

# Nothing New Under the Sun

Denny Petrillo

The wise man Solomon observed “there is nothing new under the sun” (Ecclesiastes 1:9). He had noted that generations come and go, like they always have (1:4); the sun rises and sets as it always has (1:5); the wind continues to blow and rivers flow (1:6-7)—as they always have.

There are two ways of viewing this fact that there “is nothing new.” First, one might consider it proof that there is a hopeless monotony to life. Life is, basically, boring, unchanging and wearisome. Second, one might find the fact that there is nothing new under the sun as a comforting, stabilizing truth. There are some things we can count on.

Solomon wanted to demonstrate a very important point: life without God is wearisome, repetitive and hopeless. Yet, life with God is comforting, exciting, stable and hope-filled.

Considering the point that there is “nothing new under the sun,” there are several truths related to God that are not new.

1. ***The nature of God is not new.*** He is still the all-powerful Lord of the universe. In the New Testament, this idea is comforting because we know that God won’t change (cf. with Jesus Christ, Hebrews 13:8).
2. ***God’s work is not new*** (3:14). It will (a) remain forever, (b) not be added to, and (c) not be taken from. Men may attempt to change the Gospel or the plan of salvation, but those are part of the immutable, unchanging will of God.
3. ***The plan of God for man is not new.*** God wants men to (a) fear Him (3:14), (b) live holy lives, and (c) prepare to face Him in eternity. God “set eternity” in man’s heart (3:11).
4. ***The nature of man is not new.*** It remains true that God made men upright, but mankind has sought out many devices. This teaches us that it is not “natural” for men to sin, or in other words, God did not create man to be a sinner. This would have been against the basic characteristic of God (cf., James 1:13-14). Rather, man was created good. Nevertheless, all people sin (Romans 3:23). This was true in Solomon’s day, and it remains true today.

Solomon emphasized that all men must seek to do good and to live to please God. So also is it today. God wants all men to “conform to the image of His Son” (Romans 8:29-30) and to obey His Word (John 12:48).

## Can You Finish?

By David Bragg

Recently I read of a community in England who, in 2003, exhausted their entire budget (over 3.2 million dollars) building a beautiful new library. The project was completed on time and the dedication date for the new building was rapidly drawing near. Suddenly a sickening realization fell upon the planning committee: they had no monies left to order books! “They had a gorgeous, but empty, library” (Empty Shelves, *The Encourager*, Calvert City Church of Christ, Calvert City, KY, January 20, 2019).

How frustrating it must be to have your goal in sight only to realize either that it is the wrong goal, or it lies beyond your grasp. On our own strength alone, we will never be capable of attaining the promises of heaven and eternal life. Divine intervention is required. We need grace!

Too many Christians short-change themselves spiritually, living in doubt when it comes to the certainty of their salvation. What evidence is there that God’s grace will be insufficient to deliver these spiritual promises? To ask that question is to be struck by the obvious. All the evidence consistently demonstrates that what God promises God can by grace complete.

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