



GOOD NEWS

for the unsaved WORLD!

(#193)

The new "self," and the right response to sinful works.

1

Last time:

WE SAW:

- ⇒ **The plight of the unsaved** – those who's lives are characterized by sinful works (including good works done for the wrong reason).
- ⇒ **How God restrains people's sin.** *None* of us are as sinful as we "could have been."
- ⇒ **The changes that occur in salvation:** We become "new creations" with changed values and a desire to live for God. Since God is involved in this change, it's guaranteed to occur.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the **new creation** has come: The old has gone, the new is here!
2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)

2

Today:

OUR GOAL:

- ⇒ **The result of being a new creation:**
 - ✓ The "new self."
 - ✓ How *new creations* are to respond to sinful works.

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A reminder of DEFINITIONS:

- ⇒ **"Works"** includes *everything* we do, whether they are God-honoring or sinful. It's not just "religious" things.
- ⇒ **"Death"** and **"dying"** refer to "separation" (such as body from soul) or "alienation" (such as people from God). People do not cease to exist, when they die.

3

Do you believe you are saved?

- ⇒ **Then make sure!** Find out what the Bible says about you!

Find out the:

- ✓ **CHANGES:** Things that happen to people when they are saved.
- ✓ **CHARACTERISTICS:** What a saved person will be like.

CHANGES DO OCCUR!

- ⇒ **Genuine faith** involves living a life based on what happened at salvation!
- ⇒ It's not a matter of saying, "I am saved," and then living as though no change occurred!

Ready to find out? LET'S GO!

4

The NEW CREATION and the NEW SELF.

[REVIEW FROM LAST TIME.]

GOD HAS RE-CREATED US; WE ARE A NEW CREATION!

God made us alive at creation... We chose the path of death... God now offers us a *new* life – one that is united with Christ.

Here's how it happened.

- **MADE ALIVE:** God *originally* created us "in his image" – so that we could live for him and reflect his glory in all that we did.
- **CHOOSING DEATH:** Instead of fulfilling our calling, we chose to rebel against God. The "image of God" in us was marred and distorted (though not totally gone); so we can no longer fulfil the purpose for which we were created. We *died* to God, and to holiness and righteousness. [Because of this, it has become *natural* for us to dishonor God, and to cause havoc with what he created.]
- **RE-MADE ALIVE ...**

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- **RE-MADE ALIVE:** God has offered to create us anew, to enable us to once again be *alive*, and able to fulfill our original calling.

For those who are *in Christ*, the deadness we chose is eliminated – replaced with new life. *But it's a process.* When we are saved, we *have* life that will never cease – God has made us into "new creations." But our bodies are still part of the "old creation" – and won't be changed until Jesus returns.

In the long run, our situation as a new creation is actually **better than our original situation before sin!**

1. Because of our *union with Christ*, we have been *adopted* into the "family of God." This means Jesus has become *our brother* (Ephesians 1:5; Romans 8:23).
2. The throne of God will be relocated to earth, in the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21).

These wonderful things *don't* justify our sin. They only show how amazing God's grace is!

6

ABOUT THIS NEW CREATION: [REVIEW FROM LAST TIME.]

This change is available... but only on God's terms.

- Available only in Christ. It cannot occur if we are unwilling to submit to Christ, learn his values, and live according to them (2 Corinthians 5:15, 17, 21). We can no longer live for ourselves.
- More important than religious activities – whether doing or not doing them (Galatians 6:15). It influences *all* aspects of life.
- We are created for a specific purpose: To do good works (Ephesians 2:10). God has already prepared them for us to do.
- This includes the pursuit of righteousness and holiness, and the conduct that is compatible with them (Ephesians 4:24b).
- This includes the pursuit of a renewed mind. Pursuing this is an obligation (Romans 12:2); but it is also described as a *fact – something that* is done by those who are in the process of being renewed in the image of the Creator (Colossians 3:9b-10).

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??? WHERE IS THE MORAL LAW LOCATED? ???

