

Has the New Arrived for You?

When Jesus met his disciples by the Sea of Galilee, everything changed. They left their homes and family, their ways of living, and the way they did faith, and it was all new. Jesus said, “You have heard it said, ... but I say unto you.” New, fresh living.

Some think of Christianity as an old religion, hidden beneath the dusty pages of history, and consign it to the trash heap as something that is ancient and out of date. While the basics of the faith indeed hold fast, God calls every Christian to a totally new, changed life. We must never do things the way we did them before we met Christ.

The problem is, when many look at people in the church, they see no difference in lifestyles. Christ calls all of us to grow in dramatic ways to seek the new and better life God makes possible.

A caution. Just because something is new doesn't make it better. Society does new things all the time, some good, some bad. The new in the faith life is what God does in us, and how we live now that we know him.

God wants to forge new ways of thinking and acting in us. We are called to look at everything from a faith standpoint, and that takes challenges, stretching, growing, and changing.

Will Rogers, the cowboy comedian of some years ago, spoke of the world this way. “You can't say,” he said, “civilization don't advance... in every war they kill you in a new way.

Just think of the ways the world has changed in the last few decades. The growth of science and technology has been enormous. Things once just imagined in science fiction books, re-imagined in movies and television shows, now are commonplace. From airplanes to space travel, from electricity to hand held telephones for everyone, things are totally new.

Yet we still have jealousy and violence. We seem to have less love and more hate. We still have wars. There is so much from a values and faith background that must become new.

Perhaps we begin with the mind. **Romans 12:2** And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

The imagination was given to us by God, and he can bless our transformation in divine and wonderful ways. Once the mind is shaped in a new way, it never returns to its former shape. We think, remember, and make new memories in a new way.

In this new life we live we amaze people by forgiving when no one would expect it. We love people with a heavenly love which makes us able to love not just friends and family, but even our enemies. Now that's new! And it can happen again and again.

One way of being able to find this new way is to seek balanced and far reaching sense of humor. Allen Klein, an author and self-described “jollytologist”, has discovered that “When you do find humor in trying times, one of the first and most important changes you experience is that you see your perplexing problems in a new way - you suddenly have a new perspective on them.”

I have heard it said that God must have a great sense of humor. He created mankind, after all! We trip all over ourselves trying to know everything and find that we know nothing. We insist in our own way and find that it doesn't work. We must understand that we are human, and that to discover the things which will bless and honor all must come from God and God alone.

As we realize this, and give way to our eternal destiny of living God's way, we find that it happens by trusting in Jesus as the way to all of this. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

We find that we and our ways are not the key to the new life God that Christ promises. Only trusting in Jesus to live through us brings it to reality. Hebrews 10:20 points out the new and living way opened for us through Jesus Christ.

That way is fresh, living, and lovely as Christ becomes more clear in us. The writer of Hebrews also points out in verses 24-25 ways to work out that new and living purpose.

“Let us consider how to spur one another on to love and good deeds. Let us not neglect meeting together, as some have made a habit, but let us encourage one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

Love, good deeds, and worship. It doesn't get any better than that! Has the new arrived for you?