

Who doesn't like the thought of a freshly cleaned house or a closet that's just been organized? We love springtime following a cold winter and the newness of an early morning. A tiny baby or a new puppy never fails to make us smile. Let's face it. We just like the idea of 'fresh' and 'new'. There's something about a fresh start or a new thing that's encouraging to us. One of the most widely celebrated holidays worldwide is New Year's. No matter what the old year held, there's hope for a new and better year to come and we see that as cause for a celebration. In fact, all through scripture we see new things as a cause for celebration.

I was drinking coffee on the front porch early one morning. As I watched the sunrise, I was reminded that the Father is into 'new', too. He reminded me of how often He speaks of 'new' in His Word. I believe we are created to desire the new. We are made in the image and likeness of our Father, and if He likes the 'new', shouldn't we? As we look at the number of scriptures that talk about the 'new', we can see God's heart and His intention toward us. Here are just a few of the many verses mentioned in the Word:

*"Sing to Him a **new** song..." Psalm 33:3*

*"He has put a **new** song in my mouth..." Psalm 40:3*

*"Behold, the former things have come to pass, and **new** things I declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them." Isaiah 42:9*

*"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." Isaiah 43:19*

*"For behold, I create **new** heavens and a **new** earth; and the former shall not be remembered or come to mind." Isaiah 65:17*

*"I will give you a **new** heart and put a **new** spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh." Ezekiel 36:26*

*"For this is My blood of the **new** covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Matthew 26:28*

*"But **new** wine must be put into **new** wineskins." Mark 2:22*

*"A **new** commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another..." John 13:34*

*"But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the **newness** of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter." Romans 7:6*

*"In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the **new** covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." 1 Corinthians 11:25*

*"...by a **new** and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh..."* Hebrews 10:20

*"Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for **new** heavens and a **new** earth in which righteousness dwells."* 2 Peter 3:13

Two of my favorite scriptures about new things are 2 Corinthians 5:17 and Lamentations 3:22-23. 2 Corinthians tells us that "if any man be in Christ, he is a **new** creation. Old things have passed away and behold, all things have become **new**." If you'll notice, He did not say that He cleaned up the old man. It says we are a new creation and that ALL things have become new. We got a new start. We were born again. We had a new birth. The old man / woman...whatever that looked like...is gone and a new one is created. How encouraging is that? We are brand spanking new!! I hate to be a wet blanket here but we know that on occasion we still fall short. So does that mean the new creation is no longer new? No! We have been made righteous in Christ Jesus and that will never change. The old man doesn't return when we mess up. We are in a perpetual state of newness. Lamentations tells us that, "Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. *They are* new every morning; great is Your faithfulness." Every day is a new day. Psalm 103:12 tells us that He has removed our sin from us as far as the east is from the west and that He remembers them no more!! In Christ we always have a fresh start. We are in a constant place of new beginnings in Jesus.

I am a list maker. I make "To-do lists", "grocery lists", "Christmas lists", etc. There's something about turning the page in a notebook to a clean sheet of paper that feels good to me. The old, marked up paper has been turned and a fresh sheet of paper is before me. I like that. I was that kid that got all excited about buying new school supplies each year. Even that represented the turning of a new page to me. The morning that I was reminded by Holy Spirit that the Lord loves 'new' things, I had an image of that clean sheet of paper. That clean page represented my life and how His mercies and compassions were new that very morning for me. Since that encounter, I feel that clean page as each new morning dawns. No matter what yesterday brought, there's a fresh start before me.

My Granny was an artist and I remember many times seeing a blank, clean canvas sitting on her easel. I would wonder what was in her heart that was about to be revealed through her brush and onto that canvas. It never ceased to amaze me how that clean canvas was about to house a beautiful piece of western art. That's how the Father is with us. I get excited when I think of the Lord being ready, pen or brush in hand, to write on my day all He has for me. He desires to release all those hopes and plans that He speaks of in Jeremiah 29:11 from His heart into our lives just like my Granny did onto that canvas. If you are like me, that's reason for celebration. My prayer each morning has become, "Father, thank you that Your mercies and compassions are new every morning. I ask you to take this clean slate and draw on my heart the lists, the plans, the dreams, the beauty you have for me today."

The enemy loves to try to bring our yesterdays and make them a part of our today. That's like trying to start a new painting on top of an old one. It doesn't make for a very pretty picture. We've been given beautiful gifts called repentance and forgiveness. Repent of the stuff from yesterday and don't just turn the page. Tear that page out and throw it away, then look around at the amazing world we live in. Our

Father is creative. With a word, He painted the vibrant colors and released the different textures, shapes and tastes. He wants to be just as creative on the canvas of your life no matter what your yesterdays held. Repent, receive forgiveness and wait as He does beautiful things.

As I'm writing this, I glanced up at a painting my Granny drew long ago. She's been gone for many years but her memory, her legacy, goes on in many ways. One of those ways is through her paintings. They live on and they hang on the walls of her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren today. Each of those paintings began with a brand new canvas and clean brushes. When we, through submission to His Lordship, give Holy Spirit a clean heart, we allow Him to be the artist of our lives. What He paints on our lives today will be a legacy long after we are gone to our children and grandchildren...even to a thousand generations.