

New Beginnings!

Joshua 1:1-9

Introduction:

The best part of New Year's Day is the idea of moving on and starting fresh. It makes no sense, however, that we should wait till January 1st to start new and leave the past behind!

Days can be full of mistakes and missed opportunities, but the person who moves past them, seeking to walk with Christ, is sure to see God's blessings in this life.

God is a God of mercy and forgiveness, and we need to let New Year's Day remind us that the past is the past, with no chance of being changed, but the future is still to come, and if allowed, it is God's to bless.

Every believer can have a new beginning, full of God's blessings, regardless of past failures.

How can you see God's blessings in this new year?

1. You must remember the promises God has shared with man. Joshua 1:6
 - As the Lord talks with Joshua, He reminds him of the promise He made unto the fathers of the nation! The Lord was ensuring their blessings to come, if they would just remember the promise He made!
 - As Israel began to enter into a new stage of their walk with the Lord, they were leaving behind some terrible mistakes. However, God never renege on His promises!
 - Not long after they experienced God's miraculous power in Egypt and at the parting of the Red Sea, the people turned to their own thoughts and feelings, forgetting God's promises.
 - Thirst caused grief and a lack of faith. Exodus 15:23-24
 - Hunger caused greater grief and lack of faith! Exodus 16:2-3
 - Patience caused the greatest grief and display of lack of faith!!
 - They thought they would wait, but it took longer than they were willing to wait! Exodus 19:3-8; 32:1
 - Before these mistakes were ever made, God had already promised to Abraham and to Jacob that their seed would have a land that God would give them that would be magnificent and plenteous with food and water.
 - The Lord reminded Joshua that He would not fail him nor forsake him. Joshua 1:5
 - God's promises are sure and last forever!
 - In the days of the Old Testament, the nation of Israel was to be looking forward to the promise of a new life and following God's plan for them.

- Today, in this time period of grace called the “dispensation of grace,” the Christian is to be resting in the promise of total forgiveness of sin, through the blood sacrifice that Christ made on the cross. Colossians 1:13, 14, 20-22
- The amazing love of God is seen throughout the Bible. When man would give up and find reason to renege on a promise, God is faithful and holds to His promise, making it possible for man to be justified by faith, through God’s own Son. Romans. 4:5; Ephesians. 2:8-9
- As you wake up each day this year, start your days reflecting on verses like Colossians 1:13-14, 20-22 and Romans 8:18. These promises are truly blessings every day!

2. You must obey God’s Word and seek to live according to His ways. Joshua 1:7-8

- Even though a person knows that God will hold to His promises, we see that He desires man to obey His direction.
- The Lord tells Joshua to be strong and of good courage as they enter into this new phase, entering into the Promised Land, that they may do according to ALL the law which He gave to the people.
- We know that Israel did not follow the law as God intended them to, and because of Israel’s lack of obedience, they did not enjoy the Promised Land as God intended.
- Many of the laws that God gave were not so He could be worshiped and the people be made His slaves; they were to prevent the land from being controlled by the godless heathen who lived there.
- God told them to destroy the inhabitants of the land, but they didn’t!
- God did not want to control Joshua and those who followed him. God wanted them to be a nation that would be a light to all other nations, bringing them to God.
- God’s promises are free to whoever will accept and believe on them; however God has expectations for the believer to follow in order to enjoy His promises for today!
- Paul told Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:13, 15-16 to “*give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine... Give thyself wholly them*” Why? “*that thy profiting may appear to all... for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.*”
- Paul was not talking about working for your salvation. He just wrote in verse 10 that “*we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those that believe.*”
- When you choose to follow sound biblical teaching, it will prevent bad decisions from being made.

- If I was about to let my temper control me and let my mouth be used as a tool to tear down another person who upset me, the results of my actions could be devastating to that person, myself, and others. This is why the Lord says, “*Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying.*”
- Choosing to “fly off the handle” will not cause you to lose God’s promise of eternal life, but it can lead to missed blessings in your life.
- The context of Paul’s charge to Timothy is found in verse 1. To save yourself from “departing from the faith” you need to give attendance to reading, exhortation and doctrine!
- This is what the Lord was telling Joshua too! In doing so, he would “*prosper whithersoever thou goest.*”
- As you seek to follow God’s Word, it is sure to bring you blessings in this new year!

3. You must rest in God’s faithfulness to never leave you stranded. Joshua 1:9

- Probably the greatest encouragement that Joshua had while leading the people into the Promised Land was that the same God that led him and the others through the Red Sea under Moses’ leadership is the same God that would be with him wherever he went!
- I cannot count how many times in my life I have been thankful that God is still with me when no one else would be!
- The Christian can have peace in knowing that Christ’s presence and strength are always with him.
- A very well-known verse in the Bible is 2 Corinthians 12:9. When Jesus tells Paul “*My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.*”
- Here we have the comfort of Jesus! Even when we are in a weak moment, we can trust that He is there and He is our strength!
- God knew that Joshua and the people were going to face what would seem like difficult challenges, but they were to go with the peace of God, knowing that He would be with them, and He would be all they would need.
- When you rest in the truth that the Lord can do great things both in and through you, no matter what the situation, you will surely see God working around you.
- Paul told the Thessalonians in 1 Thessalonians 2:2 that he and those with him had suffered and were shamefully treated in Philippi, yet they continued on and went into Thessalonica, continuing to carry the gospel, as the Lord was with them! The result was a great church that also sent out the gospel to others. 1 Thessalonians 1:6-7

- They knew that the Lord was with them and so they continued. Because of their willingness to go, God provided a great victory in seeing the people reached and the church started.
- When you know that God is with you in every situation, you can be used of God and sure to see God working in and around you!
- There is a great verse in the book of Romans. Romans 8:31 says, *“If God be for us, who can be against us?”*
- John said in 1 John 4:4, *“Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.”*

Conclusion:

There is no verse in the Bible that says that being a follower of Christ brings a life with no trouble! In fact, the Bible will tell you the opposite. God knew that if you love Him, the world that hates Him will hate you also.

We can learn from Israel’s experiences while in the wilderness and entering into the Promised Land.

A life obeying the Word of God, and resting in Him and His promises, will not make for a perfect life, but it will make for a life that God can bless and use to be a blessing to others.