

**January**  
**Discipleship Focus: Identity**  
**Meditation Topic: Brand New**

*From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!*

—2 Corinthians 5:16-17

Christ “is the image of the invisible God” made visible to us, “the firstborn of all creation” (Colossians 1:15). Our culture looks so much at finding the right brand...should we buy from this manufacturer or from the next one; should we order from this supplier or another; should I eat this brand or some other? The choices offered to us daily are astronomical in quantity, and these companies lure us in with just the right *branding* that will win our affection, identification, and loyalty. We know what all the ads, the cute ditties, the sub-cultural “in crowd” influence is about. It is the hope that we will become and remain loyal consumers of the products they are selling. Appealing to the human response that often replies, “yes, I want to feel like that,” or “uh huh, that’s who I am,” and even, “yep, I’m one of them,” is a tactic of the trade.

Branding is also a company’s way of distinguishing themselves from all the rest. It is a way of stating clearly who they are and what their mission or purpose is. Branding marks companies in such a way that when they are engaged customers will know them, specifically, because of their *identifying feature or characteristic*.

From merely a human point of view we could ask, what’s so wrong with that? Nothing is wrong with it. Schools do it. Coffee boutiques do it. Denominations do it. Local churches do it. The truth is God does it too! God has been leaving God’s mark on humankind since the beginning of creation. God made us in God’s own image. But when through sin and failure we do not reflect God’s character and likeness, we are moved by the Spirit of God to stop and reevaluate our Christian walk. This often happens at the beginning of a new year. *If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive*

*our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness* (1 John 1:9). The grace and love of God is extended towards us daily, offering us a new beginning and another chance to reflect God more in our lives. The Apostle Paul's declaration of being a *new creature* is real.

At this beginning of a new year, we can re-dedicate ourselves to live more fully the image of God by showing love, being longsuffering and patient, and being kind and merciful to those whom we meet, live, and work with.

So, thanks be to God that through Christ Jesus we have been declared brand new. The old, yesterday, and last year are all gone. Christ is our brand and we are made new! Beyond the human point of view is our view in the Spirit. *"So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation:*

*everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!"* God lovingly looks at you today and sees you brand new. You have a brand new heart, a brand new walk, a brand new purpose, with brand new hands.

**Prayer:** Lord, today, I surrender my self to you again or perhaps truly for the first time. Thank you for accepting me as I was and making me brand new. Help me as I walk in new life one day at a time and my whole life long. Amen.

**Song:** "This Is the Day"

**Monthly Quotes:**

Authentic self is the soul made visible. —Sarah Van Breathnach

Grow now, where you are. —John C. Maxwell

Where your pleasure is, there is your treasure; where your treasure is, there is your heart; Where your heart is, there is your happiness. —Augustine

He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all— how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? —Romans 8:32-33

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich. —2 Corinthians 8:9

## January *JOURNAL*

### January 1–10

First Read

What word or phrase has touched your heart? Reflect on it.

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### January 11–17

Second Read

Through what word or phrase do you “hear” or “see” Christ? Where does it touch your life today?

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**January 18–24**

Third Read

What is God saying to you? Who is God calling you to be?

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**January 25–31**

Fourth Read

Be in stillness and contemplation.

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How have you been able to apply this devotion to your life?

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Now, what is God calling you to do?

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