

2 Cor 5:16-21

16 Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer. 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. 18 Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, 19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

20 Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. 21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ (in Him, in Christ, in whom - 130 times), he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

The key to this verse is, "if anyone is in Christ!"

4 "R's"

Recognition - "if anyone is in Christ"

Regeneration - Paul says, "he is a new creation."

Rejection - "old things have passed away,"

Restoration - "behold, all things have become new"

What has become new in your life since becoming a believer?

You've been justified according to Romans 5.

When you were a newborn, you were born DOA! You were spiritually dead!

We were once outside of Christ. Paul describes to the Ephesians our life when we were outside of Christ.

Eph 2:1-6

1 And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, 2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air (Satan), the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, 3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

Eph 2:12

12 that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

That was us prior to giving our life to Christ.
We were alienated from God,

But, the moment we surrender to Christ, Paul says:

4 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

Eph 2:13

13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

2 Peter 1:4 says we become a new nature in Christ.

When we studied thru 1st Corinthians we learned

- that we are one spirit with Christ.

Only Christians claim they are one with their Savior.

It wasn't until you gave your life to Christ that you became alive, you were regenerated!

I don't think any of our parents had to convince any of us to sin when we were children.

If you're a believer you're "a new creation."

He's not implying that we are reformed or rehabilitated or even reeducated. No, we are recreated, we are a new creation.

You're a new as opposed to "old or former."

Galatians 5:22 lists the fruits of the spirit that we will exemplify.

We will have a new nature.

Col 2:6-7

6 As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, 7 rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.

Isa 65:17

17 "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth;
And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind.

Don't plant your feet too deep in this world!
2 Cor 5:18-19

18 Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, 19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. (4 times - reconcile)

Reconciliation can be a difficult thing for us. That's because many of times neither party wants to admit they are wrong. We were all at war with God at one time and in need of reconciliation with Him.

Paul was once at war with God.

- In acts 9 when Paul was on his way to Damascus
- to persecute Christians
- he had an encounter with Jesus.

Acts 9:4-5

He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him,

"Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"

5 And he said, "Who are You, Lord?"

Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads."

A goad is a point or a prick,

- so it's to kick against the pricks or goads.

Kicking against the goads

- alluded to oxen who hurt themselves
- when they were unruly.

Paul had not yet surrendered his life to Christ.

None of the training he'd received in the past led him to the truth.

It's not until a person surrenders to Christ as Paul did on that Damascus road that he can truly be freed.

James 4:4

4 Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world (Speaking of the world system) makes himself an enemy of God.

We don't have to be an enemy of God.

Eph 2:14-16

14 For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, 15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, 16 and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity

The war is over!

Colossians 2:13 says that God has made us alive with Him having forgiven us all of our sins.

God sent His son to this earth to reconcile us unto Himself.

20 Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, (an ambassador is a representative. An ambassador in Latin is called "Persona Grata." This person is one who represents the country from which he is coming to the country to which he is going)

And that's what we're to do,

- go to people who speak a different language,
- they don't know the Christian language,

As ambassadors, we're to be telling others of the heavenly Kingdom!

Oh, they can remain at war with God

- but it's literally committing spiritual suicide.

So what is our mission. Paul tells us in verse 20, we are to implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.

As a believer we represent Christ. In fact, Paul said in

2 Cor 3:2

2 You are our letter, inscribed on our hearts, known and read by all people,
The Lexham English Bible

2 Cor 5:20

Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.

To be reconciled (katallassō) is only used 3 times in the NT.— to restore someone to favorable or friendly relations with another after a presumed wrong.

The two other times the word is used it speaks once of being

- reconciled to God through the death of Jesus.

So we are restored to a favorable or friendly relationship with Jesus.

The third time the word is used it speaks of:

- A woman being reconciled to her husband.

It's only thru Jesus:

21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.