



New Year Special Study

## NEW YEAR, NEW YOU

Luke 5: 37 – 38; Ephesians 2: 14-15; Isaiah 43: 19

As a new year rolls in, it is noble to make new year resolutions. However, Jesus likens most people's new year resolutions to "new wine ... in old bottles" (Luke 5: 37), with the grievous consequences of breaking the bottle and spilling the wine. It means that new year resolutions can only flourish in the "new man." New man in the sense of the inner person. Our priority in the new year is becoming "**a new man**" through the grace of God (Ephesians 2: 14-15). In this study, we will examine some promises of God to make us new ("New You" promises). Then, we will do a spiritual self-audit in the light of the "New You" promises. Finally, we will do our new year personal development plan based on our spiritual self-audit. The exercise will help identify your goals and prayer needs for a "New You" in the new year. A "New You" will manifest this year by paying attention to the promises, studying the word of God, and praying the promises through.

### "New You" Promises

1. **A New Heart.** In Ezekiel 36:26, God promised us a new heart. The promise refers to a heart made free from sinful imaginations for the Trinity to live in. That is the secret of a new person (Ezekiel 11:19; 18:31; 36:26).
2. **A New Covenant.** Covenants are our agreements with God. The promise of a new covenant in the New Testament is mediated by Jesus' blood (Hebrews 12:24), and offers us opportunities for new commitments and better service to God.
3. **A New Commandment.** ... "that ye love one another; as I have loved you" (John 13:34; 15:14). We have a promise of God's abiding presence by obeying all His commandment including this one to love each other.
4. **A New Name.** A new name connotes new identity with God (Isaiah 62: 2). Christ's promise of a new name is for Christians who overcome falsehood and temptations (Revelation 2: 17; 3: 12). That is your new identity.
5. **A New Song.** A new song is promised for our daily lives as delivered and lifted witnesses (Psalm 40: 2-3), our victorious faith (Psalm 149: 1, 6), and our final redemption (Revelation 5: 9). God lives in our praises (Psalm 22:3).

### Action Plan Activity

God promises us that "**Behold, I will do a New Thing; now it shall spring forth... I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert**" (Isaiah 43:19). God will do a new thing when we do our part. We must take actions on the "New You" promises of God for 2023. To help make our action plans toward achieving the "New You" promises, we will be using methods learned from the December 2022 IMPACT Excellentia Seminar.

We will do a spiritual self-audit with SWOT (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis on each of the "New You" promises. Your strengths are the "New You" promises working for you which you must continue to intensify, your weaknesses are the failing "New You" promises you need to challenge, your opportunities are the "New You" promises to explore, your threats are the danger signs to the "New You" promises that you need to discontinue (see next page).

1. Check the circles in each of the SWOT boxes to do a self-audit of your spiritual personality with the "New

You” promises

- Strengths (Intensify)**
- New Heart (My life is a holy temple for God)
  - New Covenant (Renewed covenant with God)
  - New Commandment (Committed to obedience)
  - New Name (Identify as an overcomer in public and private)
  - New Song (Living for God’s glory e.g. daily praises, personal witnessing, love God etc.)

- Weakness (Challenge)**
- New Heart (Have guilt for defiling imaginations)
  - New Covenant (Do not always have faith in God’s promises, hence not committed to God and service)
  - New Commandment (Finds it difficult to obey some Scriptures)
  - New Name (Does not always overcome temptations, and too shy to seek counsel)
  - New Song (Not really concerned with glorifying God)

**SWOT**

- Opportunities (Explore)**
- New Heart (Personal prayers and meditations)
  - New Covenant (New calls in God’s service to deeper vows)
  - New Commandment (Opportunities to commit to obedience)
  - New Name (Fellowship and network opportunities with overcomers)
  - New Song (Personal evangelism, worship and other things that glorify God)

- Threats (Discontinue)**
- New Heart (Busy schedules, distractions, cannot pray, insensitive and stony heart)
  - New Covenant (Disappointment with unanswered prayers, fearful of vowing anything to God)
  - New Commandment (Situations that makes obedience difficult are all around)
  - New Name (Shame and shyness to identify with the Christian lifestyle)
  - New Song (Self-glory, celebrity worship, social media followings, secular engagements)

## 2. Do a Personal Development Plan

### **Personal Development Plan**

- Aggregate your spiritual self-audit with your SWOT analysis. Note in which box you are most heavy.
- Identify your present personal spiritual state based your check points in Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats
- Set goals for a “New You”
- Remember that a “New You” can only form by faith, reading and hearing God’s words, and prayers. Invest your time accordingly.
- Keep evaluating your spiritual life in 2023 with the “New You” spiritual self-audit on regular basis
- Mark any “New thing” that has changed in your spiritual life in 2023