

A New Beginning

by Erlo Stegen

God's redemption is available to all, and it brings about a new creation, a new life, and a new beginning.

Duration: 54:06

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, 2 Corinthians 5:17

Topics: "Beginning"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by praying for God's blessing on the congregation. He then shares the testimony of a man who had a life-changing encounter with Jesus. The man had run away from home and fell into a life of sin and addiction in Johannesburg. However, he eventually hit rock bottom and decided to turn his life around. He sought help and made a commitment to follow God, and his life was transformed. The preacher emphasizes the power of the gospel and how it can make everything new in a person's life.

Transcript

Let us pray. Thank you Lord for keeping us to this day. This day where you do your wonders and we pray that you will be in our midst.

Speak to us through your word and through all that we will hear. Amen. Well we thank the Lord for this day.

I asked the bridegroom just to share a bit with me what the Lord has done for him before this day. And I asked him whether there is a word that is on his heart. He said yes.

2 Corinthians chapter 5 and verse 17. Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. Old things have passed away.

Behold, all things have become new. I asked the bridegroom why he has chosen this particular verse where it says that if one is in Christ Jesus, the old things pass away, everything becomes new. He is a new creature.

Wonderful word. If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. Like the word in Revelation where the one sitting on the throne says, behold I make all things new.

He has created new heaven, new earth, everything is new. Death and illness is gone forever. Everything is new.

So he wrote and told me, he says, I've come a long way, I've come a long way. Many years ago when I was young, I ran away from home and went up to Johannesburg. And the world overcame me in Johannesburg.

He was earning a good salary as a driver, but the world swallowed him. Drinking, smoking, even drugs, he had become a scrip. Then he decided to go back home.

Because up in Johannesburg, he even drove around in a drunken state. He ended up in prison. He lost his license for five years.

He says, I've gotten to the end of myself. He decided to go home. When he got home, he found everything was like a ruin.

And he said, when he saw that, he said, well if things have gotten this bad here, I'm going back to drink. Then one day, he met up with two ladies who said to him, we can see that you're in a bad state. They said to him, you see what a state you're in now.

They said, we can arrange to get you to a place where you can find help. We'll take you to Gwasisabantu. Then they explained to him how to get here.

From Matuba, to Mpangeni, with a taxi, then to Stenga. When he got to Stenga, he just started asking around, he says, where's Gwasisabantu? They fortunately knew, and they said, no, we know, get into this vehicle, it'll take you there. That's how he got here, to the main gate, and they took him through to the reception.

And then they asked him what his problem was. Then he said to them, I want help. Alcohol's my problem, and tobacco smoking, and drugs.

They asked someone to take him through to where he would sleep. He says, I didn't waste any time, the next morning immediately I started asking who I could speak to. And then they should go home to make space for the next people.

So he said every day he was busy making right his life. So every day he made hay while the sun shone, and made right his life, confessed his sins. After the two weeks were up, he was asked to go home.

He says, when I got home, my friends arrived. They said to me, let's go and have a drink. I said no, I no longer drink.

I've stopped smoking. I've become a child of God. They said, you're lying, it's just going to be short lived, you'll go back again.

You'll give up this Christianity thing soon and go back to your old life, they said. He says, every day they came back again saying, let's go back to the drink and to the old life. And then I told them, he says, I no longer drink, all I drink is tea.

After a week, he said, now I'm going back to Kosisabantu. He heard my brother say that he brought him here. He says, when he got here, he wasted no time, he carried on making things right in his life that were wrong.

He says, from that day when he stopped, he never went back to that old life again, everything became new. And then he got a job here, as a driver. He says, then God started blessing him, one blessing after another.

He could build up the home again. And one day he was in town, he met up with a white man there, and that man offered him a car at a fantastic price. And that's how God does it, he blesses.

When he blesses, he does it like with those five loaves, they were small loaves, but he took those loaves, he blessed them, and thousands were fed. And he started saving his money, because the money he earned here, he could save almost every single cent, because here you get free board and lodging, so you don't have to pay for all those things. And what he did also, he then also took some of that money and sent it to his mother who was at home, his father had passed away.

