

CHANGE YOUR FOCUS
God's Doing A New Thing

Isaiah 43:18-19 – God's Mercy & Israel's Unfaithfulness

TEXT: 18 **Forget** the former things; **do not dwell** on the past. 19 See, **I am doing a new thing!** Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland.

PROPOSITION: To motivate the hearer to seek a new vision and a new interest in the things of God.

INTRODUCTION: Isaiah's writings to the children of Israel came at a bleak period of their history.

They are in captivity, they have lost everything they thought they would keep forever and they were home sick ***for the land and the blessing God had promised them. They would cry to God, and again He would hear and deliver them. A new exodus would take place through a new desert...***

The 1st step

to embracing the new thing that God wants to do in your life is to:

I. CHANGE YOUR FOCUS

QUIT LOOKING BEHIND START LOOKING HEAD

v.18 **Forget** the former things; **do not dwell** on the past.

If you are continually looking behind, ***you cannot see where you are going.***

If you are ever going to **move on to new things in Christ** you must learn that:

- A. You Cannot **Depend Upon Past Victories** To Sustain You!
- B. **Forget** the ***former things***; CHANGE YOUR FOCUS

Application: The children of Israel had **many victories** in their past:

1. Leaving Egypt
2. Conquering the Land of Canaan
3. Fighting off prospective conquerors
4. Survived a split in their country

But now they are in captivity.

- A.) All their previous victories were **doing nothing** to set them free.
- B.) They needed a new work, a new miracle, a new victory.

The question **isn't** *what has God done* –**the question must be:**

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">A.) <u>What is God doing</u> in your life right now?B.) <u>What is it that you want</u> Him to do in your life right now? |
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Secondly,

In order to **move on** to new things in Christ!

You must know that You Cannot Allow **Your Past Failures to Possess You**

- **Don't dwell on the past!!!!!!!!!!!!!! CHANGE YOUR FOCUS**

The children of Israel had failed God miserably.

- Every time **He blessed them** with good things,
 - They returned to Him evil things:
1. **God gave** them the Temple - **they gave** Him idol worship
 2. **God gave** them truth - **they lived** and proclaimed a lie
 3. **God gave** them His commands - **they lived** like they were suggestions.
 4. **God gave** them wealth - **they used** it to abuse the poor
 5. **God gave** them Himself - **they gave** Him nothing except rejection.

The children of Israel **did not deserve** to receive anything from God.

- Yet **He still loved them** and He earnestly wanted to **help them change**.

Notice God's Message:

Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past.

See, I am doing a new thing! CHANGE YOUR FOCUS

- God **was not** condemning them for their past,
- They could do nothing to **change it**.

Instead God was holding out **the hand of hope**.

- He is in effect saying: **Forget** about your past –
- **I am giving you** an opportunity to **start over**. CHANGE YOUR FOCUS

Isaiah 55:7 - Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts.

Let him **turn to the LORD**, and **he will have mercy** on him, and to our God, for he will **freely pardon**.

- If you are going to get **anywhere in your spiritual life**
- **You must understand** that **you cannot live on yesterday's Faith**

Fact: The children of Israel **had experienced great spiritual blessings** throughout their history.

- From the **first Passover**,
- to the **crossing** of the Red Sea,
- to the **conquering** of the Land of Canaan,
- to the **building** of the temple,
- **the children of Israel had seen the hand of God at work** in and through their lives.

Yet **their faith** in what God had done **was doing nothing to** deliver them from **their present situation**.

Their old faith **was not sufficient enough** to deliver them from **their present problems**.

They needed **new faith**, a **new vision** for **what God could do!** Change your focus

They needed a **new portion of the faith** that had brought to pass **all the victories from before**. They **needed revival** – ask God to **give you a fresh touch of His love**.

