Welcome back to our **REBOOT** sermon series.

 “Reboot” is a computer term, and as a computer engineer I am very familiar. I recently had to “reboot.”

\*Shoe Story\*

When you notice that you might be a problem , or you notice that something is going wrong you can ignore it and see if it gets worse, you can try to patch it up and keep going,
or you can start over and commit to fixing it. Sometimes that is the only way to solve the problem.

Sometimes we all need a reboot.

Usually we hear this type of message at the beginning of a new year, when everyone is thinking about New Year’s resolutions and making a new start. But if you’re aware of a problem, why wait to fix it?

You can start fixing the problem right now.
How silly would it be if my house was on fire, but “Fireman’s Day” was coming up in a few weeks…
So I’ll just wait until then to call 911.

That would be ridiculously stupid. But I did something similar. \*Tire Story\*

Don’t be like me. If you have a problem, or you know you need to make a change in some area of your life, don’t wait for New Years. Do it today. Reboot now.

Make a plan to get healthy. Make a budget. If you can make some progress by the start of 2017 then you will really have a Happy New Year.

If you need help making a plan, or you have questions, please feel free to contact us. You can use our **Anonymous Text Line 214-856-0550**

So far in this series we have talked about rebooting our health. Pastor Chris told us about his efforts to get healthier and avoid the cake guy at his gym. And we have talked a little about rebooting our finances.

But today I want to talk about another area of our lives that sometimes needs to be rebooted:

**RELATIONSHIPS**

Show of hands, who here is in a relationship? Everyone should have their hands up, because we are all in relationships other people in our lives. We might jump to thinking of girlfriend, boyfriend, husband, wife relationships, but you have a relationship with your parents, or your children, your friends, your coworkers, your Starbucks barista. Many of you have a relationship with me as a Pastor or a friend. Any time we interact with other people we start to establish a relationship, and we participate in many different relationships throughout our life. Some are short, some last a long time, but we should want any relationship to be as healthy as possible.

Relationships are formed between people, and people change over time. So it is only natural that our relationships with others can change over time. The way a 5 year old relates to their parents is very different from the way a 30 year old relates to their parents.

There are currently 11 “relationship statuses” available on Facebook. Relationships can be healthy and positive, or they can be unhealthy and dysfunctional. Sometimes our relationships with others can become damaged.

This month we came through a very contentious presidential election, and just this week many families gathered together for Thanksgiving. I’m willing to bet that many people are experiencing damaged relationships. Hopefully none of you, but many people are dealing with relationships that have been damaged.

At other times relationships can just get weaker from neglect. This can happen in marriages and in families just like it can happen between friends that drift apart. If these relationships aren’t strengthened and maintained, they can eventually die.

The closer a person is to us – a spouse, a family member, a close friend – the more we need to strengthen that relationship and keep it healthy. When we realize that an important relationship in our life has been damaged, or has become weak or unhealthy, we need to do something about it. A damaged or a weakened relationship is a problem, and we need to take steps to solve it. We may need a reboot.

**REBOOT YOUR RELATIONSHIP**

First, a couple disclaimers:
Now, I’m not a relationship expert. I have been married for 5 whole years, so there’s that. But I’m no Dr. Phil. This is just some common-sense advice for how you can attempt to reset and repair a relationship.

Also, a relationship involves multiple people. You can do your best to reboot your relationship, but if the other person doesn’t also work to restore the relationship it may not work. So I cannot give you a 100% money back guarantee that this will succeed in restoring your relationship with someone, but it should improve the situation.

Finally, it takes time to build a relationship, so it will take time to rebuild a relationship. Be patient, you’re not going to be able to fix a broken relationship over night.

Rebooting a relationship doesn’t mean you act like you’ve never met before. But in a way, you want to get a fresh start, so you could almost treat it like you are forming a new relationship.

With that, here’s my easy four-step guide.

**LISTEN, TALK, CONFESS, FORGIVE**

Alright, rebooting a relationship isn’t really an easy four-step process, but these four areas (plus two more on the next two slides) will give you a good starting point.

Listen – It’s hard to have a relationship if you won’t listen to the other person. Even if you know what they are going to say and you can recite it word for word, listen as if you’re hearing it for the first time. Listen and try to hear something new; try to hear what they are really saying. Keep listening. If you want to restore a relationship with someone you should care what they have to say.

