

**Introduction:**

1. Lamentations 3:23 tells us that God’s mercies are new every day – that we basically get a fresh start each morning. How does this truth shape the way you think about starting a new year in 2015?
2. What are some things you need to forget (Isaiah 43:18) in order to serve God more in this coming year?

**Understanding:**

3. The context of Isaiah 43 is important: The Israelites had been taken captive by the Assyrians (and later the Babylonians), and the city of Jerusalem was in ruins. God sent the prophet Isaiah to His people, and Isaiah ministered to Israel for 60+ years. How did God encourage the Israelites in the midst of these difficult times (see Isaiah 43:14)? What evidence did God provide to show that He could do this (see Isaiah 43:16)?
4. Alastair reminded us that “Memories can be helpful, as long as we have the right perspective”. It’s too easy to be defined by our failures, but our past does not need to define our present or our future. Read 2 Corinthians 5:17. How does knowing we are a “new creation” change our perspective when we wrestle with difficult things in our past?
5. How does the truth of Ephesians 3:23 help us trust God even in difficult times?
6. Isaiah 43:19 tells us that God is doing a new thing, if we would just *perceive* it. What did Alastair say was the best way to improve our perception of God and His work? (*Seeking God’s will is best done in relationship with Jesus Christ, as a deeper relationship with Him will increase our awareness of what God is doing around us.*)

**Application**

7. Don’t just base your faith on what God has done in the past, look forward to what God wants to do in your life today.
8. Revelation 21:3-5 tells us that God is making everything new. What can God make new in your life this year, that will allow you to do great things for Him in 2015?
9. Alastair shared a story of how his youngest daughter focused on the common, and didn’t see the uncommon. Pray that God would open your eyes in this new year to see past the ordinary, to see Him at work around you.