changed the world!

That was your quick review... Now I'd like to talk to you about Toothpaste...

When you go down the toothpaste aisle at your local grocery store it can be overwhelming. There is a wall of toothpaste brands and products. Most toothpaste brands carry multiple products... Like Crest for example...

Although the product is simple the makers have never stopped coming out with new innovations and improvements. The makers of your toothpaste want you to try their latest line of product. They really believe that they can improve the product.

If there is going to be a breakthrough in dental care, Crest wants you to know that they are the ones who are going to find that breakthrough.

Products are constantly being marketed as **New & Improved** & 9 out of 10 dentists agree

If something as simple as toothpaste can be improved... then might there be some things in your life that can be improved? Could there be some things in God's Church that could be New and Improved?

Something for you to think about... but first... Let's talk about God.

God is not a product. He is not made or assembled. He has no beginning or end.

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.(NIV)

Revelation 1:8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."(NIV)

Acts 17:29 ...we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone--an image made by man's design and skill.

God is the Maker. Not a product.

Psalms 95:6 Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker;(NIV)

Colossians 1:16 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.(NIV)

Colossians 1:17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.(NIV)

Since God is not a product this might be His strange Ad Slogan.

Not New and Not Improved

He is the Ancient One. He is called the Ancient of Days

Micah 5:2 "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."(NIV)

God is not a new product! He is the Ancient maker of everyone. He is **Not New and Not Improved**

You can't improve God. He is perfect and complete all on His own.

You can't add anything to God to improve Him.

What can you add to His power? He is already all powerful!

What can you add to His love? It's already perfect and unconditional!

What can you add to the stripes of Jesus? They are all you need for healing!

What ingredient can be added to His grace and Mercy? His Forgiveness extends to everyone.

You can't improve His reach! He's got the whole world in His hand.

He is not lacking knowledge or understanding. He knows everything and He understands your pain... worry... anger

He isn't a product that can be improved! He is maker of Heaven and Earth!

Have you been trying to add something to God?

Have you been trying to add your works to earn His love? You can't improve His love.

Have you been trying to feel bad or sorry enough? Been trying to cry enough tears so that He will forgive you? He will forgive you every time you ask.

Have you been trying to worship Him with just enough passion, exuberance, solemnness, or volume to gain His favor or attention? You are not understanding His love for you.

Have you been trying to be Holy enough for you to somehow unlock His power? Do you not get that when He places His Holy Spirit inside you have all the power you could ever need?

You can't improve God! He isn't a product – He is Maker!

You can't add anything – He makes everything and holds it all together.

Jesus + nothing = everything

God is **Not New and Not Improved**

Truth is also Not new and Not improved.

Be careful if someone comes to you saying they have a new and better truth.

Truth is not suddenly created... Truth can be discovered and God can reveal it... But it isn't new.

You might have a clearer understanding and be able to better articulate truth... but it isn't new.

Truth isn't new! It's ancient. Truth doesn't evolve... Our understanding of truth can change but truth itself doesn't change.

The Truth the Apostles preached wasn't new... it was new to the people that heard it... But the Truth they preached had been around since the creation of the world.

Revelation 13:8 ...the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world.

How old is truth? It's older than the creation of the world.

What you are doing today is ancient.

We may have sung a brand new song today... But we were practicing the same ancient truth that King David did. He sang unto the lord, he made music to the Lord, he danced before the lord, he wept before the Lord. When you worship you are practicing the Ancient Truth.

You may have heard a brand new sermon today... But by hearing the Word of God you were practicing the ancient truth of receiving the word of God. Jews and Gentiles alike would gather together and encourage themselves and receive direction from the Word of God. When you receive the Word of God you are practicing the Ancient Truth.

You may bring a new prayer to God today... you may surrender brand new things today... But by coming to talk to God today you will be practicing something ancient. The God who Abraham talked to, who Moses talked to, who the prophets spoke to and the new testament believers talked to... will also hear your prayer today. When you talk to God today you are practicing the Ancient Truth.

We believe Church should be a place where the Ancient and the New come together. This is why our vision is to be a 1st Century Church connecting to a 21st century World.

You use toothpaste, but that's nothing new... so did your parents... it wasn't new to them either... for centuries people have been using a scrubbing paste to clean their teeth. The purpose is the same... the actions are the same... yet Crest has still found a way to do something new with something old.

