

# Maranatha Mirror Missive



## TIME FOR A NEW START

One time Jesus said to a sick man, “Do you want to be healed?” When the man rambled on about his difficulties, Jesus said, “*Rise, pick up your pallet and walk.*”

Another time Jesus said to a paralyzed man, “Take heart, Son, your sins are forgiven.” When the nit-pickers grumbled about Jesus presuming to forgive sins, Jesus said to the man, “*Rise, pick up your pallet and go home.*”

Amazing Grace flowed into these two men, restoring their broken bodies.

Had God’s Grace come to them for keeps?

Not necessarily.

Jesus simply gave each man a new start. What will he do with it?

Grace is not a magic charm you put in your pocket and keep for the rest of your life.

Grace comes to us like the air we breathe.

We are sustained by Grace only if we keep breathing it in, walking in its light.

Jesus’ cross is the doorway to a new start for each of us.

By the power of the cross we are set free from all the sadness and evil of our past.

Our sins are forgiven---gone! We’ve been given a new start.

So what do we do with this new start?

Jesus shows us *exactly what to do* in his Sermon on the Mount (Matthew, ch. 5, 6, & 7).

Jesus never implied that we are to “get saved” and simply settle down and wait for the Rapture.

He calls us to take up our cross daily, and follow him all the way to the end of the road.

Your church may teach something less severe. My church may teach something more severe. But whatever your church or my church teaches is valid only if it matches the simple, clear teaching of Jesus himself.

For example, in my church we address the leader as “Pastor.” In your church you might call him “Father.” But Jesus gave clear direction about this matter.

***But you are not to be called rabbi,  
for you have one teacher, and you are all brethren.  
And call no man your father on earth,  
for you have one Father, who is in heaven.  
Neither be called masters, for you have one master, the Christ.  
He who is greatest among you shall be your servant;  
whoever exalts himself will be humbled,  
and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.  
Matthew 23:9-12***

Maybe it's time for a new start.

In your church they appeal for money from the pulpit. In my church they raise funds by sending out prayer letters. In some churches they conduct “fund-raisers”.

But Jesus promises that God will provide, if we seek his Kingdom first.

Do we ever hear Jesus appealing for funds? Did he ever complain that his poverty was hampering the work? Jesus knew that as he did his Father's will, his Father would provide. And Jesus clearly teaches us to live this way too.

***“Therefore do not be anxious, saying,  
‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’  
For the Gentiles seek all these things;  
and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all.  
But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness,  
and all these things shall be yours as well”  
Matthew 6:30-31***

Maybe it's time for a new start.

In your church the preacher encouraged his people to vote for a certain candidate who was approved by all the well-known "Christian leaders." In my church they singled out certain "issues" that we were to consider before we vote.

Yes, Jesus paid his taxes and did what was required of any Jew in the Roman world. But he made no effort to replace Caesar or dethrone Herod or even to clean up corruption in the Temple. Jesus regarded this world's "power" as inconsequential, when compared to the unseen power of the Kingdom, which was his single focus.

Maybe it's time for a new start.

But suppose your church and my church are not in the mood for a new start. Suppose they want things to stay the way they are.

No problem.

Jesus simply comes to people like you and me and says, "Take heart, Child, your sins are forgiven. Rise up and let me lead you into a new life."

If we respond, the Lord gives us a new start,

not just once,

but every day for the rest of our lives!

Daily we turn away from our own confusion  
and enter God's world through the power of the cross.

Daily we die to ourselves  
and rise with our Lord to life in his Kingdom.

Daily we take time alone to breathe in a fresh word from God,  
and breathe out prayers for each other.

Daily we fit in, wherever the Lord puts us,  
to serve in his name.

What a wonderful thing, to make a new start every day!

***“If anyone would come after me,  
let them deny themselves, take up their cross daily, and follow me.”  
Luke 9:23***

Jesus, it is wonderful that we can make a new start every day. May we enter into the power of your cross everyday. May we be sustained by your grace, breathe it in, walk in it's light. Daily may we rise to new life with you as we die to ourselves. Daily may we get a fresh new word and bring the needs of others to you. Daily may we serve with joy where you put us. Daily may we respond to you as we rise up and are led by you into new life. Alleluia



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WHO WAS SLAIN  
HAS BEGUN HIS REIGN

### **Maranatha Mirror ...**

*Coming and Living Lord may we truly reflect you for your glory.*