

Do You Want a NEW BEGINNING?

Part 1

Are you in need of a new beginning? You can have one, you know. As a matter of fact, you can have many!

The term, *new beginning*, means *something fresh or changed, especially for the better, starting or coming into existence*. Wow! Just ponder that definition for moment. Does that sound like something you want and need?



I was thinking about how we all so often need a new beginning on a regular basis. How many times have you said, “I wish I could just start over!” In all reality shouldn’t we look at every day or hour we live as being a new beginning—a new start? But, how many really believe that we receive a new beginning every single day or even every hour or minute? How many of us actually look at each new day or hour as a new start—a new beginning?

Do you wake up in the morning saying, “Praise God! A new day!” Or, do you wake up in the morning saying, “Oh God! Not another day!” There is a humorous joke about a woman visiting a psychologist with her problems. The doctor asked her, “Do you wake up grouchy in the morning?” Her reply was, “No, I just let him sleep.” Do you relate in any way?

God called my husband, Rick, and I and gave us a partial vision for NBCF over 10 years ago and with that He gave us the name, *New Beginnings Christian Fellowship & Ministries*. (I think He was trying to tell us something!) In my own life I was striving to make each day a new beginning. But I find now, that I am in need of more new beginnings. Some days I need a new beginning every hour. Some days, sooner!

God is so good and His grace amazes me. He continually and constantly gives us opportunity to make life better. That opportunity is called, TODAY. And believe it or not, your TODAY holds within it a new beginning. It’s another chance, another opportunity, a fresh start, another turn to change life for the better. And, that opportunity for a new beginning comes only through Jesus Christ—the Author of your new beginning—every day and every hour.

Now, I look up words in the dictionary all the time because I find that I often *think* I know what a word means until I look it up and find something different or more. I looked up the word, *today*, and found that it means, *the day that includes this present moment*. Notice it doesn’t just refer to the day, as in a 24 hour day, but *this present moment*. Now, put the definition of, *today*, with that of *new begin-*

ning and you have: ***Something fresh or changed, especially for the better, starting or coming into existence this present moment!***

No matter what yesterday or even a few minutes ago offered, good or bad, what you do with *Today* or *this present moment—right now*, is what's important. If yesterday or even an hour ago was bad, hopeless or even disastrous, then through Christ, you can have a new beginning—*today—this present moment*—to start changing that bad into something good. Jesus offers you a new beginning today. And, if yesterday was a great day, then through Christ, you get a new day and new moments to make yesterday pale in its greatness.

Now, I'm not promising that just because you've decided to take Jesus Christ up on His new beginning that everything will start coming up roses immediately. But when we start seeing a different side or a different picture and changing from our negative, hopeless, damaging attitudes to trust in Christ Jesus—our new beginning or fresh start begins to release material changes. So, the new beginning can start immediately—but it starts in your heart first, and then must be transferred to your soul—your mind, will and emotions before it can produce. Once that processes is started, a new beginning is assured.

We all go through adversity, troubles, trials, and the like. God doesn't always bring these things on us, but He does allow them from time to time. He allows them to help us. "Help me do what?" You're asking. Help you grow stronger in faith—to trust wholly and depend on Him. In other words, help you see that you are really not in control of everything in your life and you need Him. Also, to help you grow and change into the person He intended you to be. (We will address this area later.) At the same time, some of the adversity, troubles, trials and the like we bring on ourselves. We can't even blame the devil! I've seen some people who don't need the devils help, they can bring trouble on themselves faster than a woman attacking a 50% off Sale or (for you men) a birddog fetching a dead duck!

God wants us to look at every day or hour as a new beginning and He wants us to look for opportunities for new beginnings. That means living in a state where we are aware of new beginnings. So, do you want to live in a state of new beginnings?

If you're not a Christian, you are prone to drag one bad day, experience, situation or circumstance into the next. Your remedy starts with a relationship with the Author of a new beginning, Jesus Christ. It starts with a spirit or heart change. Keep reading though!

If you are a Christian, you do not have to or even should drag one bad day, experience, situation or circumstance into the next day. For a Christian to drag these into the next day or even hour, living in a state of depression, discouragement, despair, defeat, lack, anxiety, fear, confusion, and the like, is not God nor His Will. Jesus did not die on the Cross for you to continually live under any of those conditions. And, in addition to that, think for a moment what kind of witness any Christian is under the influence and displaying those kinds of conditions continually in their lives. For instance, how many people could

you lead to the LORD in a constant state of depression or despair? Why would anyone want to be a Christian and think he/she must live like that?

“Don’t let the conditions of yesterday destroy the hopes and dreams of tomorrow.” How often do you let what happened yesterday, last month, or even 20 years ago destroy the hopes and dreams of your tomorrow—your future? You can never have a future by living in the past. And you can never have a new beginning with the old of anything.

How Does A New Beginning Happen?

