

# 26-0104a Transcript

## 26-0104a - Behold, I Am Doing a New Thing!, Tom Freed

**Bible Readers:** Mike Mathis and Roger Raines This transcript transcribed by TurboScribe.ai,  
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## Behold, I Am Doing a New Thing!

### Scripture Readings

<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> Reading</b> (0:04 - 0:50): Mike Mathis</p> <p><b>Isaiah 43:18-19:</b> (0:04) The first scripture reading this morning is from Isaiah 43 verses 18 and 19, which reads, (0:18) Do not remember the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing, (0:31) now it shall spring forth. Shall you not know it, I will even make the road in the wilderness (0:50) and rivers in the desert. This completes the reading. (0:50)</p> <p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> Reading</b> (0:55 - 1:47): Roger Raines</p> <p><b>Philippians 3:12-14:</b> (0:55) Good morning. The second</p>	<p><i>Continue</i></p> <p>scripture (0:57) reading is from the book of Philippians chapter 3 verses 12 and 14. Not that I've already obtained (1:09) it or already become perfect, but I press on so that I have made hold for that which is also (1:19) laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid (1:27) hold of it yet, but one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what (1:35) lies ahead. I press onward towards the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Jesus Christ. (1:45) This concludes this reading. (1:47)</p>
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## Transcript (0:04 - 26:01), Preacher: Tom Freed

(1:52) Good morning. Good to see everybody.

For my sermon today and tonight, (2:00) I'm using a New Year's theme, I guess. My sermon title is Behold, I Am Doing a New Thing. (2:08) I hope you had a good time bringing in 2026.

I hope you celebrated with family and friends, (2:17) enjoyed a quiet evening at home, or maybe got a few extra days off of work. (2:23) I worked, so I didn't have fun, but at least I got paid extra. (2:31) But we're here today at the beginning of 2026, a year untouched, full of unknown joys, (2:38) challenges, and opportunities that God has already prepared.

The turning of the calendar (2:47) always stirs something in us. We reflect on the past 12 months, moments of gratitude, (2:56) seasons of pain, victories won, and battles still unresolved. I'm sure we all, you know, (3:05) think back over this last year, what's happened, the good, the bad, the ugly, hopefully more good, (3:11) but here we all dwell on it a little bit.

The start of the new year, many of us have (3:19) made resolutions, promises to ourselves about health, finances, relationships, (3:26) spiritual discipline, and even quitting bad habits. Many of us make New Year's resolutions, (3:35) you know, and while goal setting can be good stewardship, we all know the pattern. (3:43) Enthusiasm in January, struggle in February, abandonment by spring.

Does that sound familiar? (3:53) How many of us have already given up on our New Year's resolution? (3:58) Sometimes it only takes a couple weeks and they go, oh man, I give up, I don't

care. (4:04) But to make it till spring would be great, but New Year's resolutions can be tough. (4:13) Why? Because human effort alone cannot produce a deep lasting change our souls truly crave.

(4:21) And in this very moment, God speaks a word of breathtaking hope to the prophet Isaiah. (4:30) Isaiah, forget the former things. Do not dwell on the past.

I am doing a new thing. Now it springs (4:38) up. Do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.

(4:45) Isaiah 43, 18-19. This is not a suggestion. This is a divine declaration from God who created the (4:55) heavens and earth.

He is the God of new beginnings, the master of redemption, (5:04) the one who brings life out of death and streams out of deserts. And this promise is not isolated. (5:11) It echoes through scripture, finding its ultimate fulfillment in Christ (5:17) and lived out in the transformative lives of people like Moses and the Apostle Paul.

(5:24) This morning we'll go over Isaiah's promise under three headings. (5:29) One, forgetting the former things, releasing the grip of the past. (5:35) Two, perceiving the new things God is doing, opening our eyes to his present and future works.

(5:42) Three, pressing on in true renewal through Christ, (5:47) actively pursuing the transformation he offers. (5:51) So let's step into the new year together, echoing God's promise spoken through Isaiah. (5:58) Behold, I am doing a new thing in you and through you in 2026.

To him be the glory. (6:07) So that's true. You know, just like he told Isaiah, he (6:11) tells us today he could do a new thing through us this year.

