

A New Thing

How many of you are ready for something new in your life? Me too! It is rare to find a person who is completely happy with every area of their lives. In fact, a new year just started and this is the time when people resolve to change.

It's January 8th so we have had a full week already.....be honest, how many of you have already blown a new year's resolution? I noticed many gym parking lots are starting to thin out already.

Most of you have heard me preach about resolutions, they are not necessarily wrong but the problem with them is motivation, especially staying motivated. We resolve to change because we are tired of the way things are.

I don't want to be overweight, I want to be able to wear my favorite pants and shirts so I resolve (determine, come to a definite decision about) to lose weight. That's cool....but how? "Well I'm going to eat healthier and exercise regularly."

Why does this tend to fail time and time again? It's because I like pizza and cheeseburgers and I don't like to exercise. Ultimately I WANT to eat what I want and do nothing yet not gain any weight.....like when I was in my teens!

Besides motivation, the other issue is that YOU are determining that you are going to do something that YOU may not have the willpower to actually follow through with. Even though you have resolved to do something that is good for you.....you just can't. Aren't we missing something here? How about um....Jesus?

What about instead of just resolving to do something in our own strength, and change something that we may not be able to, we surrender to Christ? That's what we need, fewer resolutions and more surrender! On the radio I heard them say we should resolve to surrender more to God this year. Now that is a resolution I could back, but you still need the work of the Holy Spirit to even do THAT!

Listen, God wants to do a new thing.....in your life, in your family, in your job, in your school, in this church, and in this community. It's going to take surrender. If you surrender, God will do a new thing!

Isaiah 43:16-19 (NKJV)

16 Thus says the Lord, who makes a way in the sea
And a path through the mighty waters,
17 Who brings forth the chariot and horse,
The army and the power

(They shall lie down together, they shall not rise;
They are extinguished, they are quenched like a wick):
18 "Do not remember the former things,
Nor consider the things of old.
19 Behold, I will do a new thing,
Now it shall spring forth;
Shall you not know it?
I will even make a road in the wilderness
And rivers in the desert.

In this text we see Isaiah give a word from God to Israel. Israel was not in a good place at this time, they were in exile in Babylon, the people lost all they had and were dreaming of going back to where they had it all.

Isn't this typical for man, when things aren't going well....wish you could go back! Wish you had never made that decision. Wish you could have a do over. "Things were better before!"

You know what....maybe they weren't.....are you all knowing? Do you see the beginning and the end? If you are a follower of Jesus then I guarantee that He has greater things for you than your past....Like Israel, sometimes I think we forget how mighty our God is.

Isaiah 43:16-17 (NKJV)

16 Thus says the Lord, who makes a way in the sea
And a path through the mighty waters,
17 Who brings forth the chariot and horse,
The army and the power
(They shall lie down together, they shall not rise;
They are extinguished, they are quenched like a wick):

As Israel dreams of the good ol days when things were "better", God reminds them of what He did last time when it looked like it was all over and there was no hope. This is just a reminder of what God can do.

If today, you feel like you need God to do a new thing, remember how mighty our God is. Remember the last that God showed up and did the unexpected. You just have to know that He is able....then trust Him.

Psalms 24:8 (NKJV)

8 Who is this King of glory?
The Lord strong and mighty,
The Lord mighty in battle.

Psalms 62:11 (NKJV)

11 God has spoken once,
Twice I have heard this:
That power belongs to God.

Psalms 147:5 (NKJV)

5 Great is our Lord, and mighty in power;
His understanding is infinite.

Jeremiah 32:27 (NKJV)

27 "Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me?

It is critical that we remember that Jesus is greater than any situation. There is nothing in heaven or on the earth that is more powerful than the Lord God Almighty! When we get that we will stop looking to the good ol days.....

Isaiah 43:18 (NKJV)

18 "Do not remember the former things,
Nor consider the things of old.

Why are you looking back? If you call yourself a follower then Jesus is in front of you, not behind. That's satan's place. satan is behind you....he lives in the past because he has no future!

Do not remember the former things. Don't wish you could turn back time. Don't sit around and think about how things used to be. They are FORMER things....They are OLD things....this means they are long gone! In the past!

If you want God to do a new thing, you have to get your focus off the past. STOP looking back and START looking forward. If you keep looking back you won't be able to see where you are going.

To stop looking back you have to forget the past glory.

Israel had some awesome victories in their past. They got out of Egypt. They had victories on the way to Canaan. They conquered Canaan. Fought battles against its enemies. They had great victories in the past. They could dwell in past glory.

But remember where they find themselves....in captivity. The victories of the past aren't going to do them any good now. They need a new victory. They needed God to do a new thing!

You remember what God has done in the past just to remember what He can do, not to predict what He will do next. How often do we ask God to do what He did before? We pray in a certain spot. We ask a certain way. We mimic what others did when God answered their prayer.