Talk – Again, relationships are built on communication. If appropriate, tell them you want to repair your relationship. (That isn’t always a good idea.) Tell them things that you’ve left unsaid for a while. You’re establishing a new relationship so say nice things even if you think they already know. “I love you.” “I appreciate you doing that.” “Thank you.” “I like the way you …” And don’t just say them, say things you mean. You’re not trying to butter them up. You’re trying to communicate your feelings in a way that will build your relationship. And it is okay to express negative feelings, if you try to express them with love: “It hurts my feelings when you say that.”

Confess – “I’m sorry.” That’s another good thing to say. Admit when you’re wrong. Don’t wait for them to apologize to you – you’re making a new start, so you make the first move. When it’s appropriate and possible, do what you can to “make it right.” Apologize and ask them to forgive you.

Forgive – This is a big one. If you want to reboot your relationship and make a new start, you need to be able to let go of ways they have hurt you in the past. This doesn’t mean you have to forget and act like it never happened, but you need to stop holding it against them. Stop seeking payback.
What if they don’t apologize or ask for forgiveness? Forgive them before they ask. Forgiving is about you letting go, regardless of what they do.
Be prepared to forgive them multiple times. Forgive them even if you forgave them before and they hurt you again. Jesus said we should forgive them 70x7 times, but the Bible also said we should keep no record of wrongs, so if you can tell when you’ve forgiven them 490 times without keeping a record, then you can quit.
Just kidding, keep going.

**SPEND TIME**

It takes time to establish or re-establish a relationship. So, you’re going to have to set aside time for it. Make it a priority. Plan to spend time with the person. But also include them in the planning, be considerate of their time as well.

**RESET EXPECTATIONS**

Re-examine the expectations you have for this person. It is okay to have expectations in a relationship. Your boss has expectations for you, and you have expectations for them. But it is beneficial to have those expectations clearly expressed, so that everyone is on the same page. Again, you may think they know what you expect, but you’re rebooting the relationship, so you should communicate it to them to make sure they know.

But in relationships with friends and family members it is better, whenever possible, to get rid of your expectations. In the past, we have talked about how expectations rob us of love. You don’t appreciate the things people do if you expect them to do it. And other people’s expectations can leave you feeling unappreciated and unloved. Expectations can turn a relationship into more of a contract, and something that is set in stone isn’t alive.

So that should give you some places to start if you want to reboot an important relationship in your life.

Now let me ask you a few questions:
What is the most important relationship in your life?
Is it with your parents, your children, your spouse?
Does it change over time? – in different phases of a person’s life?

What is the most important relationship in your life right now?

The most important relationship in your life is your relationship with God.

Did you realize you have a relationship with God?

**HOW DO YOU RELATE TO GOD?**

Think about it. How do YOU relate to God?
Do you relate to Him like Santa Clause?
Do you relate to Him like an elderly relative you visit on the weekends?
Do you relate to Him like a college roommate that you used to be very close with?
Maybe you don’t feel like you have a relationship with Him. (If so, He does want a relationship with you.)

The best answer might be, “He is my everything.” But even that isn’t good enough, because your everything isn’t big enough to encompass all that God is.

Whatever your relationship with God may be, it isn’t complete. There’s always more. And if your relationship with God has become weaker over time, or it has been damaged. Even if your relationship with God has been static for a while, you can reboot your relationship with God.

**REBOOT YOUR RELATIONSHIP**

God frequently reboots His relationship with people. Look at His relationships with humanity throughout the Bible: Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses & the wilderness, Israel’s kings, Jesus, Holy Spirit

We talk about a progressive revelation of God, but that’s not just throughout history each of us receives a progressive revelation of who God is. Each of us has a progressively developing relationship with God.

We each have a relationship with God. And at times that relationship can become damaged.
Who damages it? We do. It’s not God. If our relationship becomes damaged or weak, we did it.

Even if we become complacent, and we feel like our relationship with God is “good enough,” and our relationship with God becomes a routine… That’s not a healthy relationship.

**REVELATION 2:4 NKJV** Nevertheless I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love.

In all these situations we need to reboot our relationship with God.

**LISTEN, TALK, CONFESS, FORGIVE**

Listen – Read His Word. Listen for His voice.

Talk – Pray, talk to God. Let Him know you want to renew your relationship with Him. And as you pray, listen for His response. Press in toward God.

Confess – Admit that your relationship has become damaged. Confess how you have wandered away. Repentence.

**1 JOHN 1:9 NIV** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Repentance is a way to reboot your relationship. You turn away from the sin that you realize has damaged your relationship, and you make a new start by turning back to God.