(Not the written document, but its relationship to people!)

- For "OLD Creation" people:
 - ✓ They are NOT saved.
 - ✓ They are controlled by their OLD selves.
- ↳ The moral law is an external restraint. It's NOT part of their nature.
- For "NEW Creation" people:
 - ✓ They ARE saved.
 - ✓ They are controlled by their NEW selves.
- ↳ The moral law is an internal motivation. It's a part of their nature, because: ① It was placed there by God, ② as a result of our union with Christ; and it results in us being ③ empowered by the Holy Spirit, ④ so we will want to live by it.

8

HOW does the NEW SELF affect life?

When God makes us new creations, he gives us a new "self."

★ It is our responsibility to live lives that are controlled by this new "self." ★

- When we were old creations, we were controlled by our old self.
- Now that we are new creations, we need to be controlled by our new self.

In some passages, our response is described as "taking off" the old self and "putting on" the new self.

The New Testament Greek words that are translated as "take off" and "put on" are used for taking off and putting on clothing. We don't need to "wear" our old selves anymore! Our job is to "wear" the new self, instead! [Sometimes the term "put on" is even translated as "clothe yourself."]

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WE NEED TO VIEW OUR FORMER UNSAVED LIFE AS OUR "OLD SELF" – AND OPPOSE IT.

None of us likes the struggle. But we need to ① remind ourselves that final victory won't arrive until *Jesus* returns... and then ② cling to him for the strength (and patience) to continue fighting.

Consider these facts:

- **FACT #1: DEAD.** Our old self was crucified with Christ. We no longer have to obey its sinful impulses. We are to consider it dead!
- ↳ However, we must also remember that being "dead" refers to "separation." It doesn't mean "vanished into non-existence."

For we know that our old self was crucified with [Christ] so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin ...

Romans 6:6 (NIV)

[MORE] 10

I AM YOUR MASTER! YOU NEED TO OBEY ME!

I HAVE A NEW MASTER - JESUS! I NEED TO OBEY HIM, INSTEAD!

... our old self was crucified with him ... anyone who has died has been set free from sin.

Romans 6:6b, 7 (NIV)

- **FACT #2: STILL FIGHTING.** The old self is dead – separated from us – but it *wants* to be reunited with us. Yet it can do so only if we choose to yield to it.
- ↳ Though its impulses still pursue us relentlessly, we no longer *have* to be slaves to the sin it promotes (Romans 6:6).

The old self is ruled by sin; it is a slave to sin. Now that it's crucified, we do not have to be slaves anymore!

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- **FACT #3: POWER.** God has empowered us to fulfil our responsibility.
 - ↳ People can't crucify *themselves*. In our union with Christ, *God* accomplished something that we cannot. And so, we give *God* the credit for saving us.
 - ↳ However, we have a responsibility to *respond* to this – to live a life that is based on trusting God. If we *have* been united with Christ in death (thus being crucified with him), then we must *live* united with him in his resurrection (Romans 6:5).

Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.

Romans 6:12 (NIV)

THE OLD SELF WANTS TO RETURN ME TO THE SLAVERY OF SIN!

IF I FOLLOW IT, SCRIPTURE SAYS I WILL DIE!

WHAT SHALL I DO?

For if you live by its dictates, you will die.

Romans 8:13a (NLT)

SEE THE NEXT PAGE! → 12

HOW SHOULD WE RESPOND TO SIN?

- ↳ **RUN from the sin!** Some Scripture passages tell us to *run* from it (1 Corinthians 6:18; 10:14; 1 Timothy 6:11; 2 Timothy 2:22). [We are to *resist* or *fight* the *devil* (James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:9), not the sin.]
- ↳ **KILL the lifestyle!** Some passages tell us to "put to death" our old ways of sin. *Crucify the sinful nature (flesh), and leave it there!*
 - If we do so, we will *live*; if we don't, we will *die* (Romans 8:13).
 - *We* also are crucified with Christ (Romans 6:6). *But we (not the flesh) are raised to life in Christ!*

Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have **crucified the flesh** with its passions and desires.

