

A TIME OF REMEMBRANCE & RENEWAL

Life Connecting Teams ~ January 2025

New Covenant Church of Philadelphia

And He who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also, He said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." Rev. 21:5 ESV

OBJECTIVE: To gain a deeper understanding of what it means to experience "new life in Christ".

INTRODUCTION:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and He declared that everything was very good in Genesis 1:31. Yet mankind sinned, marring God's creation. The world was no longer "good". From the beginning, until today, the earth and everyone in it experiences sin and death, according to Romans 5:12. Yet something will change in the fullness of time. After sin is eternally judged, God promises a new heaven and a new earth where suffering, pain, sin, and death cease for all eternity. Finally, all creation will be free from the reign and effects of sin. When we consider this future, it gives believers hope and affects our lives on earth as we eagerly wait for this promise to be fulfilled: "Behold I make all things new".

LESSON:

Many people, no matter what they believe, look at January 1st as a chance for a new beginning. If the previous year was disappointing or they made significant mistakes, they imagine wiping the slate clean and starting over. Christians know that "**new starts**" are available any time, they are not dictated by the calendar. "*The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning*" (**Lamentations 3:22-23 NKJV**). A Christian who obtains his greatest joy from the Lord sees the coming of the new year as a time to **remember the goodness of God as it has unfolded during the past year**. Sometimes the details of God's intervention are only obvious when we survey His goodness over time.

Why is it important to remember all the Lord has done?

"Take care lest you forget the Lord, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery" (**Deuteronomy 6:12 KJV**). Christians are to never forget what their Lord has done for them.

Let's consider and discuss some of the ways God brings renewal into our lives.

Repent: Beginning the new year with repentance is to draw closer to Jesus, to receive the fresh grace that is ours in Him. It is our pathway to greater intimacy with God. How can we begin new plans and journeys in 2025 without first allowing His light to penetrate the darkness of our hearts and to reveal areas in need of growth? How can we start working and dreaming without first renewing our joy in the

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One who directs our steps? **John 1:9 NKJV**, *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

Salvation and Restoration: When someone trusts in God for salvation, the Holy Spirit indwells him, and he becomes a new creation. **2 Corinthians 5:17** says: *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new”*. The believer is no longer bound by sin; we become new creations, able to please God and live in His ways. **Galatians 2:20** sums up our newness well: *“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”* No longer do we live for ourselves, but we live for the One who gives us new life. A transformation occurs in those who surrender to God, and of them it can also be said, *“Behold I make all things new.”* The meaning of transformation is as follows: a change of the form or nature of a thing or person into a completely different one, by natural or supernatural means.

Renew: The New Year should also be a time of renewing old commitments, like marriage, family, and church. Before we begin grand plans to lose weight or develop a new skill, let's begin by renewing the core commitments we already have. Our most vital work is what we do within the walls of our homes, loving our spouses and raising our children in an atmosphere of godliness and grace. We should also renew our commitment to be faithful to gathering with our church family. The church is the focus of God's mission in the world, where we gather in community to go out and declare Christ's Lordship.

Rest: The New Year should be a time to rest. First, we rest in the reality of our identity in Christ. We may have failed to meet our goals in 2024. Jesus still loves us, despite our failures, unchecked boxes, and broken promises. The gospel tells us that he loves us during these times. We should plan to physically rest. Rest isn't a sign of laziness or weakness; it's a sign of spiritual strength and confidence that when we close our eyes, our lives are in the hands of a sovereign God. To rest is to say that we're not God and that the world can go on without us.

New Year's Day is no different from any other day as far as Christ is concerned. New Year's Day is a day of resetting hearts, which have wandered, and of restoring the habit of turning to Christ every day for a fresh start in a relationship with Jesus, which is always growing.

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Remember in Prayer

- Bishop Grannum, Pastor Oliver, Pastoral staff and their families.
- Ministers, Deacons, and Ministry leaders
- NCC staff and volunteers
- Sick, shut-in and bereaved
- Continued growth in the Prayer ministries of NCC
- Capital Campaign
- Our children and youth for protection and safety

Resource: <https://www.gotquestions.org/I-make-all-things-new.html>