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NEW YEAR NEW LOOK

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# New Editor's Note

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AMANDA STEPHANUS  
Editor-in-Chief



For many people, the start of a new year brings a desire for change—new beginnings, renewed purpose, and improved goals. For some, the new year also marks a major milestone. For *Women Building Godly Lives*, the beginning of 2026 represents a significant accomplishment as we enter our 10th year. With this milestone comes a season of transition. In the fall of 2025, Elizabeth stepped down as Owner and Editor and graciously entrusted me to continue this good work.

When I accepted, I made a commitment to Elizabeth, and I make that same commitment to you. While leadership and appearance have changed, our purpose remains the same. *Women Building Godly Lives* continues to exist for one reason: helping women build their lives upon the solid foundation of Christ (Matthew 7:24).

We invite you to share our website with other women who would be interested in subscribing to our newsletter.

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Please take a moment and visit our updated website:  
**<https://womenbuildinggodlylives.com>**  
where you can read about our staff members as well as read previous newsletters.

# NEW MERCIES

BY: ATHENA SCHERFIUS

Jeremiah lived through the many calamities and atrocities associated with the Babylonian aggression. He bore witness to the fall and destruction of Jerusalem and the carrying away captive of the people. Jerusalem suffered greatly during this dark time. The walls of the city were torn down, the temple was utterly destroyed, and people were ripped from their homes and scattered. During this time, families were torn apart; no age or gender was spared. Some were killed, while others were carried away, never to return home.

Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age... And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all these he brought to Babylon. And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem... And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia (2 Chronicles 36:17-20).

The people of Judah, by their own disobedience and total disregard for God's commands, brought this tragedy upon themselves. They failed to turn to God and His Word.



They were not thankful for all He had done for them. They turned from serving the living God to the idols of the nations. Jehovah's condemnation was devastating.

Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit. Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord. For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters [Jehovah God - TAS], and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns [idols of the nations - TAS], that can hold no water (Jeremiah 2:11-13).

The people also engaged in every type of immorality. In addition to their idolatry, they were guilty of oppressing "the fatherless and the widow" (Jeremiah 7:6), stealing, murder, adultery, and swearing falsely (Jeremiah 7:9). All of this, though God had delivered them out of Egypt with a mighty hand (Daniel 9:15) and brought them into a land of abundance (cf. Joshua 24:13).

Nevertheless, God was faithful. His mercies were without end. He gave them ample opportunity to return to Him and to serve Him. He sent His prophets, pleading with them to repent and warning of consequences if they refused (cf. Jeremiah 25:3-7). It was up to them to make the choice and leave their ungodly lives and return to God. They refused.

They went into captivity. And yet still, God's mercies were overflowing. After seventy years, the Babylonian empire fell to Cyrus, and the people were allowed to return to the land and rebuild the city and the temple (cf. Jeremiah 25:11). From the remnant that returned came the Messiah. God's promise to Abraham and His mercies offered to all humanity are seen in the promised inheritance obtained only in Christ (cf. Genesis 18:15-18; Galatians 3:16-29).

Today, we see that humanity has turned away from God. People are unaware of the mercies He offers daily. They are not grateful for what He provides and turn away from Him with no regard. They live daily without acknowledging God and what He unselfishly provides for them every day (not only the blessing of salvation through Christ, but the many physical blessings that demonstrate His love and mercy for His creation).

Jeremiah, the weeping prophet, wrote, "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. The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him. The Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him" (Lamentations 3:22-25).

We see that God's mercies are new every morning. He is faithful. Every day that we arise, we are blessed by God. He sends the sunshine along with the rain (Acts 14:17). He provides for our needs. Furthermore, we are privileged to live in a country where we can worship God without fear of persecution or threat of life.

As Christians, we have the comfort that the Lord is "good unto them that wait for Him and to the soul that seeks Him" (Lamentations 3:25). God has richly blessed His people and will continue to do so. We do not deserve His mercies, but because God is a loving, just, merciful God, He always provides. We have been given so many opportunities throughout our lives. We have the privilege to serve Him faithfully, and we daily enjoy the hope of heaven. We are also given the opportunity and responsibility to seek and save the lost, to bring the Word to others in this world who do not know God and His mercies.

The Lord is good and merciful. His mercies are new each and every morning. He is faithful to us and to His Word. We must glorify Him and not let any opportunity pass us by to let others know of His glory. We must be aware of those mercies He continually provides and be grateful for them (cf. Psalm 100:4; Colossians 3:15; Philippians 4:6; et al.). Friends, let us strive to live so that we never take for granted the mercies of God. Let us live a life that brings honor and glory to our God. ♦



66 *As Christians, we have the comfort that the Lord is "good unto them that wait for Him and to the soul that seeks Him" (Lamentations 3:25) 99*



# A NEW NAME—CHRISTIAN

## BY: ELIZABETH TURNER BEALL

Names are important. Names identify us. Every person born has a name. Some familiar names are Eve, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, Leah, Ruth, Esther, Mary, Elizabeth, Dorcas, Lydia, Priscilla. Each name mentioned brings something about the person to mind. But these are individual names.