You can't depend on past victories for your present needs. Your future is not based on what God has done but on what God is going to do!

Haggai 2:9 (NIV)

9 'The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house,' says the Lord Almighty. 'And in this place I will grant peace,' declares the Lord Almighty."

If you believe God is going to do a new thing in 2017, say "amen!"

Forget your past victories, but also forget your past failures.

Israel messed up A LOT. You probably don't have anything on Israel...Israel had widespread idolatry, pagan religious practices, rejected God's law, they were unfaithful, they complained all the time, they messed up over and over.

The children of Israel did not deserve any good whatsoever from God. But He loved them and so wanted to do a new thing in their lives. He just wanted them to turn from the past and turn to Him....repentance.

You can't worry about past failures. It doesn't matter how many times you have failed. If you have sinned, repent, look to Jesus. He is ready and willing to forgive.

Isaiah 1:18 (NKJV)

18 "Come now, and let us reason together,"
Says the Lord,
"Though your sins are like scarlet,
They shall be as white as snow;
Though they are red like crimson,
They shall be as wool.

Forget the past, good and bad.....look to Jesus.

Isaiah 43:19 (NKJV)

19 Behold, I will do a new thing,
Now it shall spring forth;
Shall you not know it?
I will even make a road in the wilderness
And rivers in the desert.

God wants you right where you are at, forgetting the past, looking to the future, but standing in the present. Alert, ready. He's going to do something new, will you be aware of it? Will you even know it when it happens?

If I had a dollar for every time that I realized what God was doing after it was done, I'd be a wealthy man. The reason I missed it so many times is because I was dreaming of the past or even looking to the future with little awareness of what was going on right now, in the present.

Think about your life right now. The things you are going through. God is starting a new thing. He has already started a work in you. Even if it looks like there's nothing going on.

He will make a road in the wilderness and a river in the desert.

Isaiah 43:19 (NKJV)

19 Behold, I will do a new thing,
Now it shall spring forth;
Shall you not know it?
I will even make a road in the wilderness
And rivers in the desert.

Forget the past, be aware of the present, and look to the future.

Behold, I will do a new thing. A new thing is something FRESH! Why would you want what's old? How many of you pull into McDonald's and say "I hope the fries are old!"NO, you say "I hope the fries are fresh!" You want them hot AND salty. They are no good if they are hot OR salty!

I want something fresh from God today. I don't want old and I don't want ordinary.

You may be in the wilderness and you are tired but there isn't a road in sight. You may be in the desert and you are thirsty and exhausted but there isn't a river to be found.

It shall spring forth. God will PRODUCE something fresh! If it springs forth, it's like it just shoots out of nowhere. You won't see it coming and then there it is!

God want's to do a new thing.....do you believe it?

He said *"Behold, I will do a new thing, Now it shall spring forth; Shall you not know it?"*

What He is saying is are you willing to embrace this new thing, do you want to open yourself up to it?

The word know in *"Shall you not know it?"*, know is the Hebrew word yada (ya-daa) and it means much more than being aware or having insight. It has to do with a total giving of yourself. It's more like a relationship between a husband and wife. The same word yada was used in Genesis 4:1

Genesis 4:1a (NKJV)

1 Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain

Obviously this yada speaks of knowing someone intimately but in a complete giving of yourself and a complete receiving of the other. **Will you completely give of yourself to God and completely receive the new thing He is doing in your life?**

He may be calling you to take a leap of faith and do something that doesn't make sense to anyone else around you. Look to Him. Are you willing to fully embrace what God is doing? It will take surrender.

Psalm 143:10 (NKJV)

10 Teach me to do Your will,
For You are my God;
Your Spirit is good.
Lead me in the land of uprightness.

WORSHIP TEAM

The only way we can do this is to walk in the Spirit. Paul exhorted us to walk in the Spirit. Walking in the Spirit includes looking forward and not to the past. Looking to what God is doing instead of relying on the glory and victories of the past. Don't limit God to what He's already done. He's doing a new thing.

Consider what it's like to walk against the wind. It can be difficult....there is a drag on you. It takes more effort and energy just to make a little progress. This is what it's like when we walk in the flesh (our will/desires).

But when you turn around and walk the other way, with the wind, Not only is it easier (I didn't say easy, it still takes effort, you still have to walk) but it becomes easier, there is a push from behind and with less of you own effort you can make more progress. This is what life is like when we walk in the Spirit of God (His will/desires)

Today God is doing a new thing, we must be open to it. It's sprouting and will spring forth! Our response to it is pivotal, don't let it pass you by. Lift your eyes, look to the future that God has for you. Don't look to the past, don't grieve over the used to be's, they are old, long gone. Desire the new thing!

Join me in drawing nearer to the heart of God and inviting Him to do a new thing in you today. Don't try to make it happen, but stand in expectancy. Because God's doing a new thing in the Earth, and it's coming your way.