



With the new year upon us, it's a good time to turn our hearts toward the entire idea of newness and how it can impact our walks with God.

### Materials Needed

- Each student will need:
  - Print out of the student journal pages (below)
  - Colored pencils or pen

### Open

- After your group has gathered, share in your own words:
  - **With the new year upon us, it's a good time to turn our hearts toward the entire idea of newness and how it can impact our walks with God.**

Open your time with a simple exercise with adages regarding time and new vs. old. Read each adage below (you may want to add a few of your own) and ask your group to tell you which is a Bible verse and which is not.

#### Adage:

*Out with the old, in with the new!*

*The old has gone, the new is here! (1 Corinthians 5:17)*

*A stitch in time saves nine.*

*Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? (Matthew 6:27)*

*Time is a great healer.*

*Don't pour new wine into old wineskins (Mark 2:22)*

### Digging In (God, Show Me!)

- Share that the Bible, while it doesn't really talk about the new year as a holiday, it does talk a lot about new things, and old vs. new things. With the new year upon us, it seems a good time to focus on a few of these verse and see what they can teach us about our walk with God.

Have students read the passages on their journal pages. As they read, ask them to do the following:

1. **Mark every reference to "new" or "time" or "birth" with a clock.**
2. **Circle anything that stands out to you in any way (something cool, a challenge, something you don't want to forget).**

After a few minutes, ask students to share what they noticed about time or new birth.

#### **Possible responses:**

*-Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past.*

*-God does new things.*

*-No one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit.*

*-You must be born again.*

*-If you are in Christ, the new creation has come.*

*-The old has gone, the new is here!*



Ask students to share about anything else they noticed that stood out to them in these passages.

### ● **Taking It Inward (God, Teach Me!)**

- Take a minute to internalize all that your students have just explored. Use the questions below as prompts. Give students
- a minute to respond on their journal page and then discuss each question as a group.

**What do these passages tell us about God?**

**What do these passages tell us about our relationship with God?**

### ● **Putting Into Practice( God, Change Me!)**

- We think of a new year as a fresh starting point, and rightly so. But so is our relationship with God. Use the questions below to help students apply the truth of these Bible passages. As before, give students a minute or two to respond to each question (which are noted on their journal page) and then discuss each question as a group.

**How does your relationship with Christ affect the following?**

- your life priorities and goals
- your reactions to frustrations and disappointments
- how you see yourself
- how you let your past affect your present and future

**If you really are a new creation, and you are, how can that help with the following situations?**

- mistakes you've made you wish you hadn't made
- personality quirks like temper, bad moods, gossiping
- temptations

Our past may not be able to be changed, but even it can be made new. How can God use your past mistakes and pain for good?

As you look at a new year, how can you look at your relationship with God in a similar way? What would you like to freshen up in your walk with God?



## Digging In (God, Show Me!)

### Isaiah 43:18-19 (NIV)

"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. <sup>19</sup> See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.

### John 3:5-8 (NIV)

<sup>5</sup> Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. <sup>6</sup> Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. <sup>7</sup> You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' <sup>8</sup> The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

### 2 Corinthians 5:14-19 (NIV)

<sup>14</sup> For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. <sup>15</sup> And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

<sup>16</sup> So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. <sup>17</sup> Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! <sup>18</sup> All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: <sup>19</sup> that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them.

## Taking It Inward (God, Teach Me!)

What do these passages tell us about God?

What do these passages tell us about our relationship with God?

## Putting Into Practice( God, Change Me!)

How does your walk with Christ affect the following?

- your life priorities and goals:
- your reactions to frustrations and disappointments:
- how you see yourself:
- how you let your past affect your present and future:

If you really are a new creation, and you are, how can that help with the following situations?

- mistakes you've made you wish you hadn't made:
- personality quirks like temper, bad moods, gossiping:
- temptations:

Our past may not be able to be changed, but even it can be made new. How can God use your past mistakes and pain for good?

As you look at a new year, how can you look at your relationship with God in a similar way? What would you like to freshen up in your walk with God?