



A new calendar year begins. What does the future hold in store for us? God alone lives outside of time in eternity. He knows the end from the beginning. We don't. The closer we live to God the more He can share His heart with us.

Here are **two of Jesus' thoughts** about new beginnings:

1. **"Unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies it produces many seeds"**, John 12:24.

Good seed is buried by a farmer into well-prepared soil long before the farmer can enjoy a fruitful crop. As Christians we must let God plant us *firmly* where He plans to use us *fruitfully* in due time.

All circumstances are under God's ultimate control. God works in our tough dark times as well as in our easier brighter moments. God *grows* His people into women and men He will work through to accomplish His will.

A farmer works hard and hopes for the best. He relies on good weather and other growing conditions outside of his control. God *knows* what He will bring to pass. There is no doubt God's purpose will always prevail. Don't fight against God just because what He is doing with you is hard! God is so great! Put your confidence in Him alone.

2. **"Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am my servant will also be. My Father will honour the one who serves me"**, John 12:26.

Jesus spoke these words while explaining to His disciples He must soon go to His death on the cross. The cross is not an option for any Christian – it is a necessity. Without the cross there is no Christianity.

God judges success in terms of our faithfulness, and nothing else. There can never be any *faithful* Christian service without *following* in our Master's steps. By taking up the cross today we receive a guaranteed heavenly reward. Thanks to God and the way of life which embraces Jesus' cross, we can all know what our ultimate future holds!