

# A TIME FOR NEW THINGS

■ (1) WEARINESS AND DISCOURAGEMENT CAN SAP OUR SPIRITUAL LIFE – Covid pandemic restrictions have had a terrible impact in the past year. Many businesses were shut & thousands have still not found jobs. Schools have been shut but some children had difficulty accessing internet & are left behind in their education. Can they catch up? Depression & suicides have risen & remain high. **DESPITE THE UNCERTAINTY, MANY HOPE THAT THERE WILL BE A NEW BEGINNING – LIKE A SPRING FESTIVAL.**



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■ **(2) CHINESE NEW YEAR IS ALSO KNOWN AS THE SPRING FESTIVAL** and is celebrated around the world. It is also marked by the planet's largest annual migration of about 3 billion people, but Covid may dampen it this year. The New Year itself is a seven-day-long state holiday in China, and on the eve of the New Year, Chinese families traditionally celebrate with a massive reunion dinner. Considered the year's most important meal, it is traditionally held in the house of the most senior family member.



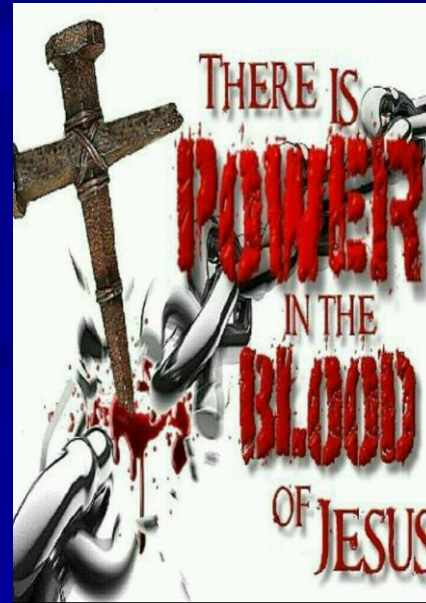
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- **(3) SPRING CLEANING:** Before the beginning of the new lunar year, houses are thoroughly cleaned. For the New Year, new clothes, new cars, new houses and many things are exchanged for new things. Chinese New Year is also known as the **Spring Festival:** 春 (spring) = 三 (three: the Triune God) + 人 (man: Jesus became a man) + 日 (day: the day where Jesus died for us is the day of salvation). Jesus knew the state we were in and He came to do a thorough “spring cleaning” for us.



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- **(4) RED PACKETS (ANG POW)** containing cash is a feature of the Spring Festival. In ancient times it was 100 coins strung together by a red cord. The auspicious color of Chinese New Year is red. **RED LIKE THE BLOOD OF JESUS** which cleanses us from our sins. *Ephesians 1:7* *In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses.* **THIS MORNING WE CELEBRATED HOLY COMMUNION (BREAD – the Body of Christ & “WINE” - the Blood of Jesus).**



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■ (5) NEW YEAR , A TIME FOR NEW THINGS: WE CAN'T CHANGE THE PAST, BUT WE CAN RUIN THE PRESENT BY WORRYING ABOUT THE FUTURE. GOD IS MASTER OF BOTH THE PAST (THE FORMER THINGS) AND THE FUTURE (NEW THINGS). *Isaiah 42:9* See, the former things have taken place, and new things I declare; before they spring into being I announce them to you. **BEING THE MASTER OF BOTH THE FUTURE AND THE PAST, GOD HAS THE PRESENT IN HIS HAND ALSO.**



