

Southern Adventist University
Knowledge Exchange

The Main Thing Devotional

Chaplain's Office

3-21-2022

A New Thing!

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“Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert,” Psalm 69:29–30, ESV

A New Thing! In January, my husband and I discovered that a big tree in our backyard was dead - split down the middle by a lightning strike - barely holding on and needing to come down immediately. We arranged for a company to dismantle the dead tree and remove it, leaving only a few sections of the trunk for future campfires. Now we're left with the task of filling in the holes and ruts their equipment and the removal process left behind, and our hearts mourn the beautiful lush yard we once had. But a grain of hope burns in our hearts that if we put in the work now - filling in the holes with soil and seed, watering, and being patient with the growth process - eventually our yard will be restored and we'll be able to play football again.



As we were working to fill in holes with soil and seed a few weeks ago, the Holy Spirit brought the above passage to mind. Is there something dead in *my life* the Holy Spirit wants to reveal to me needs to be removed? Is there something dead in *your life* the Holy Spirit wants to remove? You may not be equipped to remove it just like we weren't trained in how to remove a dead tree, but with your permission, God's Spirit is all-powerful to remove any spiritually, mentally, emotionally, or physically dead thing in your life. It may not be a dead thing, but even a thing that leads to death, especially eternal death, God absolutely wants to remove these things.

Does it feel like whatever God is removing or has removed has left you with clean-up work, repair, or restoration? As you examine your life, what once seemed lush and beautiful, does it now feel like it's in disrepair? Does the process make you frustrated, anxious, impatient, or hopeless?

All of this is an indication that God is doing something new in your life. I used to enjoy the shade from the tree in our backyard and was disappointed to hear we had to take it down.

You may have enjoyed the way life *used* to be when the dead thing(s) *seemed* to be okay things, and now that God is wanting to remove the dead thing(s) you may be frustrated or sorrowful. Yet, think of the damage that we avoided by removing the dead tree that certainly would have crushed our house had it not been removed? Think of the greater pain or longterm effects God is helping you to avoid altogether, because of this removal and restoration process. What's more, think of the amazing life-giving blessings God can pour out in our lives when He's removed the dead things that don't belong.

Just think of how little involvement we have in this restoration process:

- It's not our job to remove the dead thing(s) from our lives - through the baptism of the Holy Spirit, He will either equip us with strength and courage to do so, or by simply giving Him permission He may go ahead and remove it for us.
- He calls us to co-operation with His Spirit to fill in the gaps, put down new seed, and nurture the new seed until it sprouts. He calls us to participate with Him, but ultimately much of this work is out of our control and requires patience and trust.
- Without the baptism of the Holy Spirit we are not empowered to bring about restoration. It's through God's Spirit that new seed springs forth and produces new, vibrant, living things in our lives!

I am thankful God speaks to us through His Word and through His creation. I pray that as you make the Main Thing, the main thing this week, He will convict your heart of the new things He's wanting to do.

Reflect

- What is God convicting you of right now that he wants to remove?
How is He calling you to co-operate with His Spirit in the restoration process?
What new thing is God giving you a glimpse of that He is doing in your life right now?

News and Resources

- Follow [@ministryandmissions](#) on Instagram for updates on events and programs as well as encouraging messages and [check out our website](#) for many new resources.
- If you are feeling anxious or have recently experienced loss or grief call 423.236.2782 to talk to a counselor on campus! (This is a free service for Southern students.)
- **Talk** with Chaplain [Joseph Khabbaz](#) if you need someone to pray with or have a desire to grow spiritually.