

# New Season New Choices

Sermon Title: **New Season New Choices**

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Well, I would like to read just a little humor I came across. At Saint Peters Catholic Church in Toronto, they have weekly husbands marriage seminars. In the session last week, the priest asked Frank, who said he was approaching his 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, to take a few minutes to share some insight into how he had managed to stay married to the same woman all these years. So Frank replied to the assembled husbands: "Well, I tried to treat her nice. I spent the money on her." He said: "Best of all, I took her to Italy for the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary." The priest responded: "Frank, you are an amazing inspiration to all the husbands here. Please tell us what you are planning for your wife for your 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary." Frank proudly replied: "Well, I'll be going to pick my wife up."

I just want to read just a couple of scriptures. You have handouts before you; Isaiah chapter 43. We will just read the first two verses, verse 18 and verse 19. Let's read them together in unison: "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." I also want to read a scripture in the book of Deuteronomy; just one verse in Deuteronomy. The fifth book of the bible, Deuteronomy chapter 30 verse 19. It says: "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you. That I have set before you, life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore choose life." And he implies: also choose blessing that both thou and thy seed may live.

I just want to use as a subject: New Season, New Choices. As we enter a new season, I just want to encourage you to let you know that God is good. God loves you. God enjoys blessing his people. He has an increase of his favor in store for us. God wants to do some new things, some unique things, some exciting things. Over in the book of Habakkuk chapter 1:5, God says: I want to do something that even if it were told to you, you wouldn't believe it. I want to do something so awesome that even if it were told to you, you wouldn't believe it. He wants to take us to a new place of his rich blessing. This is a new season that God is bringing us into. Brand new things in store...new life, new opportunity, new blessings, new growth, new favor. God loves to outdo himself. God never performs his greatest feats in our yesterdays.

God wants to show his favor in your life greater today than it was yesterday. God wants you to be more blessed. He wants you to have a greater blessing in your life today than you had yesterday. God wants to do a new thing. He loves and he enjoys blessing his people. Flip over to Psalm 115. I just love this scripture; I think about it all the time and it's one of my favorite psalms. This will just let you know how much God wants to bless you. Psalm 115:12-15, notice what it says: "The Lord hath been mindful of us." God's been thinking about you! You are on God's mind! The bible actually says in Psalm 139 that the thoughts God thinks about us are innumerable. They can't even be counted. God thinks about you all the time.

Jeremiah 29:11 says: I know the thoughts I think toward you saith God. Thoughts to prosper you; thoughts for your increase; for your prosperity; plans for your future to give you hope; plans for your good. That is what God thinks about you. You are on God's mind all the time! God is thinking about you all the time. You are on his mind all the time. He says the Lord has been mindful of us...he will bless us. If you have ever questioned whether or not God will bless you this is the answer. He will bless us! He will bless the house of Israel, he will bless the house of Aaron, he will bless them that fear the Lord, both small and great. The Lord shall increase you more and more, you and your children. It's a new thing that God wants to do. You are always on his mind, he is always thinking about you. He loves you. God wants to outdo himself.

I want you to know that your best days are ahead of you. Your best days are in front of you. You can give birth to more in your future than what you have lost in your past. That is the goodness of our God! That is the greatness of our God! It's a new season. In this new season we are talking about new choices...new season...new choices. I am happy to have a beginning. The Jewish New Year is almost in the middle of the regular calendar year. I needed this new beginning right in the middle of the year. I needed this new beginning! Anybody else needed a new beginning? I needed a new beginning! I was so far off my New Year's resolutions I can't even remember them! I needed a new start. I needed a fresh start. Thank God for new beginnings! Thank God for a fresh start!

God created us with a need for new beginnings. That's why you have a new morning every morning. You can forget about yesterday and you can start over every day. You have a new opportunity! You have a new chance every day. Every day is a new start. God brings a day to a close so you can have a new beginning. He created us with a need to have a new beginning. I am just happy right here in the middle of our year. I'm grateful for the Jewish New Year that we can celebrate New Year's right here in the middle of the year. We can have a new beginning. In this new season we are able to make new choices. You can start afresh. I am so grateful to be able to start fresh. You can start afresh on your dream. You can start fresh on a goal. You are not too old and it's not too late. You can start afresh!