(6:17) The first movement in God's renewal is a command. Forget the former things. Do not dwell in the (6:24) past.

Notice the strength of the language. God does not say try to ignore the past or think about it (6:32) less. He says forget and do not dwell.

The Hebrew word for dwell carries the idea of lingering, (6:41) camping, setting up permanent residence. That is telling his people, do not make (6:48) your home in yesterday. How many of us do this? You know, we keep thinking and bringing up the past.

(6:56) We keep looking at the past. It definitely affects us and brings us down. Why is this so important? (7:05) Because the past, whether glorious or painful, has tremendous power to shape our future if we let it.

(7:13) In Isaiah's day, Israel was in Babylonian exile. They remembered the former things, (7:20) the miraculous exodus, the parting of the Red Sea, the pillars of cloud and fire. (7:28) Those memories were wonderful, but clinging to them kept Israel from expecting (7:34) God to act powerfully again.

At the same time, they were paralyzed by memories of failure, (7:43) centuries of idolatry, rebellion, and disobedience that led to the exile. (7:49) You know, the Old Testament is full of Israel sinning and failing, coming back to God. They (7:55) did horrible and evil things, and a lot of times they dwelled on it, especially when they're in (8:02) exile.

God says, I am about to do something greater than the first exodus. Don't let nostalgia or (8:11) regret keep you from seeing it. Apostle Paul understood this deeply.

In Philippians 3, (8:20) 12-14, he writes, not that I have already obtained all this or have already arrived at my goal, (8:29) but I press on to take hold of that which Christ Jesus took hold of me. (8:35) Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken a hold of it, (8:41) but one thing I do, forgetting what is behind and straying toward what is ahead, (8:47) I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ (8:54) Jesus. That echoes Isaiah's verse we were reading.

He's forgetting what is behind and (9:03) pressing toward what is ahead. We could see Paul had plenty behind him. On one hand, (9:12) an impressive religious resume, circumcised on the eighth day of the tribe of Benjamin, (9:20) a Hebrew of Hebrews, a Pharisee, zealous for the law.

He was about the best Pharisee you could get. (9:30) He was like the Michael Jordan of Pharisees, you could say. I don't know.

(9:34) On the other hand, he had a horrifying record of sin, persecuting the church, imprisoning believers, (9:45) approving the murder of Stephen. He even called himself the chief of all sinners. (9:53) So he had a lot in his past to look at, good and bad.

(9:59) Either side could have paralyzed him, pride in the first, shame in the second. (10:05) But Paul chooses to forget, not amnesia, but a deliberate refusal to let yesterday define (10:12) tomorrow. He treats both achievements and failures as rubbish compared to knowing Christ.

(10:21) Let's bring this home. As we enter 2026, what former things might we be dwelling on? (10:30) Past failures and sins that still produce shame, (10:34) broken relationships that remain unresolved, dreams that died and disappointments that linger, (10:42) wounds inflicted by others, betrayal, abuse, abandonment, even past spiritual highs (10:50) that we try to recreate rather than moving forward. There's a lot of things we could dwell on, (10:58) a lot of things we could keep bringing up from last year, years ago, even our childhood.

(11:05) Any of these can become chains. Dwelling on them is like trying to drive forward (11:10) while staring in the rearview mirror. If you drove the whole time looking in the rearview mirror, (11:17) you'd never get to your destination.

You'd probably crash. (11:22) So let's look ahead. Consider Moses, raised in Pharaoh's palace.

(11:29) He knew he was called to deliver Israel. At age 40, in his own strength, (11:35) he killed an Egyptian taskmaster and tried to play deliverer. When it backfired, (11:42) he fled to Midian as a refuge, as a fugitive.

He tried to do it his own way, (11:52) you know, using his bare hands to kill somebody. He thought he was doing good, (11:56) but he wasn't going off of God's plan. (12:01) For the next 40 years, he tended sheep in the desert, a failed prince turned shepherd, (12:08) likely haunted by regret, shame, and the sense that his life's purpose had evaporated.

(12:18) But the burning bush in Exodus 3 God appears and says, in effect, (12:25) Moses, forget the former things, both your failure in Egypt and the 40 years of obscurity. (12:32) I am doing a new thing. So we can see, you know, when God appears to him, he says, (12:42) you know, basically,

forget all the things that you've done.