If we live by the Spirit, let us also **keep in step with the Spirit**.

Galatians 5:24-25 (CSB)

- We have an *obligation* to **replace** what was killed with what is alive! *We cannot leave our heart and mind "empty," or our old ways will return.* (Compare to Luke 11:24-26.)

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- ↳ **REPLACE!** This is where understanding *the old/new selves* is very helpful! **We will look at two passages about this.**
- ↳ In these passages, we are shown many examples of: ① *sinful* conduct that we must "kill" or "get rid of" or "put off," and ② *godly* conduct that we must "put on" or "clothe ourselves with."
- ↳ As we look at these passages (next 2 slides), it may seem a bit overwhelming. **But we have power on our side!**

- We get this power when we "put on" or "clothe ourselves" with *Christ*. But we have an obligation to *use* this power by living under *his* control... and that begins with changing the way we think.
- The "renewed mind" of Romans 12:2 will influence how we think – including what NOT to think about.

Rather, **clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh.**

Romans 13:14 (NIV)

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• THE EPHESIANS PASSAGE:

You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to **put off your old self**, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be **made new** in the attitude of your **minds**; and to **put on the new self**, **created** to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Ephesians 4:22-24 (NIV)

- ↳ **The immediate context** of these verses: Ephesians 4:17-5:20; and all of it is very informative. (The greater context is also helpful.)
- ↳ **You will read about:**
 - Many types of *sinful* conduct that we must "kill" or "get rid of" or "put off." **We must replace these with ...**
 - Many types of *godly* conduct that we must "put on" or "clothe ourselves with."
 - There are also additional warnings and helps. It's a life-and-death matter; for *without this change, we cannot be saved* (see 5:5-6)!

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• THE COLOSSIANS PASSAGE:

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature ...

You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must **rid yourselves** of all such things as these: ... [a list of typical sins here] ... since you **have taken off your old self** with its practices and **have put on the new self**, which is being **renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator**. ...

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, **clothe yourselves** with [list of typical godly characteristics here].

Colossians 3:5a, 7-8a, 9b-10, 12a (NIV)

- ↳ **The immediate context** of these verses: Colossians 2:20-3:17; and all of it is very informative. (The greater context is also helpful.)
- ↳ **You will read about:**
 - *Sinful* conduct that we must "kill" or "get rid of" or "put off," because *such things will result in God's wrath*.
 - *Godly* conduct that we must "put on" or "clothe ourselves with."

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RESPONDING to sinful/dead works.

- **RECOGNIZE the issue.** Acknowledge the need to "kill" the sinful works that your old nature wants you to do. It's a matter of life and death (Romans 8:13).
- **REPENT:** Repentance from sinful works is one of the "elementary teachings" about Christ (Hebrews 6:1).
 - ✓ An example of acknowledging one's sins (= repentance in action) is seen in the thief on the cross (Luke 23:41).
- **REPLACE them.** Get rid of them! "Put on" Christ, instead; and develop a mind that focuses on *godly* things (Romans 13:12-14; compare v. 14b with Romans 12:2).
- **REVEAL them.** Avoid sinful works; expose them for what they are.

Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.

Ephesians 5:11 (NIV)

17

As saved people, our relationship to sinful works has changed.

- **The PAST:** We were once alienated from God because of our evil deeds... but this is *past tense* for those who have an *ongoing* trust in Christ (Colossians 1:21-23)!
- **The PRESENT:** Under the New Covenant, we have been changed (Hebrews 10:16-17)! (With this change comes forgiveness.)



- **Concerning our own evil works:** The blood of Jesus Christ can cleanse even our *consciences* from such works, so that we can serve him (Hebrews 9:14). We don't have to spend all our lives sorrowing over past sins, when Christ has already paid for them and empowered us to serve him!
- **Concerning the evil works of others (against us):** God will deliver his people from those who do evil. *Even if they kill us, we will make it safely to Jesus' heavenly kingdom* (2 Timothy 4:18, Paul's example)!

