

Mastering the Basics
Lesson 16

In Christ: A New Creation

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” (2 Corinthians 5:17, NIV).

A Christian is a person that has become someone that he was not before. A Christian, in terms of his deepest identity and nature, is a new creation, a saint, a child of God, a divine work of art, a child of light, a citizen of heaven, not only positionally (true in the mind of God but not true on earth), not only judicially (a matter of God’s bookkeeping and accounting), but ACTUALLY. Becoming a Christian is not just in getting something, it is in becoming something, that is, someone that he was not before.

Consider our physical conception and birth. Being born isn’t getting something, No!, being born is becoming someone who was not there before. God says “We are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:10). Is God’s workmanship – His masterpiece – simply adding something onto sinful clay?

The truth is, I am now someone else. This new creation in Christ Jesus was so fundamental to the apostle Paul that he states twice (and infers several more times) that when he sins, “it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me” (Romans 7:17-20). Though he acknowledges personal responsibility, he denies that sinning is part of his essential, deepest nature and personhood. We were all “by nature children of wrath,” but now through Christ Jesus we have the seed of God within us, and have become the children of God.

Contrary to much popular teaching, regeneration is more than having our sins taken away, it is becoming someone we had never been before. This new identity is not on the physical level, but the spirit level – one’s deepest self. *“This miracle is more than a ‘judicial’ act of God. It is an act so REAL that it is right to say that a Christian’s essential nature is righteous rather than sinful”* [Birthright, David C. Needham, p.61].

Even though all this is true – even though God describes us as sons of God we are still for a while inseparably linked to unredeemed flesh. Our bodies are mortal. Not just the bones and muscles, glands and senses, but mind and emotions as well. Paul says in Romans 7:23, ‘I see ... a law of sin which is in my members.’

The Christian still has full responsibility for his actions. He must yield his members “as slaves to righteousness” (Romans 6:19), depending upon the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:16-17). Remember, to become a Christian is to become part of the kingdom of God. And it was the “kingdom of God” that Christians preached throughout the entire book of Acts (Acts 8:12; 19:8; 20:25; 28:23,31). How can one assume he is entering the kingdom of God and at the same time reject the Kings – authority and rule? Sin is not simply what we do or don’t do, sin relates to our independence from the King.

God's purpose for humans is not simply that they do right things, his purpose is that they become actual extensions of His life through a dependent relationship on Him (Galatians 2:20). This, above all else, is new creation righteousness. A life that expresses itself in righteous deeds (Eph. 2:10), but the foundation for those deeds is dependence upon Him (John 15:5; Gal.5:22-23).

Questions

1. Read 2 Corinthians 5:17. If any man be in Christ (i.e. a Christian), he is: a. a hypocrite. b. doing the best he can. c. faithful to attend church. d. a new creature, that is, a new creation.
2. Read 2 Corinthians 5:17. As Christians, the old things, the old life is: a. always tormenting us. b. not far behind. c. passed away, that is, the old life is gone.
3. Read 2 Corinthians 5:17. When we were converted: a. problems started in our home. b. the devil came after us. c. a new life begun, we became new persons.
4. Read Galatians 6:15. It doesn't make any difference whether we have been circumcised or not, what counts is: a. that we stay out of debt. b. that we vote in the elections. c, that we stay out of trouble. d. whether we have been changed into new and different people, that is, we have become a new creature [creation].
5. Read Romans 7:22. As a Christian, my inward man, my true nature always delights in: a. getting drunk. b. committing adultery. c. the law of God, that is, the ways of the LORD.
6. Read Romans 4:6-7. As a Christian, God has blessed me with: a. a lot of money. b. some new clothes. c. imputed righteousness put to my account without me working for it [by grace I am saved].
7. Read 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19-20. As a new creation, I am: a. nice to my spouse. b. always at church. c. the temple and dwelling place of God.
8. Read Romans 6:18. As a new creation, I am a: a. servant of sin. b. a servant of righteousness. c. a nicer person.
9. Read Romans 6:17-19. As a new creation we no longer serve sin, that is, sin is not our master, our new master is: a. the pastor. b. our spouse. c. righteousness.
10. Read Colossians 1:13-14. As a new creation, I have been rescued from the domain of Satan's rule and transferred to: a. a new job. b. a new denomination. c. the kingdom of Christ.

11. Read Acts 8:13, 18-22; 1 John 1:8-9. As a new creation, I sometimes fail and sin, when I find my heart is not right I should: a. give up the whole thing. b. go ahead and sin anyway because I am under grace. c. repent of my sin, asking God for forgiveness.

Scriptures to use with Questions

1. **Read 2 Corinthians 5:17.** [17] Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

2. **Read 2 Corinthians 5:17.** [17] Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

3. **Read 2 Corinthians 5:17.** [17] Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

4. **Read Galatians 6:15.** [15] For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

5. **Read Romans 7:22.** [22] For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

6. **Read Romans 4:6-7.** [6] Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, [7] Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.

7. **Read 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19-20. 1 Corinthians 3:** [16] Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? **1 Corinthians 6:** [19] What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? [20] For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

8. **Read Romans 6:18.** [18] Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

9. **Read Romans 6:17-19.** [17] But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. [18] Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. [19] I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

10. **Read Colossians 1:13-14.** [13] Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: [14] In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: [

11. **Read Acts 8:13, 18-22; 1 John 1:8-9. Acts 8:** [13] Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the

miracles and signs which were done. [18] And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, [19] Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. [20] But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. [21] Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. [22] Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. **1 John 1:** [8] If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. [9] If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Answer Key – Lesson 16 In Christ: A New Creation

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