

## “New Beginnings”

By Mrs. Sojourner

Many people see New Years as a time for resolutions, starting over, or for course corrections.

I see no problem with a person evaluating their life and making any necessary course corrections at the New Year, but because of God’s grace we do not have to wait for New Years. Consider the following scripture passage:

21 Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope:  
22 Because of the LORD’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail.  
23 They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.  
24 I say to myself, “The LORD is my portion; therefore I will wait for him.”  
25 The LORD is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him;  
26 it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD.  
Lamentations 3:21-26 (NIV)

Jesus died and rose again so we could, as soon as a problem is evident to us, repent (turn around) and go the way we need to go. The Lord’s faithfulness is great.

Let us continually, throughout this New Year remember



Notes:

[a]

that making the course corrections God is reveals to us along the road of life is not reserved for New Year’s or for special celebration times. Any day can be a “New Beginnings” day.

Making these gradual “course corrections” is a part of the Christian walk. Daily spending time reading/ studying the Bible and praying are so key for a Believer to be able to hear the Lord when he wants a course correction made. Time waiting quietly for the Lord’s instruction is an act of worship.

Let us walk into this New Year with hope, expectation, and the knowing that every day of this new year can be a “New Beginning” Day as we daily listen and expect the Lord to direct us more and more in his ways.

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# Sojourning

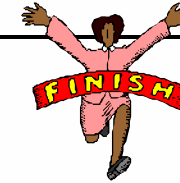
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...with The Sojourner

## “It Is Finished!”

(Teaching Sketch)

John 19:28-37



Many people at this time are busy making New Years promises to themselves and others. These people have reflected on the last year or perhaps years and found there things or behaviors they wish to change in their lives. The old year is finished and what is passed is passed, it can’t be changed.

### Reflection

The only benefit in looking back is to learn what needs to be kept and what needs to be pitched in a person’s life. “The unexamined life,” Socrates<sup>[1]</sup> said, “is not worth living.” Well, I do not often quote from ancient texts if they are not a part of Scripture but it is important to reflect on our own lives. This self-reflection needs to always be in relationship to Scripture. God’s Word puts the idea of reflection upon our own lives differently from Socrates. The scriptures admonish us to judge ourselves so we will not be judged. The supposition here then is we will examine and correct our course to match that of the scripture in order for us to complete the

tasks which have been given us by God. Yes, our tasks from God are gifts!

### Evaluation

Placing a value on what we observe in our lives comes from evaluation or the reflection. Making judgments about matters need not be condemnation of one’s life as a whole but a “fine tuning” of one’s efforts at hitting the mark.

### Starting

The world is full of starters! People generally only begin a thing which they believe will, once carried out, yield a benefit to themselves or others. Anyone can start an endeavor but not all finish what they start. Many people want a nearly immediate finish with great benefit nearly instantly. Despise not the day of small things<sup>[2]</sup> (beginnings) we are told from scripture. The reason is the beginning does not often resemble the thing at the end or created. Does a seed look like the full grown plant which, when mature, creates more seeds which in turn have no resemblance to the plant from which it came. A thing

Notes:

[1] Apology  
38a

[2] Zechariah  
4:10

[3] Philippians  
3:14

[4] Romans  
5:3-5

[5] Matthew  
25:21 &  
23

Please note: This is a teaching sketch only and not the complete teaching.

## Scripture:

John 19:28 – 37 (NIV)

### The Death of Jesus

28 Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty." 29 A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips. 30 When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. 31 Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jews did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. 32 The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of

[a] Exodus 12:46; Num. 9:12; Psalm 34:20

[b] Zech. 12:10

the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other. 33 But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. 34 Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. 35 The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe. 36 These things happened so that the Scripture would be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken,"<sup>[a]</sup> 37 and, as another Scripture says, "They will look on the one they have pierced."<sup>[b]</sup>

## "It Is Finished!" (Teaching Sketch)

John 19:28-37

or matter must be brought to its maturity.

### Finishing

There are far less finishers than there are starters. Perseverance and patience are the keys. The Apostle Paul said, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."<sup>[3]</sup> Paul also said, "Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us."<sup>[4]</sup> It is important when finishing a matter not to condemn and deride oneself when noticing an imperfection but to learn change it, get back on track and repent, then finish.

### Well Done

It is this, the finishing of the task gifts given by God, which will bring about hearing him say, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."<sup>[5]</sup> What better words could be heard than well done with one's gifts!

### Just so you'll know:

**Our service is informal.** We look to the Holy Spirit of God to guide us corporately and individually.

Our service usually follows this general pattern:

- **Informal sharing** of what we have seen the Lord do in, through, and around us since we last met.
  - Testimonies are often a part of the conversation.
- **Opening Prayer**
- **Praise & Worship**
- **Words of Prophecy or Knowledge** if they have been given during "Praise & Worship" (other times as the Spirit moves).
- **The Pastoral Message**
- **Prayer Requests**
  - Ministry to those present & intercession.
- **The Blessing**

