

NEW CREATION
2 Corinthians 5:1-21

INTRODUCTION : YES FACE

Have you seen a butterfly come out of its cocoon? One of the most fascinating thing in nature.

“Can a butterfly go back into a cocoon after it’s come out as a caterpillar? Of course not. It can’t happen. Once the caterpillar becomes a butterfly, it is what it is — a butterfly. When you become a believer, you’re like that butterfly — you come out of your cocoon. It may take you some time to fly spiritually, but once you become a new creation in Christ, you are what you are. You are a new creation.” – Rick Warren

But what does it mean to be a “new creation” in Christ?

**2 Corinthians 5: 17Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 18All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. 21God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

Pray

Do you want to know what does it mean when the Bible say that you are “new creation?”

We’ll share that later. **But before that, let’s talk about the characteristics of this new creation.**

CHARACTERISTICS OF A NEW CREATION IN CHRIST

- I. **NEW DESTINY - 2 Corinthians 5:1-8**
- II. **NEW MOTIVES- 2 Corinthians 5: 9-15**
- III. **NEW PERSPECTIVE – 2 Corinthians 5:16-21**

I. NEW DESTINY

- 1. **Their destiny is Heaven**

**2 Corinthians 5: 1Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands.*

Etymology : “tent” KJV “house” “oikia” – dwelling place - our bodies or the place where we are currently living right now – the world

Ice breaker : Some of us have sexy tents, big tents and etc. Look at my tent I have a one-pack

What's the context? (previous chapter)

**2 Corinthians 4 : ⁸We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; ⁹persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.*

¹⁶Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. ¹⁷For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. ¹⁸So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

Application : This is the reason why a Christian can still be joyful in the midst of suffering simply because for him, THE BEST IS YET TO COME. (say to your katabi)

Examples : You have a sickness right now...the best is yet to come...perfect bodies will be coming soon!

You are a victim of injustice...the best is yet to come. Being persecuted because of your faith...the best is yet to come.

Encouragement : Just continue serving Him...because the best is yet to come.

Illustration : Florence Chadwick was the first woman who crossed the English channel in both directions. In 1972, he wanted to cross between California coastline to Catalina Island around 26 miles...boats surrounded her because it was full of sharks but a thick fog had set in. She wasn't able to see anything. So she gave up little did she know that she was just 1 mile away from the finish line. Two months later she tried crossing again but she was able to finish even with the thick fog...*the reason...she kept a mental image of the coastline...*

Application : Sometimes, even in our ministry, we could ask, "Does this amount to anything?" But just keep on swimming...you don't know the finish line might just be a corner away. **Christ is coming soon.**

Evangelistic : Now, let me talk with some of you. We have to remember, that without the Lord, our destiny is hell. This is the reason why John 3:16

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Remember, God doesn't send people to hell. Man chooses to be there and that's why out of His great love for us He sent His Son. That's why don't stop at 3:16, look at verse

17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

***2. Their destiny is with the Lord.**

***2 Corinthians 5: 6Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. 7We live by faith, not by sight. 8We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord**

Illustration : In 2009, I went to the Philippines to attend my parent's 50th wedding anniversary. Going home, I had a stopover in Vancouver. When I received my boarding ticket, it had no seat number on it...uh-oh...I knew that my wife and kids would be waiting for me at the airport and besides **I was away from them for two weeks that I wanted to see them already.** But fortunately, my name was the last one that was called but they asked me if I get the next flight which is about 3 hours later, then they would give me \$200...of course I chose to go home immediately. But when I came home and told her the story, she said, "Why didn't you choose to get the \$200?????" LOL

Application : When we are away from the body, we are at home with the Lord. We will now see the one to whom we say "I love you." OFWs would understand this. We can talk with our loved ones in Zoom and etc but nothing would be actually being there.

Question : What is the most relaxing place in the world? Our own homes specially when all of our loved ones are there.