Groups also have names—teachers, evangelists, doctors, lawyers, cooks, gardeners. These names identify what that group has in common. But they are not distinctive or unique.

In the New Testament, we see Jews, Romans, Greeks (also spoken of as Jews and Gentiles). Within the group of Jews are Scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, and Zealots. Each of these groups is a sect within the Jewish culture that has particular beliefs or work to do within that group. These groups are a bit more distinctive, but they are not new.

Disciples are followers of a certain leader. John the baptizer had disciples (Mark 1:4-5). Jesus had His disciples in general and his twelve apostles, making up His inner circle. Through time, various leaders have had disciples—spiritual, political, and cultural. The name “disciples” is not distinctive or unique of any one group.

As the Gospel spread, especially “after the persecution that arose over Stephen” (Acts 11:19-20), Gentiles also heard the Gospel, believed it and obeyed it (Acts 10). Barnabas and Saul taught in Antioch for a year. By this time, those who believed and obeyed in repentance and baptism were no longer just the Jews, but Gentiles as well. They were disciples of Jesus, but Luke tells us these “disciples were first called ‘Christians’ in Antioch” (Acts 11:26).

Look at that word “Christian.” “Christ” is readily seen, the Greek word for “the anointed One” and the Old Testament term “Messiah.” When Jesus lived His life in human form, the “Messiah,” the “Christ,” fulfilled all the Old Testament prophecies. As the work of Jesus was completed, with His crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection, Jesus commissioned the apostles to go out and make disciples of all nations—HOW?—“baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them all things I have commanded you. . . .” (Matthew 28:18-19).



This was a bit different, definitely unique, and NOT just for the Jews only, but all the Gentiles as well. The “ian” suffix means being a follower of and, in this case, a follower of Christ. How were they to follow? John 14:15 says, “If you love Me, keep My commandments.”

There are people today who say we cannot be Christians like they were in Jesus’ day. The question is, “Why not?” **If we do today what they did then, why can’t we be what they became—Christians?** We will be added to that same group of saved people, as in Acts 2:47b: “And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”

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*The new name, “Christian,”  
denotes a way of life, a  
commitment, a surrender to God  
and our Savior.*

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What did they do that was so special and so different that we cannot do today? Look and see. When the people met on that Pentecost Sunday morning, and Peter and the apostles stood up and gave that first Gospel sermon, the people there understood that they were sinners. They had crucified the very One who could save them from their sins. Yes, they HEARD the message, they BELIEVED what they heard and understood who Jesus Christ was/is, and they knew there was something they needed to do. When they asked, Peter told them to “REPENT and be BAPTIZED for the remission/forgiveness of their sins, and they did that, immediately. In fact, three thousand of the ones there that day were baptized for that reason. What they did, along with Gentiles not long after this, made them Christians, followers of Christ Jesus our Savior. They were the beginning group of the same ones who began to be called by that new name--- “Christians” --- in Antioch.

We, today, doing what they did then, are still being added to the Lord’s body/church. The Bible tells us what needs to be done and how to stay faithful. The new name, “Christian,” denotes a way of life, a commitment, a surrender to God and our Savior. Let’s spread that Good News to others and make them a part of that new name--- “Christian.” ♦

**2 CORINTHIANS 5:17** reads, “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become as new.” Vine’s Expository Dictionary defines the word “creature” this way: “...the creative act of God, whereby a man is introduced into the blessing of salvation, in contrast to circumcision done by human hands, which the Judaizers claimed was necessary to that end.” The symbolism is clear: the “new creature” is created by God and, therefore, cannot create itself. We cannot save ourselves, but through God’s power, we become a new creature.

## A NEW CREATURE

BY: ROBYNNE ASHBY



When God transforms us into this new creature, He gives us a requirement: “old things are passed away.” What does this mean? God has done what He said He would do, and now we must do what He has commanded us to do. As new creatures, we live for the One who died for us and no longer live for ourselves (2 Corinthians 5:15). To do this, we must be vigilant to obey the requirements God places on a new creature.

In Colossians 3:12, we are given commands on how to remain a new creature: “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering.” The first part of the verse has the idea of putting on clothing or a garment. We will adorn ourselves with these attributes Paul gives.

The phrase “bowels of mercies” is one we no longer use, but in ancient times, the bowels were seen as the heart. It was thought that the feelings emanated from this area of the body. A better phrase for today would be a “heart of compassion.” Are we calloused toward our fellow man’s trials and hardships, or do we recognize his distress and wish to help? We may not understand or empathize with his situation, but we have the ability to comfort or to alleviate his circumstances. “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2).