Here is how your great grandparents cleaned their teeth...

A little baking soda... a little water, and a brush...

Dis you use baking soda and a little water this morning to clean your teeth? That's probably what your great grandparents used... So why don't you use that...? Why do you use this modern paste in a tube?

You use it because it accomplishes the same ancient need for cleaning teeth... but it also suites your taste better with a minty fresh flavor, it looks a little appealing to you visually, and because it is more readily available and easier to receive. This paste in a can fits your life.

All the tweaks and improvements that Crest has made didn't change the purpose of the toothpaste...

Churches over the last half century have had wars over the Ancient and the New. Churches have split over the choice to use ancient hymns or new contemporary worship even though the purpose is the same.

Stained glass cathedrals or modern church buildings? They serve the same purpose..

Candle light or special theatrical lighting? As long as God is receiving Glory... what's the big deal?

God and His Truth is Ancient – **Not New and unimproved**

But style preference, musical tastes, and technological options don't have to be Not New and Unimproved.

The Ancient of Days like new things...

Psalm 96:1 Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.(NIV)

Isaiah 43:18 "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past.(NIV)

Isaiah 43:19 See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland.(NIV)

There are those out there who think God really isn't being worshipped unless it is done in a liturgical setting, with a choir and a pipe organ, with a minister wearing a robe, and in a stained glass cathedral.

And there are those out there who think God really isn't being worshipped unless it is done in a contemporary setting, with a rock and roll band, and a

minister with tattoos and skinny jeans, and in a theater setting with a big stage.

And of course... these 2 types will demonize each other... The traditional will say of the contemporary that they are lacking reverence for God. The contemporary will say of the traditionalist that they aren't really worshipping with their heart but are stuck in their traditions.

The power isn't in the ancient. The fact that other people sang to the Lord 2000 years ago doesn't bring power. People are not healed or saved because we are doing the old traditional things...

The power isn't in the new. The fact that people are gathered in a 21st century building with new songs and current styles doesn't bring power. The lives of people aren't transformed because of the new things they are doing.

The Power comes from God... regardless of new or ancient style.

The power comes from God being on the inside of you!

Ephesians 3:20 Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,(NIV)

That's where the power comes from. Let's not argue over the old way and the new way... That's like arguing over toothpaste...

Instead let's be filled with the Spirit... Just like the church in the book of Acts. Let's be passionate worshippers. Let's be people of the Word and people of prayer. That's where the power is!

We refuse to get into an Old vs New war... a traditional vs contemporary battle... Those wars are petty and kinda dumb... However...

At Redemption we want to be a Church that connects to the culture of today...

We don't play many 15th century hymns. We have nothing against them or people that like them... But we would wager to guess you were not rocking 15th Century Hymns in your car...

We want our music and how we choose to worship, to connect with the culture of today.

We dress pretty relaxed and comfortable here. We have nothing against fancier dress, but we don't want people to think they need to wear a suit to come to Jesus.

We want how we live out faith to connect with the culture of today.

We want our ministry of the Ancient Truth to impact a modern culture. That means we will not compromise TRUTH but that we will deliberately look for new and improved ways to connect with culture.

God is not New and not Improved. But You can be new & improved... His church can be new & improved.

MUSICIAN

I asked this question at the beginning of this sermon...

If something as simple as toothpaste can be improved... then might there be some things in your life that can be improved? Could there be some things in God's Church that could be New and Improved?

We will be talking to God very soon.

I want you to think about your life... is there an area you know right now needs to improve? Do you believe God can bring a breakthrough to your life right now? Have you been filled with the Holy Spirit? Do you have that power working inside you? Do you know that today?

If you aren't sure of any of that you need to come receive prayer in the first 2 feet of this altar today. We want to see your life improve but it is up to you to come. That same ancient power can fill your life today.

If you know you are filled with the Holy Spirit and that God's power is at work inside of you, then I want you to come pray for your city and your church today. Because we as a church need to improve. We are sitting in this nice comfortable sanctuary and there are too many empty seats... there so many hurting, confused, and lost people in this city... some of your friends.

Come pray that Redemption Church will be new and improved today. That we will have a fresh move of God's Spirit and that we will reach our city better than we ever have.