

A NEW BEGINNING: EMBRACE THE NEW!

Scripture used: [Isaiah 43:16-19 \(NIV\)](#)

OVERVIEW

Pastor Hurmon continued our sermon series on A New Beginning this week with a powerful sermon about embracing the new. The key insight is how God wants to make our lives impactful despite the pandemic and all the other suffering in our lives. As painful as suffering is, God is uniquely able to redeem suffering and transform it into positive impact, if we let Him work through us! This is easier said than done, though. We learned earlier about how we must forget the past and stay focused, but even those two steps are not enough. We now have to embrace the new things that God is doing. This is exactly what NBCC is doing as a church: we are not trying to return to the past of only in-person gatherings. We look forward to a time when we can gather at both the Redwood City and San Jose campuses, but on top of this, we are also embracing the new and committed to continuing our Online Gatherings, because of the new fruit they are bringing. With God's help, NBCC will embrace the new things and new opportunities that God is bringing. And so will each of us!

KEY POINTS

- 1) **God's process of redemption never stops.** There is a never ending process of redemption in this world. God is transforming suffering into impact regardless of who we are, where we are, or what we're dealing with. Joseph went from Canaan to Potiphar's house to a jail cell to the leader of an entire nation. Then, eventually, the Israelites who moved to Egypt were enslaved and had to be delivered through Moses and Aaron. They ended up in the Wilderness and needed a new leader, Joshua, to bring them into the Promised Land, and so it continues even up to today. What matters throughout all of this is that God is our Redeemer, as it says in [Isaiah 43:14 \(NIV\)](#)! He was at work in the background during Joseph's time, Moses' time, Joshua's time, and is at work in the background during COVID-19. God is sitting on the throne, triumphant. And He wants us to play a role in that victory over death.
- 2) **Embracing the new isn't easy.** There are three key insights that Pastor Hurmon wants us all to remember about embracing the new. The first is to own our stuff. We must be completely honest with ourselves about where we are right now. This will naturally lead us to repentance, which means both a change of heart and a shift in perspective. The need to shift our perspective is the second point. Once we own our stuff and adopt a different mindset, this leads us to the third part of the process: expecting God-orchestrated surprises. The Lord is at work in every situation.
- 3) **Adopt a growth mindset.** The best way to prepare ourselves to play a role in God's redemptive plan is to have a growth mindset. That means seeing ourselves as capable of growth, rather than being stuck as the person we are today. A growth mindset says, "I can learn anything I want to," while a fixed mindset says, "I'm either good at it or I'm not." A growth mindset says, "When I fail, I learn," versus a fixed mindset of, "When I fail, I'm no good." Growth says, "When I'm frustrated, I persevere," not, "When I'm frustrated, I quit." Finally, growth says, "If you succeed, I feel inspired," not, "If you succeed, I feel threatened."

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - Embracing the new requires real change. This starts a conversation between us and God. For God to work in the world, we have to ask for it -- we need to be open to change -- and then follow through on those things He has put in our heart. What kind of change are you more open to right now? What kind of changes are you more resistant to? Why?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - There is so much suffering and brokenness in the world, especially right now. As Jesus followers, we must live hopefully. Consider [Isaiah 43:18-21 \(NIV\)](#). We know that God does the unexpected in the worst of times. When God does a new thing, how much of it is up to God, and how much of it is up to us? What is our part to play? What does God have to do in our hearts to prepare us for the new things He is orchestrating? This week's question is "What does living with empathy and expectation look like in my life?" Discuss with others, while remembering that the answer should fit into God's plan, not ours.
- 3) **DO** - Pastor Hurmon gave us an uplifting affirmation for this week: "God, help me to embrace the new thing that You are doing in my life!" Let's take this to God each day as a part of His process of redemption. And, if helpful, meditate over the characteristics of a growth mindset versus a fixed mindset. Ask God for help to be open to growth and new things! See you next Sunday!