Kindness is expected of the Christian. Even worldly people understand this necessary attribute of those who proclaim Christ. Kindness is readily seen and understood by the youngest among us, and they are attracted to it naturally. They intuitively feel safe and are drawn to those who show kindness. Are people drawn to us because of our kindness, or are they repelled because of our unhelpfulness? Ruth and Boaz are excellent examples and ones to emulate. Ruth’s kindness towards her mother-in-law Naomi was known before she went into the fields to glean. Because of this, she was welcomed into the fields, and Boaz, on his part, ensured she had more than enough to sustain her and Naomi (Ruth 2:6-17).



Humbleness of mind is defined as humiliation of mind, that is, modesty (Strong's Concordance). The purest example of humility is Christ in Philippians 2:5-8. Christ showed humbleness of mind to God the Father and to man. Imagine creating a being with your attributes, endowing it with your skills of reason and discernment, providing it with everything it needs for survival, giving it commands for proper worship so that one day the being will be able to enjoy eternity with you, protecting it through centuries, and then making yourself subject to it to the point of allowing your creation to torture and kill you. When we put these things into proper perspective, God is not asking very much of us to humble ourselves.

Longsuffering is often described as patience, but there is more to it than that. It encompasses fortitude and long-enduring temper. Consider Joseph, for example. At the age of 17, Joseph was sold to the slavers and taken to Egypt (Genesis 37:2, 28). In the years following, Joseph served in Potiphar's house, spent 2 years in prison (Genesis 40:1, 41:1), and by the age of 30, came before Pharaoh to interpret Pharaoh's dreams (Genesis 41:46). Imagine the highs and lows of Joseph's life during these 13 years. He went from a beloved son to a slave, a trusted servant to a criminal, a prisoner to the second in command only to Pharaoh.

**“When we put these things into proper perspective, God is not asking very much of us to humble ourselves.”**

The word “meekness” is perhaps one of the most misunderstood words in our time. It is used erroneously to mean someone of a timid nature, almost a pushover. That could not be further from the truth. Meekness is power under control, the capability to dominate another but abstaining because of gentleness and humility. The Bible describes Moses as “...very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth” (Numbers 12:3). This was a commentary of Moses' character given during the account of Miriam and Aaron's speaking against him. Instead of using the power and authority given to him by God to silence and rebuke them, Moses instead prayed to God to heal Miriam of the leprosy with which she had been struck. We should all strive to be like Moses, an individual known for his meekness, not one who uses his power to overwhelm or abuse others.

When Joseph's brothers came to Egypt and He revealed to them who he was, Joseph told them that everything he endured was part of God's plan for the saving of Jacob's family. (Genesis 45:5-8). Joseph would later emphasize to them that what they meant for evil, God meant for good (Genesis 50:20). His example of longsuffering and the attitude displayed during those years is one we all should emulate. Will we be longsuffering in our own situations and trials? Will we be longsuffering towards those who wish us ill? If Joseph can do so in his circumstances, we can too.

While these are not the only attributes with which a new creature must adorn itself, they are necessary in our lives. They are attainable, and they will enhance our lives in the way God desires.♦

**"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."**

**- Lamentations 3:22-23**

**WRITE THE VERSE:**

**PERSONAL REFLECTIONS:**

***“...And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.”***

- *Acts 11:26*

## WRITE THE VERSE:

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS:

***“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”***

## - 2 Corinthians 5:17

## WRITE THE VERSE:

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS:

# QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION OR GROUP DISCUSSION:

1. With what other attributes must a new creature adorn itself?  
(Galatians 5:22-23, Colossians 3:12-15, 2 Peter 1:5-7)
2. How will a new creature incorporate these attributes in its life? Be specific to situations that regularly occur in your life and daily interactions.
3. How are you reflecting a life worthy of the name “Christian”? What are you doing that shows you are a follower of Christ?
4. Make a list of the daily blessings God provides for you. How are you expressing your appreciation to God for these blessings?
5. What are some “safeguards” we can put in place to make sure we do not become ungrateful for what God does for us daily?

## WHEN YOU PRAY:

1. Be more intentional to thank God for His mercies and blessings
2. Pray for wisdom to make decisions worthy of the name “Christian”
3. Pray that non-Christians in your life see the characteristics of a “new creature” in you, that they might desire to seek a godly lifestyle for themselves.



# NEW



Find the following words in the puzzle.

Words are hidden **↑**, **↓**, **→**, **←**, and **↖**.

LONGSUFFERING  
FAITHFULNESS  
COMMANDMENTS  
COMPASSION  
CHRISTIAN  
BLESSINGS  
CREATURE

FOLLOWER  
KINDNESS  
MEEKNESS  
MERCIES  
ANTIOCH  
CHRIST  
HONOR

GLORY  
LORD  
LOVE  
NEW