There is a Roman scholar by the name of Cato. Cato started to study Greek when he was more than 80 years old. When asked why he was tackling such a difficult task at his age, he replied: "It's the earliest age I have left". It's never too late. You are never too old to work on a goal; to work on a dream. We can start afresh on our goals and on our dreams. In this new season you can start afresh with your daily discipline; the daily discipline that you need to have. I talked with two or three people lately, and they just talked about how they had fallen off the saddle. Well, I just want to let them know: You can start afresh today! You can get back on the saddle today. You can start afresh on your daily discipline.

John Maxwell said: You are what you do daily. He also said: Success doesn't happen in a day, success happens daily. Your success is found in your daily routine. A reporter asked the great Mr. Casals: "You are 95 years old, and the greatest cellist that ever lived. Why do you still practice six hours a day?" Casals replied: "Because I think I'm making progress." You are what you do daily. Success is found in your daily routine. Success doesn't happen in a day, it happens daily. We can start making good choices daily. God just dropped in my spirit one day about choices. I saw it so clearly...it's the choices we make. You always have two choices. I don't care what it is you do, what you are getting ready to say...you always have two choices. God showed me so clearly you always have two choices.

One night I was getting ready to -- I can't remember what I was about to eat - - but I was about to eat something crazy one night. The wisdom of God spoke up and said you have two choices here: you can choose to eat that. Now let me say this: you have the right to make choices, but you don't have the right to choose your consequence. You don't get to choose the consequence, you can make the choice but you can't choose the consequence. I was about to eat something crazy and the wisdom of God rose up in me, saying: Son, you don't want to do that. That's not a good choice! I obeyed. I'm so happy I obeyed! My stomach didn't hurt. I slept so good, I felt so good the next morning. I said glory to God! I'm so glad I didn't make that stupid choice I was about to make last night.

You always have two choices. I began to see the wisdom of God; it boils down to it's about choices. The wisdom of God is always there to lead you to make the right choice. The wisdom of God is always there to lead you to make the right choice. Notice when he said: I set before you life and death. Then he said choose life. I set before you blessing and cursing. Choose blessing. That's the wisdom of God. The bible says in Proverbs that the wisdom of God is always crying out. But it says that no one will listen. He can't get anybody's attention.

The wisdom of God is always leading us to make the right choice. He is always leading us to make the right choice. You always have two choices. You can sit in front of the television for six hours, or you can read a book and better yourself, and improve your knowledge base, and improve your skills. You have two choices! You can get you a Big Mac and fries, and a piece of cake and sit down, or you can get your tennis shoes on and head out. You can go jogging and you can work out; and you can feel great. You always have two choices!

I don't care what it is that you are about to do, or what you are about to say...you always have two choices. I set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. You always have two choices. When your spouse says something to you sideways, you have two choices. You always have two choices. Now you can poke your lip out and give them a piece of your mind, or you can choose to walk in love and hold your tongue, and allow Godly wisdom to flow out of your mouth. You always have two choices. It's all about choices, and so for this New Year that's what I felt the Holy Spirit impressing on me. You have two choices...make the right choice. You always have two choices...we always have a choice. We need to make the right choice.

I just want to give you some areas to make some good choices in your life every day. Make some good choices for your health every day, you always have two choices. Make some good choices for your health. Your exercise, your eating plan; make some good choices. You always have two choices. You can drive to McDonalds or you can drive to a salad bar. You always have two choices. You can eat an apple or you can eat a piece of cake. You always have two choices. So you want to make good choices. These are choices you want to make daily, because remember your success is found in your daily routine. You are what you do daily, so you want to make good choices on a daily basis, because every moment of the day you are always confronted with choices. Every moment of the day. The minute you get home, you have a choice of what you are about to do. You have a choice of what you are about to say, you have a choice. You always have two choices. Make the right choice.

Make good choices. Make good choices for your health. Make good choices for your time. I like something that Elbert Hubbard said. He said: "Every man is a fool for at least five minutes every day. Wisdom consists in not exceeding the limit." Make good choices for your time. Make good choices for your time every day. Stop long enough to grow a little bit every day. Grow a little bit every day. Read every day. Think every day. Add some value to yourself every day. Enhance your skills every day. Invest in yourself every day. You have a choice. You need to make a good choice for your attitude every day. Choose to be happy. Choose to be optimistic. You always have two choices.