The Bible tells us in Lamentations (of all places!) 3:22-23 (Amplified Bible), *“It is because of the LORD’s mercy and loving-kindness that we are not consumed, because His [tender] compassions fail not.²³ They are NEW every morning: great and abundant is Your stability and faithfulness.”*

We don’t get a new beginning every day because we’ve worked so hard for it, we’ve got it all together, because we’re a good person and deserve it, or even because we’re desperate for it. No, we get a new beginning every day because of the *work* of the Cross—the Blood of Jesus Christ being shed for us eradicating our sin, all because of the LORD’s mercy and loving-kindness toward us. Jesus Christ is the one who stands in the gap to stop terrible and dreadful situations and circumstances from literally consuming us. When He took our life and sins to the Cross for us, He proved His tender compassions toward us. When we accept Christ Jesus—and *all* His finished work on the Cross, then His tender compassions become absolutely *new (fresh)* every morning. Why? Because of His great and abundant stability and faithfulness toward us. It’s *not* about what we can do; it’s about what He has already done.

You must be willing to focus on that kind of hope and trust that He desires to pour out on you new mercy, loving-kindness and compassion every single moment of every day. That means a new beginning!

You may not be able to trust yourself, but you need to learn [right now] how to trust God. Trust in God is called, *faith*. If you cannot trust in God to help you change your situation, circumstance, or even your self, then I hate to break the news to you: You have no hope. But, when any of us gets in the “mully-grubs” we need to know that there is Someone greater than us and our problems to help us through. He is CHRIST JESUS, GOD ALMIGHTY! The Author of NEW BEGINNINGS. He is God of TODAY—of THIS PRESENT MOMENT and of tomorrow.

4 Hindrances to a New Beginning

I would like to give four reasons that I believe people hold on to their problems like a teddy-bear and live in a constant state of “mully-grubs” hindering a new beginning (there are more, I’m sure, but these are probably in the top four):

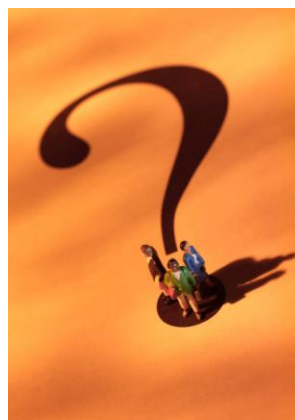
1. Being a control freak. Being a control freak comes from pride. “I can do it myself, thank you very much!” Oh, and we all do such a great job controlling our own lives, don’t you? Essentially, pride says, “I’m bigger and greater than God.” Just something to ponder. Pride will never let God do His job or take His place in our life—which is to be our God! As long as pride is in place and through it we try to control our own lives—we will never see the opportunity for new beginnings, because we are not the author of our own new beginnings, as many teach today. Only God is.



James 4:6 says, “*But He gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: ‘God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.’” James 4:10 tells us to therefore, “Humble yourselves before the LORD, and He will lift you up. And, Psalm 149:4 says, “For the LORD takes delight in His people; He crowns the humble with victory.”* Lifting us up and being crowned with victory are both associated with a new beginning.

2. Not believing God. In other words, having no faith. Do you know that there are “unbelieving Believers?” Unbelieving Believers believe in God, but not what He says! In other words, they don’t believe His Word—the Bible. A bit confusing, isn’t it? How can we believe in God, but not in what He says? Here’s some examples: God says, that Jesus came to set the captives free—that means in every way—spiritually, physically, emotionally, mentally and financially (Isaiah 61:1)—it’s what salvation is all about. Wherever and whenever free. Do you believe that? God says, we were healed (1 Peter 2:24). Do you believe that? God says that we have been given the “fullness of Christ” (Co-

Have you ever said or thought? If so, it’s time for you to believe that 10:34; Romans 2:11; Ephesians 6:9; Colossians *loved the WORLD . . .*” (John 3:16). The . . . well. . . , WORLD—EVERYONE! His Word is for all—everyone who comes to Him.



there is captivity, Christ has set us that by the wounds of Jesus we believe that? God says that we have lossians 2:10). Do you believe that? “God will help others, but not me?” God does not show favoritism (Acts 3:25). The Bible says that, “*He so word “world” in this passage means*

“*Without faith it is impossible to please God,*” (Hebrews 11:6). And, therefore, without faith it’s impossible to have a new beginning.

Do you need some mountains (of trouble, difficulty, misfortune, suffering, etc.) moved in your life so you can have a new beginning? “*Have faith in God,*” Jesus answered.²³ “*Truly I tell you, if anyone says*

to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in their heart but believes that what they say will happen, it will be done for them,'" (Mark 11:22-23).

3. Spiritual laziness and apathy. Not wanting to do what it takes to change and make change. A new beginning takes effort and many just don't want to put forth that effort. In other words, they don't want to read and take time to meditate on what God says through the Bible, pray, be a part of a local church (fellowship and service), tithe/give, etc. Notice I used the words, "don't want to." If you will notice, we *will* always take the time to do the things we really want to do! Spiritual laziness is based on a "don't want to" mentality.



