

The New Creature In Christ

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2 Cor. 5:17

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

The student of human nature needs only to look about him to see the defilement and corruption of humanity. He has only to survey the evil purposes of the heart to cause him to say with Isaiah (Isa. 53:6), *“All we like sheep have gone astray ...”*, and with Paul (Rom. 3:23), *“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,”*

Thus we see that man must undergo some radical and vital change before he can properly be called a Christian. His relationship to God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit must be changed before he can scripturally wear the honorable name of Christian.

This change is a translation from Satan’s kingdom into Christ’s kingdom.

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

Jesus calls it a conversion and a new birth.

- Matt. 18:3, *“And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.”*
- John 3:3-5, *“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”*

In the text it is represented as becoming a new creature.

What constitutes this change?

The old man is put off

Eph. 4:22-24, *“That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”*

What is the old man?

That *“which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.”*

The old man is crucified.

Gal. 2:20, *“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”*

The old man is buried.

- Rom. 6:3-4, *“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”*
- Col. 2:12, *“Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.”*

Is the dead man or the live man buried in the physical death?

Which should be buried in the spiritual sense?

Paul makes the burial significant of one thing and the resurrection significant of another. The burial symbolizes the death — the death to sin. The resurrection symbolizes a life — a life to righteousness. The dead man (dead to sin) is not raised; neither is the live man (alive to righteousness) buried.

The new creature is raised.

Rom. 6:3-4, *“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”*

No part of the old man should be raised. The children of God are holy, and the children of the devil are unholy. An unholy child of God would be as absurd as a holy child of the devil.

Rom. 6:12, *“Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.”*

Many try to become a new creature and hold on to the old man, but such is not only unreasonable, but it is contrary to the scriptures.

- Isa. 35:8, *“And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass*

over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.”

- Rom. 12:9, *“Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.”*
- 1 Cor. 3:16-17, *“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.”*
- Rev. 21:27, *“And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.”*

The new man must be put on

Gal. 3:27, *“For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”*

Paul said in Gal. 2:20, *“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: ...”*

The mystery of the new creation is that Christ now lives in Paul. Through this mystical union with Christ, Paul was entirely a new man with new ideals and purposes.

Christ now lives in him as Saviour, Example, Guide, and Master.

Hence, conversion to Christ does not paralyze men’s powers and stifle their efforts.

Paul was as active after conversion as he was before, but previously he was engaged in persecuting Christians; later he devoted his talents and energies with a zeal to the cause of Christianity.

Since baptism is necessary to become a new creature, what is it?

Let us get the picture presented in the Bible:

Water is involved.

Acts 8:36, *“And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?”*

Much water was necessary.

John 3:23, *“And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized.”*

Going down into the water.

Acts 8:26-39, *“And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.”*

A burial and resurrection.

- Rom. 6:4, *“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”*
- Col. 2:12, *“Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.”*

Coming up out of the water.

Mark 1:9-10, *“And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him.”*

What is the picture you see in reading these passages? There is water (much water), going down into the water (a burial and resurrection), and coming up out of the water.

The thing you saw is God’s picture of baptism.

The new creature in Christ has:

A new life.

Rom. 6:3-4, *“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”*

We arise from the watery grave of baptism to a new life.

A new standard.

Christ is the Christian’s standard.

- 1 Pet. 2:21, *“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:”*
- Phil. 2:5, *“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.”*

As Christians we should remember that He is our standard. We are to strive to be, and strive to lead others to be Christians.

We should determine our actions by “What would Christ do?”

A new motive.

The new creature has had a change of heart; hence he now loves righteousness, and hates evil.

- Rom. 12:9, *“Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.”*
- Heb. 1:9, *“Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.”*

A new purpose.

Whatever one's purpose in life may have been before, a Christian has a new purpose.

Phil. 3:13, "*Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,*"

Former purposes may have looked to selfish ends, but the new purpose is to serve.

It now becomes more blessed to give than to receive.

A new home.

- John 14:1-3, "*Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*"
- 2 Pet. 3:13, "*Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*"

As the soldier beside his lonely campfire, thinking of home, falls asleep and dreams of loved ones back at home; so the soldier of the cross in the thick of the fight is encouraged to press on in the fight by the beautiful vision of "the home over there."

Conclusion

You cannot claim these wonderful promises if you are not a Christian.

If you have not yet become a new creature in Christ, won't you do it today by your simple obedience to Christ?

Upon your sincere faith in Jesus Christ, repent earnestly of all your sins, and upon a confession of your faith in Him, be buried with Him in baptism.

Then you will be raised a new creature in Christ, to "*walk in newness of life.*"

