

A new creation

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- [0 : 00] Let's turn now to the chapter we read, Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians, chapter 5, and verse 17. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.
- All things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new. Now, Paul tells us that we need not expect, whilst we are in this world, but to feel weary and burdened.
- He knew as long as body and soul remain united together, he, of course, was absent from the Lord. And hence the struggles, the warfare, the trials, and the tribulations of this life.
- To have been with Christ would have been far more glorious. But it was necessary that he should continue in this world, witnessing for Christ, instructing the judge, opposing evil, and being faithful to the end of life's journey.
- And Paul could indeed say at the end of life's journey, I have fought a good fight, I have run my course, I have kept the faith.
- [1 : 31] And yet, friends, there are many in this life, and they want to get away from this world. Not so much for their desire to be with the Lord, but to escape the hardships of this life.
- And yet, God can give us the mind to labor in this world, however difficult a task that might be. And when our labors are at a close, we will no longer have a mind for this world.
- We will be given a mind to enter into our eternal rest. Somehow, friends, I cannot help but suspect the person who has never done telling us how he or she longs to enter heaven, when in fact their life does not bear the fruit of someone, as it were, on the threshold of glory.
- We find this chapter is divided into three sections. The first section is covered by verses 1 to 9, to which I have made a brief reference.
- The next section is covered by verses 10 to 16. And in that section, he solemnly reminds us of the great day of judgment.
- [2 : 57] We must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ and receive from him according to the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or evil.
- And having that before his mind, he preached with fervency and urgency to persuade men to forsake their sins and to take hold of Christ as their Lord and Savior.
- And that combined was the reward that was before his mind, animated him in all his triumphs and urged him to be faithful and diligent and persevering in his ministry.
- And then the last section is covered by verses 17 to the end of the chapter. And there, of course, he speaks of this new creation in verse 17.
- And he ascribes the glory to God in verses 17, 18, 19, and 21 for this new creation.
- [4 : 11] Salvation is of the Lord. For we are saved by grace through faith. And that not of ourselves. It is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.
- And hence, no one can stand in the presence of God and glory in this matter. Well, let us look then at this version.

Rather than divide it maybe into two, three or four headings, we will just take it bit by bit. Now, friends, if you had a knife, a fine art, and you were to visit an art gallery, and there see some paintings from past masters, even supposing you had never met these men, and supposing you had never read anything about these men, one message in particular would be conveyed to you.

And that is this, that they mastered their works. And you could find nothing in these paintings that in any way was to the detriment of their reputation.

Their works spoke volumes for them. Now, if I direct you to the work of creation. There we see the handiwork of God.

[5 : 48] Look at the majesty of the mountains. Look at the verdant pastures. See the beauty of everything he created. And in a passive sense, it glorifies the creator.

But remember, we are dealing here also with a new creation, the handiwork of the triune God.

You wouldn't expect Leonardo or Michelangelo or any of these men to produce something shoddy. You don't expect the triune God to produce something shoddy.

And hence, friends, this work must resemble its other. And yet there are many in prison who profess to love Christ.

And you can't find Christ neither in their conversation nor in their conduct. And there's supposed to be his workmanship. There's a contradiction somewhere.

[6 : 56] Now, we find that in verse 16, Paul illustrates his determination to live no longer to self but to Christ and that found practical expression in his experience.

And the same should apply to you and to me. If we are living to Christ, living for Christ and living to his glory, that should find practical expression in our daily living as well.

Now, at one time, Paul judged others, including Christ, in the light of appearances. And here he appears to admit that in his unregenerate state, he judged Christ according to external circumstances.

And this in all probability was due primarily to his upbringing and secondarily to his prejudices. And thus, he concluded that one born in such obscurity and one brought up in such restricted circumstances and one who died in such a humiliating manner could not have been the Messiah the Jews looked for.

And hence, he rejected them and consequently persecuted all his disciples until that great event on the road to Damascus which changed his whole life radically.

