

Needed: New Beginnings!

By Joy Rice Martin

The coming of spring reminds me of new beginnings. I looked in my garden back in March and my knockout roses looked dead. In the fall I had pruned them, but now they appeared to be "knocked out" for good! But it was amazing what spring rain, sunshine, and plant food did for them. Now they are all full of brilliant, deep red blooms. New life has come to my garden. First my tulips came up, the Bradford pear trees were covered with tiny white petals, then the azaleas bloomed, the cherry trees blossomed, and now my roses and day lilies (beautiful yellow) have transformed our yard. Even my two hibiscus trees, which survived a rough winter, now are covered with green buds. There is the hope of new life everywhere!

This reminds me that God likes new beginnings. Look at what He says in Isaiah 43:18-19, - **"Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold I will do a NEW thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert."** God promises to do new things in our lives in every season!

I think everyone experiences times when it seems that all the things we cherished in the past are changing. Doors have been closed. Some perhaps have an empty nest for the first time, or have retired, maybe not voluntarily. Maybe you have moved and are faced with finding a new church and making new friends. Perhaps you have lost a job, or a child, or a mate, and you feel numb inside.

Is there hope for you? Does God have something wonderful in store for you and me? I believe that absolutely, because God says "I know the plans I have for you...plans to give you a future and hope" (Jer. 29:11). Think about these verses, "And he hath put a **NEW** song in my mouth, even praise unto our God..." (Ps. 40:3); "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are **NEW** every morning: great is thy faithfulness."

If you feel like your body is failing, and your strength is gone, claim this promise: "I am continually with thee; thou hast held me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory....**My heart and my flesh fail, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever**" (Ps. 73:23,24,26). So dear one, take heart. Just like a root out of dry ground that springs back to life, so you too can experience new mercies every day and fresh growth in the Lord.

What new things would you like to see in your life this summer? Pray about it, and then make a list of these things. Then ask God to show you what your part will be.

Here are the lyrics of a sweet song by Don Moen based on the Scripture in Isaiah 43:18-19.

*"God will make a way, where there seems to be no way;
He works in ways we cannot see,
He will make a way for me.
He will be my guide, hold me closely to His side,
With love and strength for each new day,
He will make a way, He will make a way.*

*By a roadway in the wilderness you lead me,
And rivers in the dessert there I see;
Heaven and earth will fade away,
But His Word shall remain,
And He will do something new today.
God will make away, He will make a way."*
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Today take some time to go outside and enjoy God's new things in this season--the birds' joyful songs early in the morning, beautiful flowers, the stars at night, the beauty of the mountain or plains or woods--wherever you live, find a spot to cherish and rejoice in God's new work! Then trust Him to do His new work and make a way for you, no matter what obstacles you are facing.

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