You know, I have a new calling for (12:48) you. I have a new thing for you to do this year. And we can see that it was a great thing he had (12:54) prepared for Moses to do.

Moses had to release his past to step into God's future. Paul's story is (13:04) even more dramatic. Saul of Tarsus was breathing threats and murder against the disciples, Acts 9-1.

(13:14) Instead of proving that Stephen was stoned, he ravaged the church. Yet on the road to Damascus, (13:21) Jesus confronted him, blinds him, and calls him. Three days later, Ananias lays hands on him, (13:29) scales fall from his eyes, and Saul becomes Paul, the greatest missionary the world has ever known.

(13:37) Neither Moses nor Paul erased their past, but they refused to live in it. (13:43) God redeemed it, but they had to release it. (13:49) 2026 will be shaped by what we choose to carry from 2025.

Let us confess, repent, forgive, (13:58) give thanks, and then release. Hand the past to God, who is so sovereign over every yesterday. (14:09) We don't need to carry anything.

We don't need to carry our sins. As far as east from west (14:16) is as far as God has removed our transgressions from us, Psalm 103-12. (14:22) He puts our sins in a bag and tosses it in the deepest part of the sea.

(14:28) We don't need to drag our past, our sins, forward into 2026 or anything else in that matter. (14:38) God does not leave us with a command to forget without giving us something (14:42) indefinitely better to focus on. Immediately he says, see, I am doing a new thing.

(14:51) Now it springs up. Do you not perceive it? Notice the urgency. It is happening now.

(14:59) It's springing up like fresh water in a desert. God is not merely planning a new thing. He is (15:06) already at work.

The imagery is vivid. A highway through trackless wilderness. (15:14) Rivers bursting forth in parched wasteland.

In a place where nothing grows, life explodes. (15:23) I think of that work where I work. It's all dirt and rocks and chemicals.

There's still (15:30) in certain areas little trees that grow up. You think, how does that happen? God can create life (15:37) anywhere, even spiritually where it's barren. He can do that in anybody's life.

(15:47) For Israel, this point to a new exodus. Return from Babylon greater than the deliverance from (15:54) Egypt. But the ultimate fulfillment is in Christ.

Revelation 21.5 declares from the throne, (16:04) behold, I am making everything new. In Christ, God has already begun the greatest new thing (16:12) in history. New covenant, Jeremiah 31.31, Hebrews 8. New heart and new spirit, Ezekiel 36.26. (16:23) New creation, 2 Corinthians 5.17. New heavens and new earth, Isaiah 65.17 and Revelation 21.

(16:36) All experiences personally. The man who once destroyed churches now plants them across the (16:43) Roman world. The persecutor becomes a persecuted for Christ's sake.

(16:51) Moses, the stuttering shepherd, becomes a leader who stands before Pharaoh and parts the Red Sea. (17:00) What keeps us from perceiving God's new thing? Often it's precisely our fixation on the former (17:08) things. We are consumed with regret, shame, or nostalgia, and our spiritual eyes grow dim.

(17:19) Paul warns against this in Philippians 3. He strains forward, eyes fixed on Christ. (17:27) The Greek word for straining pictures a runner leaning forward, (17:32) every muscle extending towards the finish line. So how do we cultivate this perception? (17:44) Through the renewing of our minds, Romans 12.2, daily immersion in scripture, (17:50) through prayer that expects God to speak and act today, through worship that declares his (17:58) present faithfulness, through Christian community where others help us see what we miss.

(18:06) In 2026, God is already bringing forth new things, new opportunities to serve others and share the (18:14) gospel, deeper fellowship in our relationships, healing for wounded hearts, greater boldness in (18:22) teaching the lost about Jesus, and fresh joy in worship and walking with him daily. (18:30) He might be bringing a new thing to us today at worship. We have to make sure to be diligent and (18:39) pay attention and perceive it.

We must have eyes to see it. Ask God daily, Lord, what new things are (18:48) you doing in my life, my family, my church, my city? Help me perceive it. I'm horrible about perceiving (18:57) things.

I don't pay attention to anything. So we got to pray. We got to ask God for help.

Maybe (19:05) others had to point it out. But God has something new prepared for all of us in 2026. (19:14) Finally, God's new thing is not passive.

