

A NEW BEGINNING WITH GOD IN YOUR LIFE

Sunday, June 26, 2011

Text: Romans 6:1-9 / Psalm 121:1-8

INTRODUCTION:

London businessman Lindsay Clegg told the story of a warehouse property he was selling. The building had been empty for months and needed repairs. Vandals had damaged the doors, smashed the windows, and strewn trash around the interior.

As he showed a prospective buyer the property, Clegg took pains to say that he would replace the broken windows, bring in a crew to correct any structural damage, and clean out the garbage.

"Forget about the repairs," the buyer said. "When I buy this place, I'm going to build something completely different. I don't want the building; I want the site."

Compared with the renovation God has in mind, our efforts to improve our own lives are as trivial as sweeping a warehouse slated for the wrecking ball. When we become God's, the old life is over (2 Cor. 5:17). He makes all things new. All he wants is the site and the permission to build.

[The adventure of new life in Christ begins when the comfortable patterns of the old life are left behind.](#)

SCRIPTURE:

1 "I will lift up my eyes to the hills— From whence comes my help?

2 My help comes from the Lord, Who made heaven and earth.

3 He will not allow your foot to be moved; He who keeps you will not slumber.

4 Behold, He who keeps Israel Shall neither slumber nor sleep.

5 The Lord is your keeper; The Lord is your shade at your right hand.

6 The sun shall not strike you by day, Nor the moon by night.

7 The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; He shall preserve your soul.

8 The Lord shall preserve your going out and your coming in From this time forth, and even forevermore." (Psalms 121:1–8 NKJV)

1. A NEW HEART

- *“Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. 26 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. 27 I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.” (Ezekiel 36:25–27 NKJV)*

ILLUSTRATION:

Heart is used in Scripture as the most comprehensive term for the authentic person. It is the part of our being where we desire, deliberate, and decide. It has been described as "the place of conscious and decisive spiritual activity," "the comprehensive term for a person as a whole; his feelings, desires, passions, thought, understanding and will," and "the center of a person. The place to which God turns."

J. Stowell, [Fan The Flame](#), Moody, 1986, p. 13.

1. FORGETTING THE PAST

- *“Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 3:13–14 NKJV)*

ILLUSTRATION:

Do not say, "Why were the former days better than these?" You do not move ahead by constantly looking in a rear view mirror. The past is a rudder to guide you, not an anchor to drag you. We must learn from the past but not live in the past.

Dr. Warren W. Wiersbe.

- *Ephesians 5:8-11 - 8 **For you were once darkness**, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light 9 (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), 10 finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. 11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.*

3. LEARNING FROM PAST MISTAKES

- *“For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. 11 Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.” (Hebrews 12:10–11 NKJV)*

ILLUSTRATION:

Two pals are sitting in a pub watching the eleven-o'clock news. A report comes on about a man threatening to jump from the 20th floor of a downtown building. One friend turns to the other and says, "I'll bet you ten bucks the guy doesn't jump."

"It's a bet," agrees his buddy.

A few minutes later, the man on the ledge jumps, so the loser hands his pal a \$10 bill. "I can't take your money," his friend admits. "I saw him jump earlier on the six-o'clock news."

"Me, too," says the other buddy. "But I didn't think he'd do it again!"

4. WAIT ON THE LORD

- *“Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.” (Psalms 37:7 NKJV)*
- *“But those who wait on the Lord Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.” (Isaiah 40:31 NKJV)*

ILLUSTRATION:

Waiting for God is not laziness. Waiting for God is not going to sleep. Waiting for God is not the abandonment of effort. Waiting for God means, first, activity under command; second, readiness for any new command that may come; third, the ability to do nothing until the command is given.

G. Campbell Morgan

5. GOD'S TIMING IS PERFECT

- *“He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end.” (Ecclesiastes 3:11 NKJV)*

ILLUSTRATION:

In a lifetime the average American will spend:

Six months sitting at stoplights

Eight months opening junk mail

One year looking for misplaced objects

2 years unsuccessfully returning phone calls

4 years doing housework

5 years waiting in line

6 years eating

Survey of 6000 people polled in 1988, *U.S. News and World Report*, Jan 30, 1989, p. 81.

6. EACH NEW DAY IS SPECIAL

- *“Through the Lord’s mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. 23 They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. 24 “The Lord is my portion,” says my soul, “Therefore I hope in Him!” (Lamentations 3:22–24 NKJV)*

ILLUSTRATION:

I am always reminded that if the Lord has been so faithful toward me I can do but one thing, return that faithfulness through a willingness to be as obedient as humanly possible.

It was a stormy night in Birmingham, England, and Hudson Taylor was to speak at a meeting at the Severn Street schoolroom. His hostess assured him that nobody would attend on such a stormy night, but Taylor insisted on going. "I must go even if there is no one but the doorkeeper."

Less than a dozen people showed up, but the meeting was marked with unusual spiritual power. Half of those present either became missionaries or gave their children as missionaries; and the rest were faithful supporters of the China Inland Mission for years to come.

[W. Wiersbe, Wycliffe Handbook of Preaching and Preachers, p. 242.](#)

CONCLUSION:

Openness is essentially the willingness to grow, it's a distaste for living in a rut, eagerly standing on our tip-toe's for a better view of what tomorrow will bring. A man once bought a new radio, brought it home, placed it on the refrigerator, plugged it in, turned it to WSM in Nashville (home of the Grand Ole Opry), and then pulled all the knobs off! He had already tuned in all he ever wanted or expected to hear. Some christians are "rutted" and live rather dull lives because they have yielded to the tyranny of the inevitable, "what has been will always be." Stay open to newness. Stay open to change. We must allow the Holy Spirit to direct our lives as it pleases God!