Apathy is defined as absence or suppression of passion, emotion, or excitement; lack of interest in or concern for things that others find moving or exciting.

The truth is, we all have to *push through* sometimes. And, that also takes effort and even exertion, both of which God is willing to strengthen us to do. But, if you will push through spiritual laziness and apathy you will find that new beginning waiting for you—a moving and exciting new beginning!

4. Unforgiveness. This is a sure "new beginning" stopper! Unforgiveness can stop communication with God not to mention other people. Unforgiveness is listed among the sinful acts of people in



the Last Days (2 Timothy 3:3) of which we are in. We are expected by God to forgive because we have been forgiven by Him for our sins and wrong-doings. If we do not forgive, God cannot hear and forgive us of our sins (Matthew 6:14-15). If He cannot hear or forgive us, He cannot hear our prayers (because unforgiveness is in the way) nor answer them! Through unforgiveness we are unable to enter into a new beginning

when we need one. So, "*When you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins,*" (Mark 11:25). The act of forgiveness in itself is a new beginning, isn't it?

All four of these reasons are really sin and sinful reactions. If you want to be able to capitalize on a *new beginning, today and continually*—don't keep [hold, grasp, grip, possess] and repeat sins that keep you in the mully-grubs of life!

As God's children, His mercy, loving-kindness and compassion provide us with a new TODAY. It is up to each one of us as to whether or not we are in a *position of receiving* God's mercy, loving-kindness and compassion—so that we can have that new beginning today!

I urge you to accept the new beginning that our wonderful loving Father has provided you through His only and precious Son, Jesus Christ.

(See Part 2 of, "Do You Need A New Beginning?" and discover how you can get to a place in your life where you are continually experiencing new beginnings—fresh starts in the face of seemingly immovable obstacles, terrible hurts, disappointments and the like.)

Not A Christian?

Now, if you are NOT a Christian—have not made Jesus Christ, God's Son, the LORD of your life, please let me take a minute to encourage you to do so. Quickly!

You've probably heard the saying, "Everyday is a new beginning." However, that's only true if you know the Author of new beginnings, Jesus Christ. I assure you that without Him the old and bad of yesterday will surely follow you into tomorrow, destroying any chance of a new beginning. Without Jesus Christ—a true and successful new beginning is impossible. But, the Bible tells us: "*If anyone is in Christ, he is a NEW creation; THE OLD HAS GONE, THE NEW HAS COME*" (2 Corinthians 5:17). THE OLD HAS GONE, THE NEW HAS COME! Now, that's a new beginning!

If you have not personally and verbally asked Jesus Christ into your life, then you do not have a relationship with Him or God the Father.

Going to church does not give you a relationship with God or make you a Christian. You must be born-again. John 3:3 says, "*Jesus replied, 'I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God,'*" (NLT). That's why He went on to say, "*So don't be surprised when I say, 'You must be born again,'*" (John 3:7 NLT).

God's Word, tells us the only way to Him is through Jesus Christ. "*Jesus said, 'I am the way the truth and the life. NO ONE comes to the Father except through Me,'*" (John 14:6).

The only way to God and to His Home—Heaven—is through Jesus Christ. Why? God is holy—Heaven is a holy place. We are not admitted into the presence of God or into Heaven in sin. Sin is unholy. And, *everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard* (Romans 3:23 NLT). God's remedy for sin is death. Thankfully, we are not required to die for our own sins—we are only required to be free from them. How? Jesus took our sins upon Himself on the Cross. He didn't go to the Cross "for us" as we are used to hearing; He went to the Cross "as us." Making it personal to you: Jesus went to the Cross "as you." Think about that.

Your part is to release your sin to Him—letting Him take your sin—and confessing that He is the only one who is able to take your sin by confessing Him as your Savior and LORD.

If you are not sure that you are saved (have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ) and would like a new beginning, a fresh start right now—don't delay, please ask Him into your life by praying the following prayer:

Dear Jesus:

I know that You are God's Son and the only way to God and His Heaven. You went to the Cross and died "as me" for all my sins so that I could know God and have a new beginning.

I come to You right now and I ask that you please forgive me of all my sins. I ask You to come into my life and make me new—born-again. I make You Savior and LORD over my life. Show me Your ways, Oh LORD. Take charge of my life and lead me in a new direction to a new beginning today.

Thank you LORD. I love You.

Amen.

If you just prayed that prayer, the way is now open for you to approach Father God. Your spirit is born-again, it has come alive, and you are a new creation in Christ with new beginnings facing you.

Please email or write us and let us know of your good news. We would love to send you our booklet (free of charge) on how you can start living a new life in Jesus Christ. God bless you and keep you and promote you to every new beginning in your life!

Debra Jack, Co-Senior Leader NBCF—New Beginnings Christian Fellowship