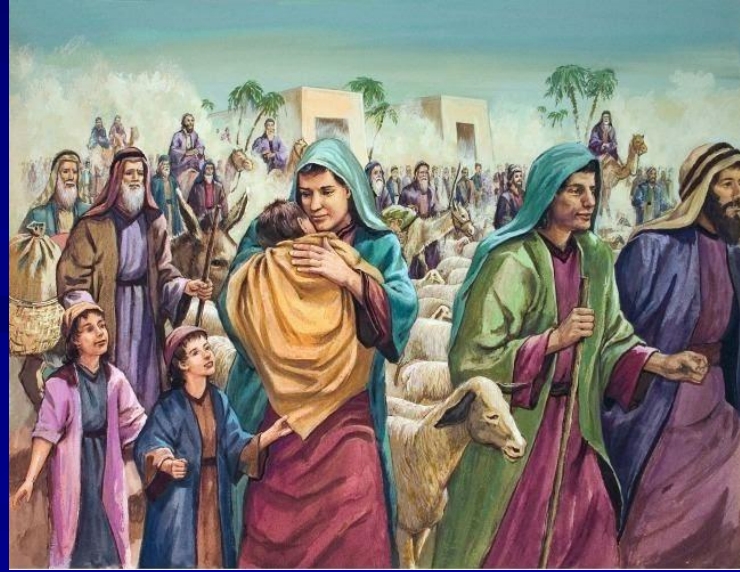
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**(6) SPRING IS A TIME FOR NEW THINGS: *Song of Solomon 2:11-13*** See! The winter is past; the rains are over and gone.<sup>12</sup> Flowers appear on the earth; the season of singing has come, the cooing of doves is heard in our land.<sup>13</sup> The fig tree forms its early fruit; the blossoming vines spread their fragrance. **NEW THINGS** – flowers, birds, blossoms, buds. **LET'S BE ENCOURAGED TODAY TO SEE THE WAYS THAT GOD BRINGS NEWNESS INTO OUR LIVES EVERY DAY.**



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- (7) GOD WANTS TO BRING NEWNESS INTO OUR LIVES EVERY DAY. GOD HAS ALWAYS BEEN DOING NEW THINGS. He took the Hebrew people from slavery to a new land (**Exodus**). He took Saul the Hebrew of Hebrews, the persecutor of Christians & turned him into Paul the Apostle of the gentiles (**Romans 15:14-33**) LET US LOOK AT JUST FIVE OF THE MANY NEW THINGS GOD WANTS FOR US: (1) New mercies (2) A new covenant (3) A new creation (4) A new attitude (5) A new command.



# 1. NEW MERCIES

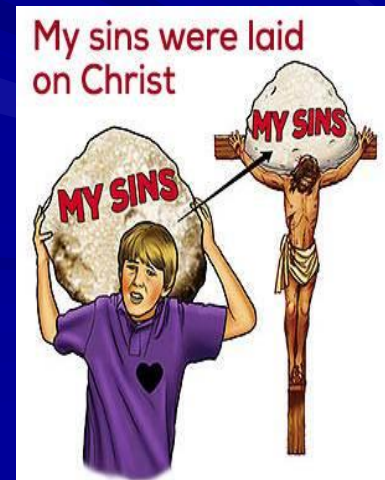
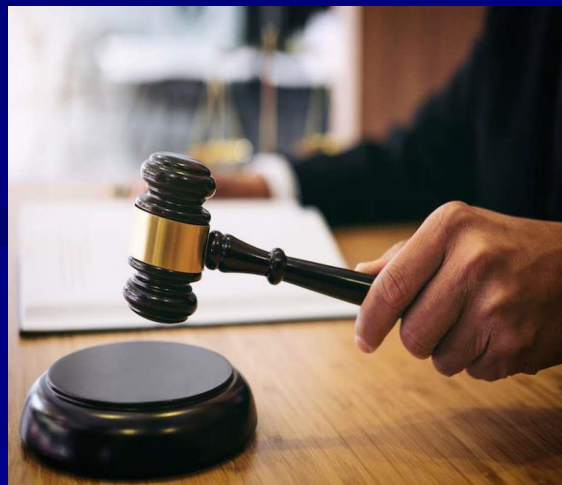
■ WHAT A JOY IT IS THAT HIS MERCIES ARE NEW EVERY MORNING (like the Morning Glory Flower) - BECAUSE WE NEED THE MERCY OF GOD EVERY DAY! *Lamentations*

**3:22-24** *Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, "The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for him."* **JUSTICE** is receiving the punishment we deserve. **MERCY** is receiving the forgiveness we do not deserve.





■ **THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN JUSTICE & MERCY?** A Christian man became a magistrate. One morning there appeared before him in the court a friend of his youth, who had committed an offense against the law. People expected the magistrate to be merciful, and they were very much surprised when they heard that the sentence was a heavy fine. But they were more surprised when the magistrate went to the officer of the court, and took from his own pocket the money to pay the fine. He did his duty as a magistrate, and upheld the law (**JUSTICE**), but he also **SHOWED THE MERCY OF GOD** for his friend when he paid the penalty for his friend. The law-breaker was broken-hearted in his repentance before Jesus .