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How should we respond to people who practice sinful deeds?

- **Be repulsed by what they do.**
 - ✓ Don't follow their example – Matthew 23:3.
 - ✓ Be grieved about their evil deeds – 2 Peter 2:8 (an example).
- **Oppose them.**
 - ✓ Expose those who continue in sin, especially when it causes harm to the church – 3 John 1:10; 2 Timothy 4:14-15.
 - ✓ If they refuse to repent, expel them from the church – 1 Corinthians 5:1-5.
 - ✓ Don't welcome or encourage them in any way – 2 John 1:10-11.
- **Encourage repentance** – 2 Timothy 2:25-26.

Many of these verses focus on people in the *church*. The goal of opposing and expelling them is their eventual repentance and salvation. As long as they refuse to repent, they cannot be treated as "saved."

IN THE PURSUIT OF "FOLLOWING JESUS" – SUMMARY.

- **NECESSITY:** It should be obvious by now, that all the Scripture passages that focus on these issues tell us that good works are not a mere "option," but an actual "obligation."
- **EMPOWERED:** Scripture also tells us that God does *not* leave us to struggle through these issues on our own. He is with us, working in us, empowering us, and changing our thinking (as we pursue a renewed mind).
- **ACTION:** God says he will empower us. "Faith" is accepting as *true* what God says he will do, and responding by doing what he has enabled!
- **PERSISTING:** When we fail – when we "fall down" because we are weak – we can follow Paul's example. We can "get up," forget the past, and press on toward what God has called us to!

Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize of God's heavenly calling in Christ Jesus.
Philippians 3:13b-14 (BSB)

MY LIFE EXPERIENCE DOESN'T AGREE WITH THIS. **SO THE BIBLE MUST BE WRONG!** **TIME TO RE-THINK YOUR VIEWS!**

- Our goal has been to find out what Scripture says, whether or not we approve of its message.
- If we choose to ignore or deny what Scripture says, we have ZERO chance of ever changing.
- The first step toward change is to admit the truth, and admit our inability to change. Acknowledge it all to God (who already knows it, but is waiting for *us* to know it), and then pursue the change by letting Scripture change the way we think on these issues.
- We need to find out what Scripture says, accept it as true, and begin to pattern our lives after it. Since God is involved in the change, we should give him the credit he deserves, for the changes that occur.
- The issue isn't "being sinlessly perfect," but "growing in that direction."

YOUR (OUR) MISSION!

⇒ **PURSUE** the life that God enables his people to live!

AND

⇒ **OPPOSE** the life that leads to death!

IF WE ARE SAVED, God has given us:

- ✓ **NEW selves.**
- He has also given us:
- ✓ **Instructions** for learning how to live-out these new selves.
- ✓ **Power** for living-out these new selves.

People in some churches downplay the need for holiness, righteousness and obedience. They treat it like an unrealistic dream that shouldn't be taken seriously. They lead people to *expect* to always sin, and to believe that nothing can be done about our sinning until Jesus returns. They treat trying to do good works as tantamount to *pursuing salvation* by "works," instead of by "grace."

It may take some time for those who grew up in such an environment to *undo* such influences on them. They may have difficulty *living* the way the Bible says God's people will live, because it requires *believing* that ✓ the Bible is speaking truthfully on these matters, and that ✓ holiness and obedience – the *responses* of a saved person – *don't* contradict what the Bible says about the *grace of God*.

This is important, because our view of "the nature of a Christian's conduct" will influence our view of what we should be doing, if we claim to be "Christians." If we view the Christian life as one of constantly being defeated by the devil, we will most likely live defeated lives. (We will also be living the *opposite* of how the *Bible* says we should live.)

If we were raised in a church that promotes such views, it may take a *lot of time and effort* to *change* the false thinking that has been embedded in our minds...

★ But it can be done, if we let the Word of God *change* our thinking! ★

Credits

SCRIPTURE

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