Forgive – Do you realize you can forgive God? Forgiveness is about us letting go; sometimes you can hold something against God and you need to let it go.
Moreover, by forgiving others we can become more like God, and grow closer to Him.

**SPEND TIME**

You have to spend time with God. But isn’t God always with us? Yes, but just as a married couple can live in the same house and rarely interact, we can ignore God. We need to spend time focusing on God.
We need to set aside time to be spent focusing on God. Set aside a specific time for prayer. Set aside time to read the Bible. It takes planning. It takes intentional actions.

Originally God commanded that people set aside one day a week to focus on Him. But people became more focused on what they should not be doing on that, rather than what they should. We still need to take time to rest, remove distractions, and focus on God.

Fasting can also be a part of rebooting our relationship with God. When we fast we’re refocusing on our need for God, even beyond our most basic biological needs. It’s not about depriving ourselves; it’s about remembering the priority God has in our life, and focusing on Him rather than our day to day needs.

**RESET EXPECTATIONS**

What do you expect from God?
What does God expect from you?

With God, we should always expect to be surprised.

**ISAIAH 43:18-19 NIV** Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. 19 See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.

Sometimes we think we know what God is up to, but He always has a way of surprising us.

\*$5 Demonstration\* - **TECH NOTE:** Roll up the screens when I tell the volunteer to go.

**ISAIAH 42:15 NIV** I will lay waste the mountains and hills and dry up all their vegetation; I will turn rivers into islands and dry up the pools.

**ISAIAH 42:16 NIV** I will lead the blind by ways they have not known, along unfamiliar paths I will guide them;
I will turn the darkness into light before them and make the rough places smooth. These are the things I will do; I will not forsake them.

\*Finish Demonstration\*

**JOHN 9:39 NIV** And Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind.”

**JOHN 9:40 NIV** Then some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, “Are we blind also?”

**JOHN 9:41 NIV** Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, ‘We see.’ Therefore your sin remains.

What would you tell Jesus? Can you see or are you blind?

We are blind. We have to trust in God to lead us.

Sometimes we think we can see what God is doing, we think we understand the plan, often we don’t.

And we can waste a lot of time and energy trying to stick to what we think the plan is, or should be. \*\*

**PROVERBS 19:21 NIV** Many are the plans in a man’s heart, but it is the Lord’s purpose that prevails.

That’s not to say we shouldn’t make plans. The second message in this series was all about making plans.
Plans are useful, and sometimes necessary. But don’t be upset if God interrupts your plans.

**RESET EXPECTATIONS**

God often does unexpected things. New things, new opportunities to grow in our faith frequently spring up in our life. God is leading us by a path we cannot see, and it will take us to some unexpected places. \*\*

Don’t miss those opportunities to grow in your faith. Don’t turn them down or pass them by because they are new or unexpected. If we stick to our old expectations for God we will miss the new things he is doing.

**REBOOT YOUR RELATIONSHIP**

We often need to reboot our relationship with God. Even when we are walking with Him, we sometimes need a reset. We can wander away, and we need to repent and turn back to Him. We sometimes need a renewal. We pray, Lord, renew a right spirit within me. His Holy Spirit reboots our whole life. But even after we have received His Spirit, we can still pray that He would renew that Spirit within us, so that it can overflow into the world around us and the lives of the people around us.

Don’t be afraid if He is leading you into unfamiliar territory. Trust in Him. Our relationship with God is the most important relationship in our life. We need to follow Him where He is leading us. Do not abandon your first love. And if you have fallen away from God, if your relationship with Him has become weakened or damaged, REBOOT! You can always turn back to Him and start over. He is always eager to renew His relationship with you.

And when that relationship is strong, it blesses everything else.

**MATTHEW 6:33 NIV** But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

If you want to repair your relationship with someone else, turn to God first.
If you want to reboot your health or your finances, turn to God first.
Lift these things up to God in prayer, and let your relationship with God direct how you approach these other areas.

Behold, God is doing a new thing. Do you not perceive it?
Don’t wait. Today is the day. Renew your relationship with God. Take steps to grow in your faith.

At the end of service every week we open up the front of the church and invite everyone to come forward and spend some time in prayer. Take a step today to grow in your relationship with God. Talk to Him.
If you don’t have a relationship with Jesus, please start one.
Pray for your relationships. How can you reflect Christ into those relationships?
Ask how you can renew your relationship with Him.
Ask Him to help you recognize the new things He is doing.
Pray for courage and boldness as He leads you into new areas.