

A close-up photograph of pink cherry blossoms in full bloom, with green leaves and dark brown branches. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green.

April 2016

From the Pastor



## A New Beginning

April is a wonderful month. It is the time when we see all sorts of new beginnings. Trees are beginning to leaf. Flowers are beginning to break through the ground. Many home gardeners are beginning to prepare the soil for all sorts of new plants.

When I think of these new beginnings, I am reminded of what the Bible has to say about how God renews us and how the Christian life is a fresh new life. Consider these verses.

The first comes from when the prophet Jeremiah wrote about how the nation of Israel would turn their hearts from God and yet God would forgive and start afresh with them. Look at what is written in the book of Lamentations.

<sup>22</sup> *The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end;*  
<sup>23</sup> *they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. (Lamentations 3:22-23 ESV)*

Like the dawning of a new spring day, God's love is fresh each day. He loves us with a constant love that remains with us even though we fail. God is there to love us each day. When we woke up this morning, God was there loving us.

Another passage that comes to mind is found in the book of 2 Corinthians. The apostle Paul speaks of the new life that we experience once we put our faith in Jesus.

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (2 Corinthians 5:17 ESV)*

Like a brand new baby, we are brand new when we come to Christ. The life we held onto before coming to Christ is one in which we turned our back on God. However, that life is dying away, and a new life is growing within us. We are new and becoming new at the same time. It's like a prince who is born into royalty has all the rights of royalty immediately but grows into that royalty. We are new in Christ, and we grow into that newness the moment we become believers.



King David wrote a song about God giving him something new. He was struggling in terrible times of despair, and God changed things.

<sup>2</sup> *He drew me up from the pit of destruction,  
out of the miry bog,  
and set my feet upon a rock,  
making my steps secure.*

<sup>3</sup> *He put a new song in my mouth,  
a song of praise to our God.  
Many will see and fear,  
and put their trust in the LORD.*

*(Psalm 40:2-3 ESV)*

As we cry out to God for deliverance from the trials we face, God will carry us through those trials, and on the other end we will have a new song on our lips to praise God for all He has done. God revives our heart.

As we see all the new things that April brings, such as baby birds, new leaves on the trees, green grass, I hope that this year they remind you of all the “new” that is found in God.

In Him and for His glory,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pastor Art". The word "Pastor" is written in a cursive style, and "Art" is written in a more stylized, blocky cursive.