Observe : *"At home in the body..."* then verse 8 *"at home with the Lord."*

In short : to be with the Lord is to feel at home.

Illustration : The two couples who grew old in the mission fields in Africa. When they were going home to the States, they went aboard a ship and in that ship was the president of the United States who went to Africa from some recreational hunting. When they reached the States, a band was there and the media was there to congratulate the president while both of them, not even a relative was there to meet them. While they went into their apartment, the old man went ranting, "We dedicated our lives to the mission field and when we came home, not even one was there to greet us...etc...We lived in the direst condition and when we came home.....we are in this cramped room..." So his wife was just silent and just told him to go into the room and talk to God. After a few minutes, the man came out smiling already. The wife asked, "Why are you smiling?" The man answered, "I ranted to God about us when we got home and etc. etc. etc...and God told me...son, you're not yet home."

***II. NEW MOTIVES**

***1. Their motive is about pleasing God.**

***2 Corinthians 5: 9So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. 10For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.**

REJOINDER : We are not pleasing God in order for Him to be pleased with us. He's already pleased with us because Jesus is in us.

Matthew 4:17 "This is My Son, with Him I Am well pleased."

Question : Why is our motive to please God?

¹⁰For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

Etymology : Two words for "judgement" in the NT

1. "bema" "bema" seat – it is a seat where rewards or non-rewards are given.
2. The other greek word for judgment is "krima" coming from "krisis" which means condemnation, accusation, found in Revelations.

In short, this bema seat is not a place where your eternal faith is judged "heaven or hell". The word "krima" or "krisis" is used for that. Bema is where we get our rewards if we have persevered.

1 Corinthians 9:24-25 You've all been to the stadium and seen the athletes race. Everyone runs; one wins. Run to win. All good athletes train hard. They do it for a gold medal that tarnishes and fades. You're after one that's gold eternally. (The Message Paraphrase)

Example : Manny Pacquiao – he trained hard to win and that's the reason why he can have a concert still afterwards

Important : Who is the rewarder in this instance? GOD!!! The creator of heaven and earth.

Question : Why is it important to know that?

Illustration : Donald Trump being interviewed by Oprah. His limo had a flat tire. An old chap not knowing who was inside the limo helped the driver in changing the flat tire. Donald Trump got the name and the person of the one who helped. After a few days, the man discovered that his mortgage for his home was fully paid. If Donald Trump who owns buildings can do that...what more our God who owns everything!!!!
The greatness of the reward is dependent on the greatness of the rewarder.

***Quote :** Indeed, if we consider the unblushing promises of rewards promised in the Gospels, it would seem that Our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak.
C.S. Lewis – Weight of Glory

Illustration : Lido Beach vs Boracay

*2. Their motive is love.

*2 Corinthians 5: ¹³If we are out of our mind, it is for the sake of God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. ¹⁴For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died.

Before : Our motive is to glorify ourselves, **but TODAY** we want to glorify God, to please God. Before, we only want things for ourselves but today we always think of others first, specially those who belong in the family of God.

Etymology : compels “constraineth” KJV ‘synecho’ to press together with the hands
In short : I can't do anything but love.

Note : The underlying motive for all that we do in this church or in ministry is love for our Lord Jesus Christ.

Here's the secret :

*“Do everything in love” 1 Corinthians 16:14

Imagine if we do everything out of love?

How do we know we are doing things out of love?

*2 Corinthians 5: ¹⁵And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

We are doing everything for Him.

IMPORTANT : We are going to church because of Christ. We are serving others because of Christ. We are bearing with one another and loving one another and forgiving one another because of Christ. We are giving our best at work or in school because of Christ.

Illustration : I'm going to marry that girl. Boy realized it because he kissed the girl and he did not notice that her dog bit him in the leg until he came home.

III. NEW PERSPECTIVE

*2 Corinthians 5: ¹⁶So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. ¹⁷Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

Note : we regard no one from a worldly point of view...

Question : How do we “view” people before?

