



NEW CREATION

Many believers know they're saved by Jesus Christ but struggle with guilt or the perception that their lives haven't changed, feeling far from being "made new." This doesn't have to be the case. By remembering who we are in Christ, we can fully embrace the transformative life God desires for us.

WEEK FOUR

THE NEW IS HERE

Message Passage: Ephesians 2:10; Titus 2:11-14

Small Group Passage: Hebrews 10:23; Romans 5:1-5

TEACHING AND VIDEO NOTES

Today, we will discuss how the Gospel is not only about what Jesus has saved us from (sin and condemnation), but just as importantly, what He has saved us to. How do we ultimately embrace New Creation living until we meet Jesus? We do it by actively pursuing God's purpose for which we were saved.

CREATED FOR GOOD WORKS

The core of our new identity is tied directly to a new purpose, given to us by God Himself.

Ephesians 2:10 For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

We are God's Handiwork: This emphasizes that our new life is a divine act of God's creation. Just as God created humanity the first time, our salvation is a new miraculous creation, making us unique and made with a specific purpose in mind.

Note: A popular phrase is used in some pulpits from time to time. "Created on purpose for a purpose!" This comes to mind. (no known originator to give credit).

Not by Works, But for Works: We don't perform good works to get salvation; we perform them because we have salvation.

Our purpose is clear. This new life in Christ is a commission. Good works are not an optional add-on to the Christian life; they are the very reason for the new life.

"Prepared in Advance": This is profound. God has predetermined the character and direction of a believer's daily walk. These are the unique acts of service, kindness, justice, and faithfulness that align with the character of Christ. To "walk in them" means living a life that naturally aligns with the unique purposes God has laid out for us. Our lives are a divinely prepared path.

TRAINED BY GRACE

The power to live this life of good works comes from grace, which also acts as our **Divine Trainer**. This isn't about human effort alone; it's about submitting to the active instruction of God's grace.

Titus 2:11-14 For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. **12** It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, **13** while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, **14** who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

Grace Appears, Teaches and Trains us for New Creation Living (v. 11-12): God's grace, made manifest in Jesus Christ, does more than just save us; it educates us. It is the curriculum for the Christian life. This "education" has two parts:

1. The Negative Discipline (Say "No"): We must renounce ungodliness (a lack of reverence toward God) and worldly passions (desires centered entirely on the present world system).
2. The Positive Discipline (Live "Yes"): We must actively live self-controlled (towards self), upright (towards others/society), and godly (towards God) lives. This triad of actions forms the ideal Christian behavior.

The ultimate result of this purification is a people zealous to do what is good. Our old, misplaced zeal (like Paul's pre-conversion) is now rightly directed toward God's purposes. Living the "new creation" life is characterized by this active, passionate pursuit of good works.

Takeaway: There is a necessary tension in the Christian life: we are saved by grace, but we must work out that salvation by submitting to the training of grace. When

you feel spiritually stuck, remind yourself of your identity as God's Handiwork and intentionally choose to walk in the good works God has prepared for you - because regardless of how you feel, God has given you the ability to live a life that produces good works. This active obedience solidifies the reality of your new-creation identity.

Small Group: Knowing this, it's essential to factor the spiritual attribute of hope. In our small groups, we will discuss how our faith and hope in what is and what will be can impact our ability to hold fast to New Creation living.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Read: Hebrews 10:23

1. The command is to "hold unswervingly to the hope we profess." Given that hope in the Bible means a certainty of future good, what promise or aspect of your salvation (past, present, or future) gives you the greatest certainty and helps you "hold unswervingly"?

Leader Notes: Define hope as a confident expectation, not wishful thinking. Encourage members to name a specific promise (e.g., forgiveness, eternal life, Jesus's return, the Spirit's presence) that anchors them. Ask: "What happens to your obedience when your hope starts to 'swerve'?"

Read: Romans 5:1-5

2. According to Romans 5:2, we "rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." What does "the glory of God" mean in this context, and how does this future, ultimate hope give you joy today, even amidst imperfect obedience and daily difficulties?

Leader Notes: "Glory of God" here refers to the believer's future participation in God's divine perfection (being fully transformed and resurrected). This joy is a spiritual discipline. **Ask:** "When was the last time you were genuinely joyful because of your future with God?"

3. Paul says we "rejoice in our sufferings, because suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope." For unbelievers, this seems counterintuitive, but for a Christian, beneficial. Can you share an example of a past difficulty that God used to build perseverance or godly character in your life?

Leader Notes: Acknowledge that this is a hard truth. Suffering doesn't automatically produce good things; it does so when endured with faith. Ensure the focus remains on the sanctification process. This links to walking by the Spirit—the Spirit sustains us through the suffering.

4. Why is hope the final product in this chain (suffering - perseverance - character - hope), rather than the starting point? How is this "hope" at the end different or deeper than the "hope" mentioned in verse 2?

Leader Notes: The hope in v. 2 is the initial, objective certainty of salvation. The hope here (v. 4) is the subjective, deeply tested confidence derived from experience. We know God is faithful because we've seen Him sustain us through trials, confirming the initial promise.

5. How does the Holy Spirit—the third person in the Trinity we learned about two weeks ago—give us assurance? What does it mean that "God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit"?

Leader Notes: The "pouring out" signifies an abundant, unmistakable, and experiential sense of God's love and presence. **Ask:** "How do you recognize the Spirit's assurance of God's love in your life?"

6. If we are God's "handiwork" created for good works (Eph 2:10), and our hope is in God's faithfulness (Heb 10:23), how should this certainty motivate us to engage in those prepared good works with greater confidence and less fear of failure?

Leader Notes: Our works are not a risk of failure; they are the natural expression of a life anchored in assured victory and peace with God. This is fighting from victory.

7. "Holding unswervingly" (Heb 10:23) is an active choice, a spiritual discipline. What is one practical step you can take this week to actively "hold unswervingly" to your hope, especially when you encounter difficulty or temptation?

PRAYER TIME: Pray specifically that the Lord would solidify their hope in Jesus Christ.

DISMISS