

THE GOOD NEWSLETTER

FRESH START



COVERED BY GRACE



RENEWED EXISTENCE

DREAMING OF A NEW BEGINNING

At the age of 17, Joseph had a dream that turned his whole life upside down. His brothers despised him because he was their father's favorite and because he had had a dream that his family would bow down to him. He was sold by his brothers to a merchant and it took a lot of time before he came in front of the pharaoh in the palace. God blessed him in all these situations and on his 30th he entered a new phase in which he had royal authority over all of Egypt. Because of the famine, Joseph's family came to him for food but they didn't recognize him. By now, Joseph had come to understand that words were powerful and that he wanted God's wisdom to deal with difficult situations. There was a lot of time between the dream and the outcome, that his family would bow down to him. A dream can sometimes be so big that you need time to grow before you can handle the outcome, surrender it to God and let Him work in you so you'll be able to bear it!

"Even when we were dead and doomed in our many sins, he united us into the very life of Christ and saved us by his wonderful grace!" **Ephesians 2:5**

NEW YEAR, NEW YOU

Sometimes, by choice or not, you have to leave the old behind and make a new start. Though it can be overwhelming, if you persevere, you'll be able to look back on it and be grateful and proud! Provided you persevere of course, to start is one thing but pushing through often makes people want to stop. What if you can make a new start and you don't have to do it all alone? That you'll have someone to fall back on when it's too much for you to handle or when you have lost your purpose? How nice it would be to not have to carry all the burdens yourself and to have someone unconditionally next to you!



The good news is that this is possible! God wants to do it together with you, He wants to live in your heart. When you are baptized, you leave your old life behind in the water. You are washed clean of your past and filled with the Holy Spirit. From now on you enter into life with God, you have a direct line to Him. Because Jesus went to the cross and took all sins upon himself, we can come to God freely. "For I know what plans I have for you," says the Lord. "With these plans I have your happiness in mind, not your misfortune. I want to give you a future and new hope." Jeremiah 29:11 This is a promise that applies to you too! God has such beautiful things in store for you and He can work through any situation. On your own, a new start will be disappointing and difficult, but if you ask God if He wants to start a new life with you, you'll notice that nothing is impossible in Him!

The birds in the sky and the lilies in the field are cared for. As His child you can expect so much more. As Him to let you flourish!



PRAYER OF RENEWAL

Father in Heaven, thank You for Your goodness and Your faithfulness. Thank You for wanting to renew my heart every time so that I may become more and more like You. Every day, every moment I can start again because You died on the cross for me. Help me to repent and seek the good that You have designed for me. Work through me so that I may be a blessing to my surrounding and that Your light may shine through me. In Jesus' name alone, amen.

Don't be pulled in different directions or worried about a thing. Be saturated in prayer throughout each day, offering your faith-filled requests before God with overflowing gratitude. Philippians 4:6

BITTERSWEET

Naomi had heard that God had looked after His people by giving them bread. Together with Ruth, they left Moab under sad circumstances. Naomi was grieving, the death of her husband and two sons, and she thought that God was against her. Yet Ruth chose to stay with her: 'I want to stay with you forever. Your people will be my people and your God my God.' When they arrived in Bethlehem, Naomi said: "Please don't call me Naomi anymore," she insisted. "Instead, call me Marah, because Almighty God has dealt me a bitter blow." -Ruth 1:20. Naomi and Ruth had left their old life behind without knowing what lay ahead. Despite their feelings of disappointment and sorrow, they walked to Bethlehem with trust in God. There Ruth was blessed with a good husband and children. In this way, Naomi still had offspring so that the family name would not perish and she would be cared for in old age. The echo of Ruth resounds in Acts 20:32, "And so now, I entrust you into God's hands and the message of his grace, which is all that you need to become strong. All of God's blessings are imparted through the message of his grace, which he provides as the spiritual inheritance given to all of his holy ones." God's goodness does not depend on how you feel, He can work through any situation. Even if you have to start a new phase against your will or you find it scary to leave the old behind, whatever you feel; it may be there. As long as we continue to choose Him by trusting Him in every step we take.



- Discover in prayer what kind of relationship you have with God. Is He your Friend, your Father or don't even know yet? When you figure that out, it'll make your prayerlife more meaningful.
- Read: I'll start again monday - Lysa Terkeurst
- Listen: If my eyes were blind - The Steeldrivers

CLOAK OF GRACE

To study, Genesis 6 en Genesis 9

God thought Noah was the only righteous and upright man on earth, because he lived in close communion with God. Noah was told by God to build an ark out of wood. Animals and food had to come on board, so that he and his family (Shem, Ham and Japheth) would survive the great flood and repopulate the earth. "*I will do away with my ruined creation [...], for it breaks my heart that I made them!*" said God. Eventhough the population would start again, not all evil had disappeared. Noah, a farmer, was the first to plant a vineyard. He drank so much of the wine he made that he got drunk and passed out naked inside his tent. Ham went into the tent and gazed on his shamefully exposed father. Then he went out and informed his brothers. Shem and Japheth took their father's cloak and walked backwards into the tent to cover up their naked father. Respectfully, they turned their faces away so as not to see their father lying there exposed. Ham wanted to make Noah's shame public, condemnation by the law, Shem and Japheth wanted to cover up his shame, act of grace. Noah's ark foreshadows what Jesus would do.



Before the coming of Jesus, people were condemned by the law. Adam and Eve lived the closest to God, and yet they were tempted to indulge in sin, this to indicate that we need a Savior. God has promised to never again destroy the earth with a flood and gave the rainbow as a symbol of his promise.

God has given us Jesus as a fulfillment of that promise. Jesus has fulfilled the law because we cannot. "*I am the sprouting vine and you're my branches. As you live in union with me as your source, fruitfulness will stream from within you—but when you live separated from me you are powerless.*" John 15:5. If we accept Jesus, renewal can take place from within. In this way, nothing has to be destroyed to start again, and the old may be covered by grace out of love.