

## Introduction:

I have paid attention to new phrases or new uses of old phrases during the COVID 19 shut down. One such phrase is “New Normal”. Not attending services and doing internet or drive in services. I saw a picture of Tom Hanks as Forest Gump and the caption was “All of a sudden we were all tele-evangelist.” I must admit staying home on Sundays was very weird and then preaching on line without power point. Others might say not going out to eat, or going shopping, or going to get one’s hair done, etc. Fortunately, some of those things are changing and now we are facing another “new normal.” In the Bible and in life we find lots of new normals.

### I) Old Testament

#### A) Giving of the Law of Moses.

***Exodus 19:1*** *In the third month after the children of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on the same day, they came to the Wilderness of Sinai. 2 For they had departed from Rephidim, had come to the Wilderness of Sinai, and camped in the wilderness. So Israel camped there before the mountain.*

1. Being in the presence of God, the mountain. The day of preparation (***Ex. 19.10***), thunder, lightning, a thick cloud on the mountain, the sound of a trumpet, and the shaking of the mountain (***19.16***).

***Exodus 20:1*** *And God spoke all these words, saying:*

2. The Ten Commandments – Sabbath Day Observance.  
***Exodus 20:8*** *"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.*

3. The Levitical Priesthood instead of the heads of the families being the priest.
4. All of the various sacrifices, observance of the Passover, Pentecost, and Feast of Booths.

## **B) The Captivity and Return was full of “new normals”**

1. Being taken off their land.
  - a. Learning a new language -- **Jeremiah 5:15** *Behold, I will bring a nation against you from afar, O house of Israel," says the LORD. "It is a mighty nation, It is an ancient nation, A nation whose language you do not know, Nor can you understand what they say.*
  - b. Becoming slaves - **Jeremiah 5:19** *"And it will be when you say, 'Why does the LORD our God do all these things to us?' then you shall answer them, 'Just as you have forsaken Me and served foreign gods in your land, so you shall serve aliens in a land that is not yours.'*
2. The return – 70 years later, that generation “normal” was to be servants and to live in a foreign land. Now they were to have a “new normal”.
  - a. Rebuild the temple so as to worship there.
  - b. Levitical Priesthood offer sacrifices.
3. Eventually they adapted and lived in the land of Canaan. Without tribal territories, without a king, and for 400 years without any new revelation

## **II) New Normals In the New Testament.**

**A) Day of Pentecost issued in a lot of “new normals”**

1. The people in **Acts 2** realized this was not a “normal” Pentecost.
2. Sound of wind, tongues of fire, the 12 speaking in various languages.

**B) They heard a new message –**

***Luke 24:46*** Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, 47 "and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

1. They heard about the death, burial, resurrection of Christ and Him being at the right hand of God. **Acts 2.**
2. They heard a new message of salvation.

***Acts 2:37*** Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" 38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

3. Never before had anyone told to be baptized for the remission of their sins. Not their mom's and dad's, or anyone else.

**C) They became members of a new body, the church.**

***Acts 2:47b*** And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

1. The church- a group of people who's sins have been washed away by the blood of Christ.
2. Israel was a separate nation but they were never a group who's sins had been washed away by His blood.

#### D) A new fellowship

**Acts 2:40** *And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation." 41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. 42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.*

1. New in its activities – apostles' doctrine, breaking of bread (Lord's Supper).
2. New in its scope- **Acts 2:39** *"For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."*
3. A group of former Jews and Gentiles both worshipping together.
  - a. Gentiles were dogs- idolatrous, immoral reprobates.
  - b. Jews were self-righteous hypocrites who only cared about themselves.
  - c. Now they were both serving the same God and calling each other brothers and sisters in Christ.

### III) Various New Normals In Our Lives

#### A) When we obey the Gospel

1. Repentance is about change and turning away from sin toward God.

**Acts 26:19** *"Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, 20 "but declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance.*

2. The Bible describes us as new creatures.

**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.*

- a. Called on to have different priorities, think differently and live differently.
- b. **Galatians 2:20** *"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*

## **B) Marriage requires a new normal.**

1. Leaving mother and father, becoming one flesh, **Genesis 2.24.**
2. New relationship with new responsibilities.

## **C) There are lots of new normals**

1. Parenting, aging, etc.
2. Another phrase for "new normal" is growth and maturity.

## Conclusion:

Life is made of new normals until they become the old normal and change occurs again and we have another new normal. The final new normal will be at the resurrection. I hate to think of heaven and hell as “normal” because both places are not really normal places. Hell is a place of utter darkness and pain.

**Matthew 25:29** *'For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. 30 'And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

Heaven is the abode of God.

**Revelation 5:11** *Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!" 13 And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: "Blessing and honor and glory and power Be to Him who sits on the throne, And to the Lamb, forever and ever!" 14 Then the four living creatures said, "Amen!" And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.*

One of those places will be your final “new normal” - - which will it be?