## 2. WE LIVE WITHIN A NEW COVENANT

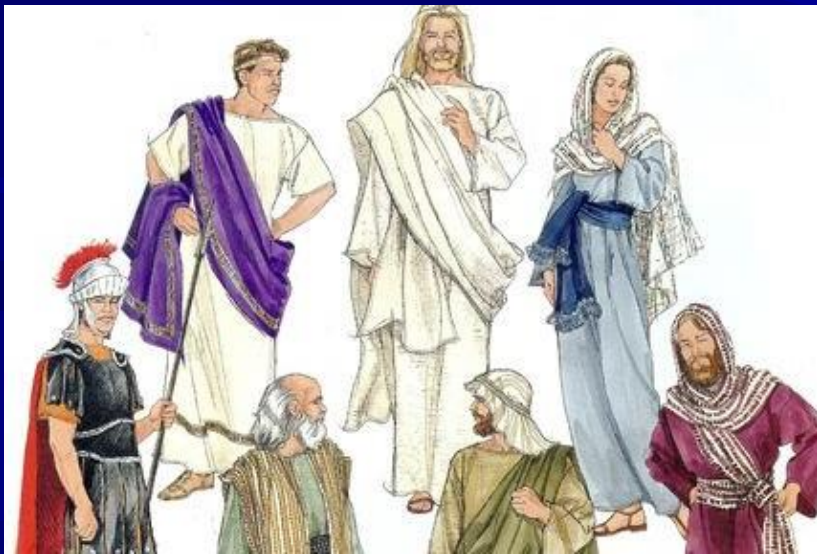
### ■ (1) UNDER THE OLD COVENANT GENTILES WERE EXCLUDED:

Approximately 1500 B.C. God initiated the Old Covenant in Horeb on Mount Sinai with Israel. This is recorded in **Deuteronomy 5:6** *“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. The Old Covenant was for the Jews only & GENTILES WERE EXCLUDED as shown in Ephesians 2:12 at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. UNDER THE NEW COVENANT ALL ARE INCLUDED. BOTH JEWS & GENTILES.*



## 2. WE LIVE WITHIN A NEW COVENANT

■ **(2) THE NEW COVENANT, NOT ONLY FOR ALL. IT ALSO BRINGS INNER TRANSFORMATION. THE LAW OF GOD WAS NO LONGER ONLY EXTERNAL; *Jeremiah 31:33-34* “*I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.*”**



## ■ (2) THE NEW COVENANT BRINGS FORGIVENESS

■ **THE OLD COVENANT** required the yearly sacrifice of a pigeon or lamb or cattle and God never really forgot the iniquity. None of those sacrifices could forgive sins - it would take the blood of the Lamb of God to do that. **1 Corinthians 11:25** *In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."*

**JEREMIAH** had prophesied **Jeremiah 31:34** "For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."



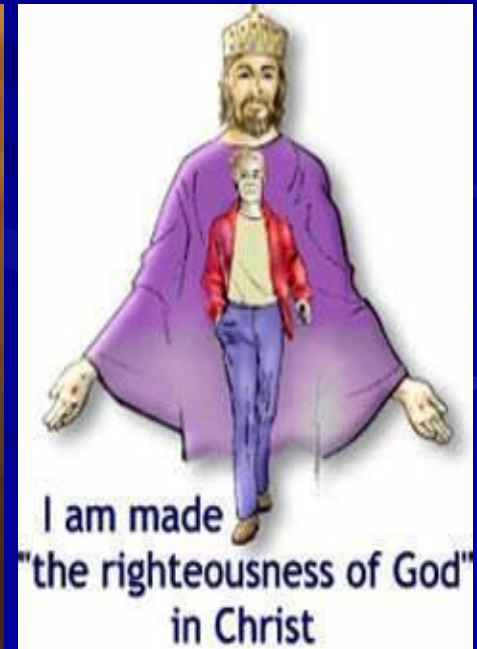
### 3. WE ARE A NEW CREATION

- **(1) THE WILD WILL BE WILD:** A couple found two young small wolves. They took them to their home, raised them, gave them the kindest treatment. For awhile the wolves behaved just like friendly dogs. As the wolves grew they became wild & eventually turned on their masters, who barely escaped with their lives. The wolves fled to join a wild wolf pack. No matter how kind their treatment, the nature of the wolves was such that eventually they were bound to behave like other wolves. The wolf nature could not be educated out of them. **WE ARE “WILD” UNLESS GOD MAKES US A NEW CREATION.**