So he didn't spend it, and so he put away money, and he could even now get married, and all the costs involved, the dowry, everything, he could pay every cent himself, he didn't even have to make a loan. So he's a good example in that, he saved, that he didn't become a burden to anybody. It's not like young people today who go in, they get a bit of money, off they are to the shop, buying some coke and other things, and they never put away anything.

Here's a good example, this is how you should do it. So God has blessed him, one blessing upon the other, and today he's got a wife. And then he goes on to say something wonderful, he says, look, I'm getting married today, but I'm not marrying this wife, I'm not marrying her because of the lusts of the flesh.

I've found this wife because God has shown me this is the one. I was troubled at home, I had no rest. Because people were hounding him all the time.

People can really get in the way sometimes, like Zacchaeus, he wanted to see the Lord Jesus, he couldn't see the Lord because of the crowd, and so it is even today. People will stand in your way that you don't get to the Lord. So people were hounding me all the time, saying, haven't you, aren't you planning to get married, when are you going to get married, you don't even have a wife.

And some people even said to him, you're just worthless, you'll just die like this. But he says that didn't make him weak, in fact it made him even stronger. He says it drove me to my knees to pray.

And he says my answer to them was always, it's in God's power. And they said where's your wife, he said it's in God's power. It's in God's hands, if God wants me to get married, I'll get a wife.

If he doesn't want me to get married, well that's fine too. And he says, and people were after me all the time until one day, I just went outside alone and I cried to the Lord. I said Lord, if it's your will that I don't get married, may your will be done.

But Lord, if it's your will that I should get married, then lead me in that way. He says that night, the Lord revealed himself to him very clearly. He says I saw our home there in Matuba.

And he says there I then saw a great celebration and a group of people coming and part of that group was a bride. And he says they were singing, it was wonderful. He says there was much rejoicing and they were shouting for joy, ululating, like we experience today.

He says they were all, the mamas were jumping for joy, they were ululating and he says even my mother who couldn't walk anymore jumped up and rejoiced with everyone else. He says after that he couldn't sleep again. And he says after the Lord showed him a vision of him in his house with his bride.

He says but after that I was troubled. It worried me and I said what is this? He says I could see my wife with me in the house. And then he said but who is this, I don't know this lady.

And he thought of all the girls that he knew from his area, he says he couldn't remember anyone that looked like the one he saw. And then he prayed, he said Lord if that is your will then let it come to pass. And then he came back here to Siza Bantu.

He says when he was here, as he was walking back from where they had tea. He met with a lady, when he looked at her he was shocked to see that that was the one he had seen. He recognised her.

He says after sometime about a month he went to his counsellor. And shared the story with the counsellor. And the counsellor said well Kumete this is a problem.

Because now you've really got to pray. I can't say anything. I can't say anything, you'll have to go and share this with Mfundu.

We here at Siza Bantu don't bring couples together, neither do we separate them. And he came then and shared it with me. He says then I said to him, well this is what you say, now we will see by the fruit whether this is from the Lord or from the devil.

You see there are some young men, they never hear the Lord's voice. They don't know the Lord's voice, but when they suddenly want to get married then suddenly they hear the Lord's voice, they say the Lord has spoken. And that's the last time they hear the Lord's voice, thereafter they don't hear it again.

And I had a cousin who once asked me years ago, he says is it possible that a girl has five husbands? Yes, yes. Yes, yes. This girl's cousin said can one have five husbands? I said why? She says because five men have come to me and said the Lord has told me to marry you.

See she was a pretty girl so they were all after her and eventually she did get married but not to one of those that had proposed. Some people get married because of their own will that they get married. Other people get married because other people have told them to get married.

Others are brought together by the will or the lust of the flesh. But there are a few that are brought together by the will of God. Now you are married, what brought you together? And maybe things go wrong because they went wrong right in the beginning.