Psalm 85:6-8 Will You not **revive us again**, that your people may rejoice in you? **Show us your mercy**, Lord and grant us your salvation. I will hear what God the Lord will speak, **HE PROMISES PEACE TO HIS PEOPLE – Don't return to folly!!!**
CHANGE YOUR FOCUS - QUIT LOOKING BEHIND START LOOKING HEAD!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

The 2nd step to embracing the new thing what God wants to do in your life is to

II. CLARIFY YOUR FOCUS -- DISCOVER WHAT GOD WANTS FOR YOU

18 Forget the former things; **do not dwell** on the past.

19 See, I am doing a **new thing!** Now it springs up; **do you not perceive it?** I am **making a way** in the desert and **streams** in the wasteland.

1. What do you see when you view your life?
2. Do you see possibilities or problems?

Notice what God said: “I am **making a way** in the desert **and streams** in the wasteland.”

- The children of Israel **had a choice**.
- They could **view their past** and the **problems of their present**,
- or they could **focus upon what God wanted to do** in their lives.

Way -vs. - Desert

Streams -vs. – Wasteland

In order to discover what God wants for you, You Must First See Yourself as God

Sees You CHANGE YOUR FOCUS – CLARIFY ☺

The children of Israel felt as though they were **getting just what they deserved** because of **the way they had lived.**

Some even believed that **God would never have anything more to do with them.**

But they were wrong!!!!!!!!!!!! CHANGE YOUR FOCUS

You may feel like **your past has made your life a wasteland**

But in God, your life can become a stream of life.

Romans 8:1-2

Therefore, there is now **no condemnation** for those who are **in Christ Jesus,** 2 because **through Christ Jesus** the law of the Spirit of life **set me free** from the **law of sin and death.** CLARIFY YOUR FOCUS

Colossians 1:21-22

And you, who once were **alienated** and **enemies in your mind** **by wicked works,** yet now **He has reconciled** in the body of **His flesh through death,** **to present you holy, and blameless,** and **above reproach in His sight** CHANGE & CLARIFY

In order to discover what God wants for you,

- You Must **See Your Possibilities as God Sees Them** -
- I am **making a way in the desert!!!!**
- **God is able to transform** the desert areas of your life
- Into fields of **blessing and abundance.**

God can take a **dried up useless life** and **transform it into a life of purpose and grace:**

2 Corinthians 3:17 - 18

Now the Lord is the Spirit and where the Spirit of the Lord is, *there is freedom.*
And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

CLARIFY YOUR FOCUS -- DISCOVER WHAT GOD WANTS FOR YOU

Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past!!!!!!

The greatest step to embracing the new thing what God wants to do in your life is to

III. COMMIT YOURSELF TO GOD'S PLAN

God had already set into motion the events and people who would lead Israel out of captivity and back into the land of blessing.

But it was still up to them to decide if they wanted **what God was offering.**

- A. If they refused God's plan,
- B. If they refused to follow where God was leading,
- C. Then they would be doomed to remain in their captivity.

I am doing a new thing!!!!!!!!!!!! CHANGE YOUR FOCUS

Now it springs up; ***do you not perceive it?***

I am making a way in the desert **and streams** in the wasteland.

God has already set into motion

- a new direction and a new purpose for your life – **CLARIFY**
- **Will you follow Him? CHANGE YOUR FOCUS?????**

CLOSE:

Psalms 95:7 - 8

7 For **He is our God** and **we are the people** of **His pasture**, the flock under his care.

8 Today, **if you will hear His voice:**

Do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion.

PROPOSITION:

Seek a new vision and a **new interest** in the **things of God**.

1. CHANGE YOUR FOCUS - QUIT LOOKING BEHIND START LOOKING HEAD

What is God doing in your life **right now?**

What is it that you want Him to do in your life **right now?**

You must know that **You Cannot** Allow –

Your Past Failures to Possess You -

Don't dwell on the past!!!!!!!!!!!!

PRAISE & WORSHIP TEAM

2. CLARIFY YOUR FOCUS -- DISCOVER WHAT GOD WANTS FOR YOU

What do you see **when you view your life?**

Do you see **possibilities or problems?**

3. COMMIT YOURSELF TO GOD'S PLAN

God has already set into motion

- a new direction and a new purpose **for your life** –
- ***Will you follow Him??***