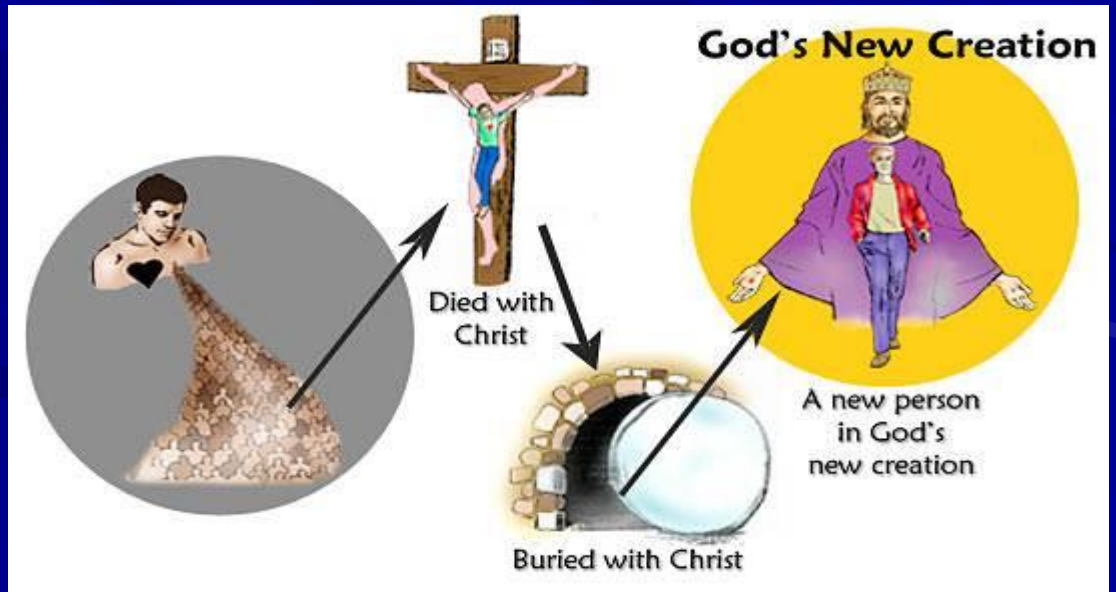
### 3. WE ARE A NEW CREATION

- **(2) OUR SINFUL NATURE IS THE SAME.** It always stays the same. No amount of education, refinement, culture, counseling, self-help courses can truly change us. We remain self centered, proud & repeat our self inflicted mistakes. **THANKFULLY, THERE IS A SOLUTION FOR US. WE CAN BECOME A NEW CREATION: 2 Corinthians 5:17** *“Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”*



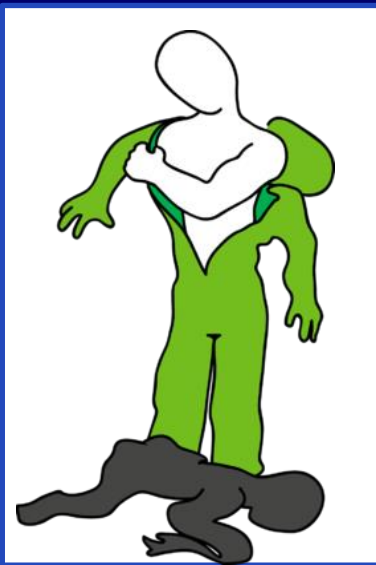
# 3. WE ARE A NEW CREATION

- **(3) GOD HAS MADE US INTO SOMETHING NEW.** In Christ we are changed into someone who didn't exist before. **SURRENDERING TO GOD** will lead to the birth of everything-new soul, new relationships, new perspectives on life, new power to face life's challenges. We can never be what we were before, because we have been born into His life-with a new spirit and nature. And because of that, our desires and goals should be conformed to those that God has for us.