But blessed is the one who gets married because it's God's will. What God has brought together let no man separate. God's will is important in a person's life.

If you look at, you see especially in marriages, how much trouble and sorrow there is. If you look at, you see how much trouble and sorrow there is. And if you look at the children today, look what state the children are in.

But it's because of the way you have been. You've taught them and remember you reap what you sow. Only you reap a lot more than what you sow.

Maybe you complain that your children don't listen to you. Well just think back, maybe you never listened to your parents and now you're reaping in multiples of what you did. But the beauty is that if we commit our lives to the Lord, surrender to Him and make right our life, He makes all things new.

He makes everything new, new heaven, new earth, there's no death, there's no sickness, there's no fighting, no sin. You see He takes away all the old, He makes everything new. The sad thing is people claim to be in Christ, but there's still old things in His life of the old.

He says He's a Christian, He still smokes, He still drinks, but He says He does it in moderation, even though He gets drunk to the point where He fights with you if you challenge Him. He says He's a Christian, He still smokes, He still drinks, but He says He does it in moderation, even though He gets drunk to the point where He fights with you if you challenge Him. A person claims to be in Christ, yet you find old things, there's gossip, there is slander, there are grudges, and there's fighting, and there's anger.

Why is it that you claim to be a Christian and yet there are the old things? Is the Bible not speaking the truth? A Hindu went to a Christian white man and he said, Why is it that you're so different to everyone else I know? And the man said, No, it's because I'm a Christian. And the Hindu said, If you find you're not a real Christian, not genuine as you should be, do what the bridegroom did, go and make right your life, those things that are wrong. Your life should be a bright outshining for the Lord.

Everything should be brand new. People that have to do with you should be like someone getting into a new car where they realize, everything is spanking new here. That's what it should be like in your life.

Now whether you're a Christian or not, you tell me, wouldn't you like something brand new if you've got a house? Don't you want your whole house, the furniture, everything? You'd say something's wrong with someone who'd say, No, I don't want something new. I want something old and tattered and torn, and I'm happy with a scrap. There's something wrong with you if you think that way.

And don't wake up when it's too late, like the rich man who only woke up when he was in hell, and then he called up to Father Abraham and said, Please. Father Abraham said, No, I don't want anything new. I want something old and tattered and torn, and I'm happy with a scrap.

And don't wake up when it's too late, like the rich man who only woke up when he was in hell, and then he called up to Father Abraham and said, No, I don't want anything new. I want something old and tattered and torn, and I'm happy with a scrap. And don't wake up when it's too late, like the rich man who only woke up when he was in hell, and then he called up to Father Abraham and said, No, I don't want anything new.

I want something old and tattered and torn, and I'm happy with a scrap. So learn from the bridegroom. When he came here, he wasted no time.

From the moment he came, he said, I want to get my life right with God. And so then the Lord eventually revealed to him that this great day was coming, that great celebration, with a bride coming. And so the bride, you heard as well how happy everyone was to see you dressed in white with your veil, and you know the significance of that veil.

Now don't you do what some people say about the bride, that she was so wonderful when she arrived, but when she got used to her husband, she kicked him. She kicked him. And in the church we can help each other.

If you have a problem and you can't solve it alone, you can go and get help, and we can help each other in that way. As a Christian, our lives should shine brighter than the sun, and we should also not say, well I'm of this family, I inherited this personality or this character. No, in Christ Jesus, everything becomes new.

Yes. Now I'm praying. I'm praying.

Let's pray for God's blessing. Lord, we rejoice and we are amazed to see your children before us. Lord, we've heard about your power, the power of the cross that's been at work in them, and in the life of the bridegroom, and how his life has been changed by you.

Amen. Thank you, Lord, for the bride and for her life. Keep her and make her a blessing that she'll be like salt in that place that she's going to, and a light.

And that the family in the whole area will be blessed, and that they will thank God, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. And the love of the Father. Amen.

Amen.

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