[8 : 50] And so, friends, what Paul is saying is this, that according to the flesh he regarded Jesus of Nazareth as a mere man and a common Jew.

And we find here Paul using a general preposition in Christ. Now, this implies union.

And if you turn to Revelation 14 and 13 there we are told blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.

There is nothing blessed about death. But if we die in the Lord that is a blessed thing. There is a union that can never be dissolved.

Listen to the apostle. I am persuaded that neither death nor life nor angels nor principalities nor powers nor things present nor things to come nor height nor depth nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

[10 : 13] The Lord reminded us what God has joined together let not man put asunder. But here friends what God has joined together no man no demon no angel can ever put asunder.

In Christ a general preposition here is not speaking of a handful of believers in Corinth. He is here speaking of all believers whichever nation they are from whatever their culture is whatever their language is that they are new creatures in Christ Jesus.

And this then speaks of union. They are in union with Christ. And that union of course is referred to again by John in the 15th chapter the vine and the fruitful branches.

It is again referred to by Paul he uses the figure of the body the members on the head and the little finger is part of the body just as much as the arm just as much as the foot.

With the little finger is hurt the whole body will fill it. And there he speaks of how unique this union is. And then of course it is also spoken of as a marriage the church the bride and Christ the groom.

[11 : 48] And so friends here we have a unique union indeed. H.E. Deblumeier the German expositor said that the Christian is a new creation to whom the standard katasaka is no longer suitable.

You know yourselves that there was a time when we also judged Christ according to the flesh. There was a time when Jesus Christ was a stumbling block to us.

Are you here tonight? And you could understand God? Why can't I approach God? Why can't I bow before God and pray to God? Why does Christ come into it?

But there is no coming to God except on the merits of another. Paul thus judged Christ according to the flesh but that is no friends gone forever.

Gone forever. And if you are a new creature in Christ this evening you no longer judge Christ according to the flesh. It is gone forever as well.

[13 : 16] Now the efficient cause in this new creation is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit implants the principle of a new life in the soul whereby the disposition of the soul is radically changed.

So friends under the influence of the Holy Spirit we see the new life and that soul moves in a backward direction then.

How beautiful. but by nature we are on a course set for hell. Our whole life of conduct of conversation our desires everything is biased towards sin and the end of life journey will bring that soul into hell.

That is what we are by nature. And here we see how God by his Spirit turns man God and the beautiful it is.

And to expect the sinner of himself to turn God would be to expect that tree to change of itself its nature which it cannot do.

[14 : 41] And that tree will only yield the fruit that answers to its nature. Man in a fallen state cannot produce the fruit of the Spirit.

it is beyond them it is impossible and hence salvation is of the Lord. We see then that the organic cause in this work is the word of God the effectual application of the word of God by the Holy Spirit.

Regeneration is within it is solely the work of the Spirit. Man is passive in the world and then the word of God comes with a resistible power to the hearer and calls them from sin to fellowship of Christ peace and to liberty.

So the soul by faith turns from sin and embraces Christ as Lord and Saviour.

So friends, this work is more wonderful than the work of creation itself. We find God bringing everything into being by the word of his power.

[16 : 13] We don't find any resistance to that work. But when we turn to this new creation there is resistance.

It is contrary to the nature of man. the glory by God. And so there is resistance from the flesh.

We mustn't think that whilst we are unwilling that we are willing that God should make us willing. We are made willing in the day of his power.

We also find, friends, that there is resistance from the world around us. all its allurements and all its attractions are contrary to the light of godliness.

And furthermore, we see that there is resistance from the powers of darkness. When a man is brought to a saving knowledge of Christ, he realizes that the devil is a real thing, that the devil is powerful, and that we cannot at all combat Satan in our own strength.

[17 : 34] He is too great, too powerful for us. So there is all that resistance to this work. Nevertheless, the Lord triumphed over all these things.

How glorious our Redeemer we have. Isn't it glorious? though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.

Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wood. What a glorious Redeemer! And there was no way this new creation could come into being without blood!

Whose blood? blood of the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world! There was no way this new creation could come into being without God assuming our nature, without the wrath and the curse of an infinitely holy God being born by us, without suffering and obedience and death.

You know friends, what a glorious message we have also for a simple lot. When the policies of men fail, does that mean everything is lost?

[19 : 11] The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holes.

However feeble we are in ourselves, we are only but instruments and our God is great and mighty.

Now we see that the word here that Paul uses, he uses it also in the epistle to the Ephesians second chapter and I think it will be around the 15th verse, to make in himself of twain one new man.

Now this word is from a root which means to reduce from disorder and wilderness. And you know you can find an allusion there to the beginning of Genesis.

the earth wars for 34 and told or it can mean ruin. And then we see the triune God at work.

[20 : 26] It is almost like a blank canvas and the artist gets his take. There's nothing there just now and then he works on it. By the time he's finished there he'll have a bottle of art.

Everything is beautiful and everything. So friends God set to work and what was the end result? It is all very good.

We see this new creation. What kind of material is God working on? Well look at the disaster of the fall. Look at the cares the ruin.

Man totally depraved. man lost. The image of God destroyed. God looked upon the human race and he couldn't find one righteous there.

No, not one. Yet we do find truth springing from the earth. His old son born of woman made under the law.

[21 : 45] Where God begins this work, he will finish it and he will perfect it and he will be married. The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness and who immediately pass into glory, their bodies being still united to Christ, to rest in our graves to the resurrection.

And on the resurrection, God will there raise up the dead and marry soul and body together never again to be separated.

what have you got there? But of what God declares to be very good? There you see God's people conformed to the image of his dear son.

And friends, people have a peculiar idea of Christ as their personal savior. some people think they have to imagine Christ there as a limp, blood-spattered figure on the cross at Calvary, and there seem as having died in their room instead, a blood-spattered figure.

He certainly passed. Crucified there on a tree, he certainly passed. But friends, that is not how we must look at Christ, our savior.

[23 : 20] First, you must begin asking yourself what you were prior to this great change. First, I am by nature dead in trespass and and sins.

By nature, I do not realize that I have an immortal soul. I do not realize that I am implicating God's wrath continually.

By nature, I do not see any beauty in Christ. To me, he is a root out of the dry ground. By nature, the gospel was boring to me.

By nature, I love sin and I live for the things of this world. and then something happened. And what happened?

Well, first, I was convinced of my sinnership and I was convinced of possessing something that is immortal.

[24 : 34] And thirdly, I realized that I was a hell-deserving sinner. that I traded in sin. And that I was sinning against God as the Lord giver.

And fourthly, I felt the impending judgment of God upon me. And I was filled with sorrow that I was sinning against a holy God.

And I was unable to turn from my sin with grief and hatred to whom? Ah, things have changed now.

Christ is no longer a root out of the dry ground. He has now taken on a beauty that I have never seen in him before.

God. The gospel has been made intelligible to me. I am able to understand it. I am able now to understand what is meant that Christ died for sinners.

[25 : 45] sinners. I know what it is to be a sinner. I feel it in myself. I abhor myself.

I have been going around with this loathsome disease for many years. But here I see the remedy. Here I see the love of God.

That he sent forth his son to save sinners. To save a wretch like me. There I see how suitable Christ is for my condition.

God unequivocally states in his infallible word that if we believe in his son we shall be saved.

By faith I have taken hold upon as my Lord and Saviour. No please. This is the point.

[26 : 51] Had Christ not died for me not only would I still be dead in trespass and in sins but I would end my days like that.

Had Christ not died for me the Holy Spirit wouldn't have worth repentance in my heart. wouldn't have worked faith in my soul.

I wouldn't have forsaken my sins. I wouldn't have seen or embraced Christ as Lord and Saviour.