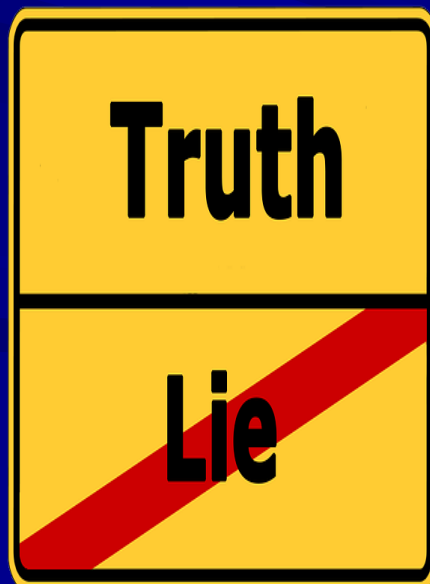
## 4. WE HAVE A NEW ATTITUDE

■ (1) JESUS IS SAYING THAT WE MUST BREAK WITH THE PAST. **Ephesians 4:22-24** <sup>22</sup> You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; <sup>23</sup> to be made new in the attitude of your minds; <sup>24</sup> and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. **JESUS ISN'T MERELY ADDED TO OUR OLD LIFE: THE OLD LIFE DIES AND JESUS BECOMES OUR NEW LIFE. JESUS MUST BE IN US DURING THE DAY & NIGHT – ALL THE TIME.**





- **(2) THE CONDUCT OF A NEW ATTITUDE: Ephesians 4:25-27** <sup>25</sup> Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. <sup>26</sup> “In your anger do not sin” Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, <sup>27</sup> and do not give the devil a foothold. **(i)** In the new attitude **WE TELL THE TRUTH**. The motive for doing this is because we are members of one another, therefore there is no place for lying. **(ii) BE ANGRY BUT DO NOT SIN:** The new man may get angry, but he does not sin (e.g. fight or curse) thus giving no opportunity to the devil.



# 5. JESUS GAVE US A NEW COMMAND

■ (1) A NEW COMMAND: *John 13:34* <sup>34</sup> “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. <sup>35</sup> By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” **JESUS** would mark us as His disciples by our love for one another. **WE CAN LOVE ONE ANOTHER BY (i) Forgiving one another (ii) Encouraging one another (iii) Bearing one another’s burden (iv) Praying for one another with sincerity. WE CANNOT POSSIBLY LOVE ONE ANOTHER WITHOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR LIVES.**



# 5. JESUS GAVE US A NEW COMMAND

**(2) JESUS COMMANDS US TO BRING THE GOSPEL TO EVERY PERSON WE MEET. *Matthew 28:10-20*** <sup>19</sup> *Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,* <sup>20</sup> *and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.* **HAVE YOU SPOKEN TO YOUR RELATIVES, FRIENDS & THOSE YOU MEET DAILY IN THE COURSE OF YOUR LIFE, ABOUT JESUS? HOW MANY IN THE PAST ONE WEEK? NONE?**



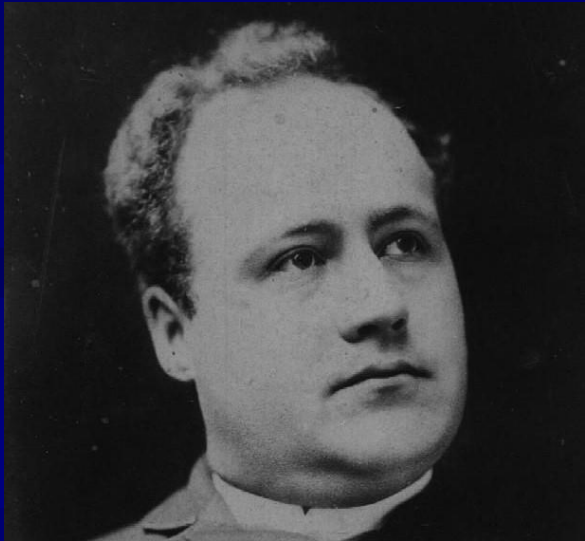
## 5. JESUS GAVE US A NEW COMMAND

■ (3) **HAVE WE EVER BROUGHT THE GOSPEL TO OTHERS?**

**YES. (i)** On 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> May 2001, we water baptized 86 Jehai men & women, & by July 2009, 203 **JEHAI** had been water baptized. **(ii)** In October 2011, we held a **VIETNAMESE** evangelistic meeting in our church and more than 60 Vietnamese accepted Jesus that day. **(iii)** In 2021, we water baptized several **BM YOUTH & ADULTS** in a stream on two separate times. **LET US CONTINUE TO BRING THE GOSPEL TO OUR RELATIVES & FRIENDS & GET THEM WATER BAPTIZED.**



