

THE NEWNESS OF THE OLD STORY

“When Jesus was born” Matthew 2:1

TODAY IS CHRISTMAS

As I type these words, it is early Christmas morning. The ham is cooking, the desserts are finished and the rest will be easy to complete. The presents are under the tree. It is quiet right now, but in a little while, a certain toddler will put an end to that. I love all of it. I love the food, the family gathering, the decorations and the presents. I love the memories, both joyful and sad, that each Christmas evokes.

BUT IT’S NEW YEARS

But if you are reading this when it’s first posted, you might wonder why I am writing about Christmas when it’s the New Year. And though they are recent events, the tree trimming and the present-opening are now part of the past, and typically a New Year’s devotion emphasizes newness and looking forward.

THE OLD IS THE FOUNDATION FOR THE NEW

Believers in Jesus Christ recognize that there is no new without the old, and that there is no basis for looking forward unless we first look back. The believer looks back and sees:

- God created mankind to fellowship with and be His family.
- Satan entered into the picture and encouraged man to break that bond.
- God promised that, rather than abandoning mankind, He would fix the relationship.
- God restoring fellowship with people through Abraham and his descendants.
- God vowing to extend that fellowship through a divine sacrifice.
- Jesus, God’s son, came to earth, lived a sinless life, and offered Himself to pay the penalty for sin, restoring the lost fellowship to all who believe.

All our realistic hope for newness in the future rests on the past: the past actions of our God who loves us all. I don’t know of anyone who expressed the Christian’s hopes for newness, based entirely on what Jesus did for us, better than Pastor Edward Mote. In 1834, while taking a walk, the following glorious words filled His spirit.

“On Christ the solid rock I stand, All other ground is sinking sand.”

Renew your hope, Child of God, no matter what challenges you face. The hope is realistic and justified because its Foundation is Christ.