



Turning the Page
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“New Life and Clear Mission”
December 31, 2023

Key Verses: 2 Corinthians 5:16-21

Key Thought: New Year’s resolutions tend to be futile when 1) we seek to accomplish them in our own strength and/or 2) they foster self-centeredness. → What we truly need is for God to give us a new Life in the Christ, and for us to give ourselves to His clear mission to share about that Life with others.

Points to Consider:

- 17: New Year’s resolutions are often a form of self-help. What we truly need is God-help— who alone is able to deliver us from ourselves and make us into a new creation in the Christ.
- Even those who are in the Christ might not always *feel* like a new creation, for two reasons: 1) they might still struggle with sin, and 2) their bodies still break down. ← There is a sense in which those who are in the Christ have been made new, and there is another sense in which they are being made new. → 1) Those who are in the Christ have a responsibility to participate in sanctification— to appropriate what God has done for them in the Christ, which can be a process (cf. Eph 4:22-24). 2) The bodies of those who are in the Christ will not fully be made new until the resurrection. However, the work of renewal that God has begun on the inside will overcome the breakdown and decay that is still experienced on the outside.
- 19-21: God paved the way for us to be reconciled to Him in the Christ through a “glorious exchange.” The sinless Christ was made to be sin so that we could be forgiven and become the righteousness of God.
- 18-20: As Paul, God has given us a clear mission to share about our new Life in the Christ with others.

Discussion Prompts:

- How can New Year’s resolutions become an exercise in futility? Can you share a personal example?
- Why is it so vital that we look to God in our pursuit of transformation?
- Can you share of your experience of new Life in the Christ?
- In what sense are those who are in the Christ also being made new? (Be sure to distinguish between “inwardly” and “outwardly.” Hint: See 2 Cor 4:16.)
- Explore the clear mission that we have received from God, as described in 2 Corinthians 5:16-21.
- How might God be leading you to give yourself to His clear mission this year?