I like what somebody wrote when they were praying. They said: "God so far today I have done alright. I haven't gossiped. I haven't lost my temper. I haven't been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish, or over indulgent. I'm very thankful for that, but God in a few minutes I'm going to be getting up out of bed. From then on I'm going to need a lot more help. You always have two choices. So make good choices about your attitude. Make good choices about your attitude every day. Make good choices about your money every day. These are choices you have to make. You are confronted with these choices every day. Make good choices for your faith every day. Spend some time with God every day. Spend some time in his word every day. In fact, do this first because this sets the tone for your whole day. Make that choice. Spend some time.

How can you handle the pressures of life and the ills of life and you are not connected with your creator...with the omnipotent one, the all powerful one? How can you handle the stresses of life if you are not dwelling in the secret place of the most high, and abiding under the shadow of the almighty? Folks, that's where your strength comes from! That's what undergirds you; that's what gives you the spiritual fortitude to be able to walk in love, and to be able to have joy, and to be able to be thankful and gracious in all of your dealings. It's because you spend time with God. You spend time with God. That's a decision, that's a choice you have to make. You have a choice to do everything else and you also have a choice to spend some time with your creator every day. Make a choice to spend some time, make a choice for your faith. Spend some time with God every day. Make a choice to demonstrate love to your family every day. Invest in your relationship every day.

I thought about it, I said I have a choice: I can fuss and fight with my wife every day or I can love and make love with my...I mean. I chose love! I choose love every time! Listen, life is too short! Life is too short to be arguing. Life is too short to be at each other's throat. Life is too short, make a choice to love. There is a quote that says: You don't have forever. Get busy living and loving because you don't have forever! You don't have forever! Get rid of all that petty stuff, that is too petty. Life is short, make the most of your time. Choose love! Choose Joy! Choose Happiness! I choose to be happy. I choose to love. Make a choice every day to add value to others.

John Maxwell said he calls this the No Grow Soul Principle: Know your purpose in life, grow to your maximum potential, and then sow seeds that benefit others. Make a choice every day to add value to others. As you make this choice to add value to others, I thought about something the Holy Spirit actually prompted this in my heart and I saw clearly what he was saying on this Jewish New Year that we are celebrating, Rosh Hashanah. Everyone had partaken of the apple and the honey, which are the symbols of sweetness so that we are saying may this be the sweetest year on this first day of the New Year. We are saying: May this be the sweetest year that I have ever had.

So we partake of the apple and the honey, but the Holy Spirit he quickened into me, he said: Notice where you are putting that apple and the honey...putting it in your mouth. He said: You are putting it in the mouth.

Over in the book of Proverbs, the apple represents encouragement. Apple represents encouragement. The bible says a word fitly spoken is as apples of gold in pictures of silver. And then he said: The honey is also in your mouth. The bible talks about adding sweetness to your lips. I began to see what he was saying. The apple represents encouragement, honey represents sweetness. So you use kind encouraging words in this New Year. Use kind, the apple is encouraging; the honey is kindness. Use kind and encouraging words throughout this New Year. Then it will be the sweetest year you have ever had. The Holy Spirit showed me that. He showed me that. Praise God! Amen. Glory.

[Pastor James Bronner]: Amen. Wasn't that a great and appropriate message for this New Year? Amen. Even at home we go over our household mission statement every month, and my kids will tell you that is one of the top three principles we have on that mission statement: to make wise choices or decisions. I found with people in life, whether they are in a good place or a bad place, you can always look back over their life and see major decisions...choices that were made to lead them where they are.

When you see somebody in a highly successful place, you can go back over their life and see good choices all through. When you see a real bad place, you can always track it to forks in a road...bad choices that were made. The other thing about those two choices that he talked about, when you don't make a conscious choice for the positive path...you almost default to that negative choice. You don't have to make a choice to say I'm going to have bad health, but if you don't make a choice to get up and exercise and to eat right...you automatically default to that sick.

You don't even have to make a conscious choice to say I want to be broke, but if you don't make a conscious choice to say I'm going to budget and save and manage my money...you will automatically default to the other choice. So we want the positive path, we have to make a conscious choice to do positive things. So we thank C. Elijah for the so appropriate message on this first day of the biblical New Year to help all of us make the right choices that we face every day. Amen.

This is something we have to face every day; we can't go off the good choices we made five years ago. This is daily...not even last week. So we have to make these choices every day. Take that with you all through this year and strive to make better choices in your life...in every area of your life...every area. Whatever choices you make in that area, those are the results you will get. If you make good choices in health, but bad choices in finance...you will have bad results in finance and good

results in health. You have to make it in every area...relationships, your communion with God, every area of your life.