

## WHAT'S NEW?

Whenever I see my mom, she usually starts off a conversation with me by asking what's new. It does not matter whether I saw her the day before or if 4 or 5 days have passed since we last saw one another, she still starts off with asking the same question. Usually I respond by saying, "Not much", or "Busy as always!"

I was reminded about this conversation starter my mother had with me on New Year's Day. I think the reason why I began thinking about this is because New Year's Day is when we take time to consider what has become new. There are so many new things we need to consider with each new year. So often the start of a new year may see us paying some additional taxes which can affect our discretionary income. We will begin to see new television shows soon as well as new movies that will be coming to theaters in 2024. For anyone who still writes cheques like I do, then we will have to remember to put the new year at the top. If we still have a calendar in our house this will be the time when we put up a new one. Of course, many people will be starting off this year with new resolutions they have made for their lives. This is the time of year when we consider what should be new in our lives.

Have we considered this when it comes to our spiritual lives? One of the realities once we believe in Jesus as our Lord and Saviour is we become reborn. This truth is brought out in **John 1:12-13**:

**But to all who believed Him and accepted Him, He gave the right to become children of God. They are reborn - not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God.**

This new birth after we welcome Jesus Christ into our lives begins a process of changing us from the inside out in a way that rearranges our attitudes, desires, and motives to become more Christ-like. When we follow Christ, we should be prepared to embrace new ways of living, new ways of looking at people, new ways of serving, and new ways of facing life's challenges. This process towards a new way of living sometimes happens quickly but more often than not, occurs more gradually over time. If we are committed to following Christ, we should be seeing these new things happening within us.

At this time of year when we make resolutions it is the perfect time for us to also consider whether any of these aspects in our walk with Jesus need to be changed:

- Are there any spiritual disciplines such as prayer or reading daily devotions we need to add to our lives in 2024 in order to become closer with our Lord?
- Are there still some old, sinful behaviors we have not let go of that we need to discard in 2024?
- Are there some attitudes still lingering in our hearts such as anger or unforgiveness that need to be discarded in order to make our spiritual heart healthier and more Christ-like?
- Are we stuck at this moment in our spiritual walk and need to recommit to the process of being changed by our Lord?

These are some of the things we may need to make resolutions to change when it comes to our spiritual walk with the Lord in 2024. In order to experience the most out of our relationship with the Lord, ***we need to be open to making these positive changes He wants to make within us.*** I think if we are all being truly honest, even though we have allowed the Lord to make many positive changes in us, there are still some more we need to let Him work on. If we commit to this in 2024, won't it be interesting to reflect in one year's time the difference it has made for us in our relationship with Him.

May we all have a blessed year in 2024 walking with the Lord.

**God bless and keep safe,**

**Pastor Dean**