We are called to active participation. (19:21) Paul models this. I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.

(19:28) I press on toward the goal to win the prize. But crucially, this is not self-powered effort. (19:39) Simple one.

Passing on requires effort, discipline, perseverance, sacrifice. Paul uses athletic (19:47) language, straining, running, pursuing the prize. We've got to do our part.

(19:55) You know, we've got to put the work in. We can't sit by passively. But crucially, this is not (20:03) self-powered effort.

It is grace-empowered pursuit. Paul says in Philippians 4.13, (20:10) I can do all things through him who gives me strength. (20:15) We need to do our best.

And also, we need to realize that Jesus is helping us. (20:23) He's giving us the strength. He's picking us up on the hard days.

The difference between (20:31) failed resolutions and lasting renewal is a power source. Human willpower runs dry. (20:38) Christ's strength is inexhaustible.

Look again at Moses and Paul. Moses spent 40 years thinking (20:46) he was disqualified. When God called him, his responses were excuses.

Who am I? What if they (20:54) don't believe me? I'm not eloquent. How many of us do this? We're

called to God to do something (21:02) that's put in our hearts, and we don't want to do it. But once he began to press on in obedience, (21:11) God used him mightily.

So we can see once God, once Moses accepted what God (21:17) wanted him to do, he became one of the greatest leaders Israel has ever seen. (21:23) He led his people from Egypt. He was given the Ten Commandments.

(21:30) You know, he was a cornerstone of the Old Testament. (21:36) Paul, after his conversion, did not sit passively. He immediately began preaching Christ, Acts 9.20. (21:44) We don't need to study for 20 years and know everything.

(21:49) Paul immediately went out and preached. Look at Legion. God told him, return to your home and (21:57) declare how much God has done for you, Luke 8.39. That's all we can do, and we need to do it.

(22:04) We are scared to talk to others a lot of times for different reasons. (22:10) We can see here, sometimes you just need to go speak to others, preach Christ. (22:19) Paul endured beatings, shipwrecks, imprisonment, yet pressed on because Christ had taken hold (22:26) of him for a purpose.

Here are some practical steps for pressing on in 2026. (22:35) One, begin with surrender. Offer your body as a living sacrifice, Romans 12.1. (22:42) Moses had to surrender and obey God.

Put off the old self and put on the new, Ephesians 4.22-24. (22:52) Crucify the old ways that belong to our former life and clothe ourselves with a new life in Christ. (23:00) Three, establish daily rhythms. Time and word and prayer, not as duty but delight.

(23:08) Four, pursue accountability. Walk with others who spur you on, Hebrews 10.24 and 25. (23:17) Five, serve actively.

Renew often flows as we pour out for others. (23:25) Six, when you stumble, get up quickly. Do not dwell in failure.

Confess, receive grace and press on. (23:35) Remember Joel 2.25. God promises to restore the years the locusts have eaten. (23:43) He is the God who redeems time itself.

He can bring back all those lost years and give us double (23:50) what he had, just like with Job. And if you're a Christian, we know that in all things God works (24:00) for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose, Romans 8.28. (24:07) If you had bad years, if things went wrong or you sinned, God can turn it all for good. (24:14) He can bless us more than we've ever imagined.

In this new year, God declares over you, (24:22) see, I am doing a new thing. Now it springs up. Do you not perceive it? (24:29) Forget the former things that chain you, release regrets, hurts, and even old successes to him.

(24:38) Open your eyes to the fresh streams he is bringing forth in your life right now. (24:45) Press on in faith, empowered by Christ for the prize of knowing him more and making him known. (24:53) Moses went from punitive to deliverer.

Paul went from prosecutor to apostle, or persecutor to apostle. (25:03) What will God do in you this

year? God has something in plan for all of us, something great this year. (25:14) Let's make sure we perceive it.

Let's make sure we pay attention and find out what he wants us to do (25:21) this year to glorify him. If you've never trusted in Christ, today is the day to become a new (25:28) creation. If you're a believer carrying old burdens, lay them down and step forward in freedom.

(25:36) As we sing the invitation song, the altar is open. Come for salvation, renew commitment, (25:45) pray to release the past or any need. Members are here to pray with you.

So do not miss what (25:55) God is doing. Go forth in the power of God who makes all things new.