Answer : By the kind of car they drive? By the clothes they wear? By the kind of job that they have? By how big their house is? By how beautiful or handsome the person is? By the color of their skin? By their accent....and etc.

That's the “worldly point of view”

Illustration : I remember in the Philippines, my titos and titas would call me, “Uy mestizo.” Our idea of beauty is people that have fair skin. Before we left the Philippines, there was a proliferation of lotion, skin care that will make your skin whiter. There are still a number of Filipinos who believe people who are whiter are better-looking than people whose skin is not white.

But now to a Christian,

¹⁷Therefore, if anyone is in Christ,”

***Important :** He now looks at everything in relation to Christ...

¹⁵And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

Explain : He now looks at the snooty businessman knowing that Christ died for him. He looks at the homosexual...knowing that Christ died for him. He looks at the Muslim knowing that Christ died for him. IN SHORT, EVERYONE NEEDS CHRIST

1. New Purpose.

²Corinthians 5: ¹⁸All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

Our purpose in life : To bring people to Christ!!!

***2. We have a new position**

²Corinthians 5: ²⁰We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. ²¹God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God

Explain : Wherever you are...we are representatives of Christ. An ambassador only sends the message from the country or person he represents. I don't know if you're lacking low self-esteem but to be Christ's ambassador? Wow!!!

Application : At work, you are Christ's representative there. In school, you are Christ's representative there. In the bus, you are Christ's representative. You are the light there.

Etymology : implore “parakaleo” to come along side.

Application : We do everything in order for people to come to Christ.

***Our message :**

**Be reconciled to God. ²¹God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God*

Illustration : The hand gesture by Dr. Schafer where before we and God are together but when sin entered, we turned away from God and God who cannot look at sin, turned away from us but because of Christ, God is now looking at us and he is now waiting for people to come back to him.

***CONCLUSION :**

SO WHAT IS A NEW CREATION IN CHRIST?

¹⁷Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! ¹⁸All this is from God

What is a new creation?

“new creature” KJV

We will look at the context : *¹⁷Therefore*, (it means “there” is something before “fore”).

Let's look at the verses before verse 17

“14... because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. ¹⁵And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.”

Remember this is something that happened internally, spiritually.

A new creature is someone who has died internally *the old has gone, the new has come!*

And Christ is the one living in them.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.

How can this happen? *¹⁸All this is from God*

John 1: ¹² Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— ¹³ children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

If you believe in Jesus' name (it means on who He is, He is Lord and He is Saviour) and accept it e.g. “Lord I am a sinner and I believe you are the only one who can save me, from now I want to follow you”, then you became a new creature in Christ where our Lord lives in you.

Colossians 1: 27b...And this is the secret : Christ lives in you. (NLT)

This is the reason we have a new destiny, a new motive and a new perspective in life.

So if someone asks me who is a Christian? A Christian is someone where Christ lives in them and that's why he is called a new creation in Christ.

Story : My son Zak shared to me his testimony recently. When he was entering university, he knew he was going to be living alone, far from us without any supervision. He knew that university life had a lot of temptation. That's when he asked himself, why am I attending church, why am I following Christ? And by God's grace, in his own reflection, the reason why he was attending church or its activities is because he was a pastor's kid and it's expected of him to behave well as a Christian because he's a pastor's kid. That's the time he knew, he wasn't following Christ personally. And that's the reason when he entered university, that's the only time he committed his life to Christ personally. He said today, he's not following Christ or attending church because it's expected of him and because he's a pastor's kid. He said he is following Christ because he made a decision, a commitment to personally follow Him.

CHALLENGE : So my questions right now to you are why are you following Christ? Why are you attending church? Is it because it is expected of you or is it because of your parents or your family? Or are you following Christ because you have made a "personal" decision to follow Him? Sooner or later, "you", not your parents, not society, not the people around you but you have to make that decision to follow Christ. And our Lord is talking to you right now saying to you, "Follow me". Answer that call. (Pause for reflection)

S.G.D.