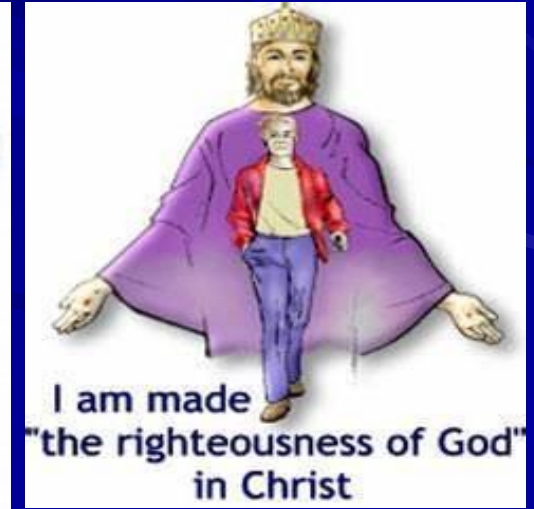
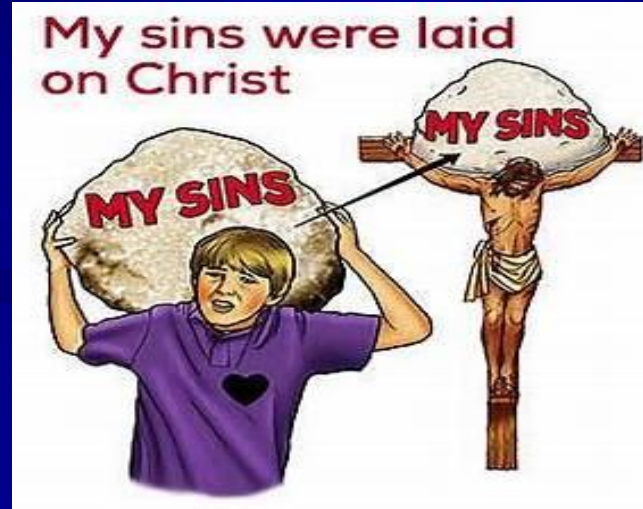
■ **(4) ORDINARY BELIEVERS CAN MAKE AN EXTRAORDINARY DIFFERENCE. (I) EDWARD KIMBALL**, an ordinary Christian, was Sunday school teacher in his church, made a living down at the shoe store. One day Edward determined that he was going to explain the gospel to a new salesman named Dwight, who had just joined the shoe shop. Edward was fearful. With tears in his eyes, he mustered up his courage and launched into the story of Jesus birth, death, and resurrection. That day Dwight gave his life to Christ. **DWIGHT IS D.L. MOODY**, who went on to become one of the greatest evangelist.



Moody the Evangelist



**EDWARD KIMBALL WASN'T A PASTOR OR PREACHING EVANGELIST. HE WAS JUST AN ORDINARY SALESMAN. BUT HE SUCCEEDED BECAUSE:** (i) HE WENT WHERE THE LOST WERE. He was like Jesus, (ii) HE DIDN'T LET HIS FEAR DECIDE. Kimball was afraid to but moved forward. (iii) HE FOCUSED ON JESUS. Jesus is the message. The cross is the magnet. (iv) HE CAME WITH A BROKEN HEART. Kimball said, "There were tears in my eyes." Moody said, "Here is a man who never saw me till lately, and he is weeping over my sins." **KIMBALL WAS AN ORDINARY MAN LIKE YOU & I. WE CAN DO WHAT HE DID, IF WE DESIRE.**



## LET US PRAY

- Father, thank you that you make me **A NEW CREATION**. You sing joyful words of life over me! I am blessed to be your child raised by Jesus to life.
- You redeem my life with **NEW MERCIES** as I follow Jesus. You have made a **NEW COVENANT** of forgiveness granting me eternal life through Jesus.
- You have given me a **NEW ATTITUDE** of telling the truth, being angry but not sinning.
- You have given me a **NEW COMMAND** to go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them and teaching them to obey your words.
- Father, I praise and thank you in Jesus name I pray. Amen.