Is that the view of Christ tonight? Is it? Rejoice! Rejoice! A young girl was converted under the preaching of George Whitefield and afterwards she was asked if her heart was changed and she replied well there is a change.

Whether it is the world that has changed or whether it is my heart that has changed I cannot tell you but one thing I can say that there is a great change and everything is different from what it once was.

[28 : 13] All things pass away behold all things become new and this change is a permanent one.

A permanent one. once the soul is delivered from bondage its status changes it is that person is no longer a bondman or a bondwoman that person becomes Christ's treat and he is given the spirit of adoption whereby we can address God Almighty as our Father.

He may backslide but he will not return to bondage. He will not. It is hell and friends what a nilso Arminianism is to Christ's atonement.

But they would dare assume that they are in hell for whom Christ died. There is not one soul in hell who shouldn't be in heaven.

And there won't be one soul in heaven who shouldn't be in heaven. And everyone for whom Christ shed his blood will be in heaven no more no less.

[29 : 48] Old things have passed away. What old things? Well, my former ignorance. I once lived without God and without hope.

That ignorance is passed away. There is still much ignorance with us. But it is wrong to say that we know nothing of God.

Faith cometh through hearing. And hearing by the word of God and to say that we know nothing is a contradiction. there is a lot of ignorance with us.

And we will go on learning throughout life's journey. And we will go on learning we believe through the endless ages of eternity. We are the finite creatures even in a glorified state. time But the point is this friends that former ignorance whereby we live without God and without hope that is God.

And what else is gone? Well the kind of attitude we had towards God and the kind of attitude we had towards the world that is a former thing as well.

[31 : 03] at one time the objects of our pursuit were of a carnal nature. And the source of our enjoyment was worldly and carnal.

That is an old thing as well that has passed away. and the kind of companions we kept. Do you think if you are to go down to one of the public houses just now and you put your head inside one of these doors all you would hear is just a mass of conversation.

A mass of conversation. And many of these people are enjoying themselves. Do you think if you took one of them and you brought him up here tonight he would feel at home with us here?

But we know that God could arrest her and make him feel at home with her but that's not for finding things on. If he wouldn't it would be miserable to be in this company.

Miserable! How much more if a sinner were to get into heaven among the saints. Heaven in all probability would be a hell to a sinner.

[32 : 21] And so friends we have nothing in common with our former compilaments. We have new interests. We have new objectives, new motivations.

We've got new friends. And we have a lot in common as God's children. Can you this night draw that line of demarcation between what you were formerly and what you are now?

can you? And so it follows then if we are a new creation in Christ that we are a separated people.

We have been set apart by Christ to serve them and to glorify his name. But remember it cannot be done without reproach.

Do you suffer reproach for Christ? If you don't suffer some degree of reproach for Christ there is something wrong.

[33 : 38] What is wrong? Have you aberrated from the path of truth? are you a compromiser? Are you ashamed to let the world know that you are Christ?

That you are bought with a price? Are you? Well friends in no way can we take up our cross and follow him with a bearing reproach for his name saying it cannot be done.

And so friends we must therefore witness on the side of Christ and if you are here tonight and you can find the marks of grace in your heart and yet you have not made a profession of faith in Christ I ask you why?

Are you waiting for something extraordinary to happen? Some people get that strange idea into their head. Something special is going to happen as if God is going to send an angel to them to tell them it's high time they made a professional day in life.

if you know you have gone from darkness to light if you know that you are God's child it doesn't matter how weak your faith is that is all the warrant you need for coming.

[35 : 21] But remember friends that on the morrow we will partake of the sacrament and we must ask ourselves now can we come to that table even although we know Christ's Savior is there anything at all in our life that keeps us from that table are you harboring a particular sin?

Have you got something against a brother or a sister? Is there anything at all that is inhibiting fellowship with Christ?

For before you come put these things right let nothing impede our growth in grace let nothing inhibit our fellowship with Christ when we partake of that sacrament that the Lord would bless it to us.

Let us pray.