



## NG Study Guide: 2 Corinthians 5:15-21 :: "A New Beginning" - Resurrection Sunday 2024 [3.31.24]

### Love God + know the Bible better:

1. Read the passage cited above, and try to answer the questions below before your group meets.
2. Regularly review the notes at the bottom.

### The Study

**Thesis:** Have you ever hoped for a new beginning? I know I have. There are things that I've done, or said, or failed to do that I should have done that I wish somehow could be erased or transformed. It would be amazing to receive favor anew from the most important person in your life. Today, this Resurrection Sunday (Easter), we will discover together how to have a new beginning. To live for Christ anew, afresh, once more. **Jesus' death and resurrection make new affections, new identity, and new purpose in Christ a reality.**

*And He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again. <sup>16</sup> 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. <sup>17</sup> Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

**Subject: Christ's New Beginning**

**Object: Live for Christ anew**

#### **A. New Affections: Live for Jesus (15-16)**

*And He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again. <sup>16</sup> 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.*

##### **1. Live for Christ not self (15)**

The life, death and resurrection of Jesus should compel us to reorder our affections. Jesus' death on the cross, as a perfect voluntary sacrifice for our sin is the reason why Good Friday is good, and the means for us to receive God's favor anew. The means of renewal is available to all, but only effective for those who yield and receive Jesus. Jesus *died for all* (John 3:16) but also died for you personally. Jesus' resurrection, *died and rose again*, is the foundation of the gospel (1Corinthians 15:1-4). The evidence of Jesus' resurrection is beyond a reasonable doubt: the missing body (Cf. neither Jews, Romans, or the disciples were responsible), apostles martyrdom, eyewitnesses (10x, 1Corinthians more than 500 who were alive to interview), and transformed lives.

The moral implication of this reality is that we *should live no longer for themselves, but for Him* (Jesus). We live for Jesus, not self, and thus new affections.

##### **2. Live like spiritual people (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.*

We now know Jesus through the Holy Spirit (spiritual birth). Our relationship with Jesus, others and the material world is transformed. Life with God gives new perspective so that our affections are re-ordered consistent with God's view. We live like Christlike spiritual people with different affections and values than the unbelieving world governed by the flesh and the material world.

#### **B. New Identity: Receive God's favor anew (17)**

*<sup>17</sup> Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

**1. In Christ you are a new creation:** To be *in Christ* means you chose to follow Jesus as Lord and Savior and received His forgiveness, and spiritual life. That spiritual life makes you a *new creation* no longer separated from God.

**2. In Christ your former identity has passed away:** *old things have passed away* means that your former nature and former identity no longer control who and what you are.

**3. In Christ all things are new:** *behold, all things have become new* refers to the idea that not only are you new in your position before God, but you progressively become more like Jesus as you live for Him. Your worldview, affections and life are transformed to reflect Jesus. Nevertheless, it can sometimes feel like you aren't making progress as you'd like, or may even feel like you regressed. That is why it is so important to know that God's favor is available anew.

**C. New Purpose: a new life in Christ (18-21)**

*<sup>18</sup> Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, <sup>19</sup> 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. <sup>20</sup> 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. <sup>21</sup> For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

**1. New message: be reconciled to God through Jesus (18-19)**

Five times we see "reconciliation or reconciled." Reconciliation means to restore favor anew. It could relate to an enemy, someone alienated, someone separated or removed. All of us need to be reconciled to God, because of sin. Jesus took our penalty at the cross, and His resurrection proves that God accepted Jesus' sacrifice on your behalf. You can be restored anew when you receive Christ, and you can be renewed any time you feel separated, alienated, or distant from God. A new beginning is available!

**2. New ministry: ambassador for Jesus (19-20)**

*God has committed to us the word of reconciliation. <sup>20</sup> 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.* You now have a new purpose in life! You are a "brand ambassador" for Jesus and His gospel. You live to represent Jesus at home, work, school, where you play and worship. We live to see as many as possible be reconciled to God and experience the blessing of life with God, and to receive favor anew from God.

**3. New means: Jesus' perfect sacrifice allows His followers to be right with God anew (21)**

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

The gospel is good news, because we are made right with God through faith in Jesus. Jesus takes our sin, and gives us His righteousness. Since you are right with God through faith in Jesus, you want to live for Him (not to become right with God, but in gratitude that you are right with God).

**Study Guide Qs:**

**Q1. What are some issues that can cause people to want a new beginning?**

**Q2. What are some ways that you might discern what someone really loves (i.e. what they are living for)?**

**Q3. Why might a new beginning be important?**

**Q4. How can believers live for Jesus?**

**"Disciples Who Dig Deeper" (optional or alternative study)**

**1. Here is a helpful article regarding the evidence of the resurrection: <https://www.cru.org/us/en/train-and-grow/spiritual-growth/core-christian-beliefs/resurrection-evidence.html>.**

**2. Here is a wonderful animated video about the Resurrection of Jesus: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/gospel-luke-5/>.**

**Love your neighbors (inside + outside the group) better:**

**1. Who would like to share how they sought to befriend or build relationship with their neighbors inside or outside the group?**

**2. Are there some needs that can provide us an opportunity to love our neighbors inside or outside the group?**

**Disciples who make disciples:**

**1. Who would like to share how they recently sought to make disciples?**

## 2. Here is a disciple making idea to consider for the weeks ahead:

Consider who can you share your new life in Chris with. What might the next step look like?

### Prayer [Loving God and Neighbors better]:

Close the NG meeting with a time of group prayer. Encourage each participant to pray, but don't force anyone to pray. Encourage the group to keep their prayers brief so that each person can pray.

### Notes:

**1. Preparation and participation:** Group participants should read the teacher's notes contained in this study guide prior to your meeting and be prepared to discuss the content. Remember the purpose of preparation and participation is to accelerate growth as disciples who loves God supremely, loves neighbors like self, and make other disciples who do likewise. **Seek to involve as many group participants as possible.** A good group discussion time allows people to get to know the passage and one another better.

**2. Consider what about the passage is particularly exciting, challenging, or confusing?**

If a leader is uncertain about a question of doctrine or theology don't hesitate to follow-up with your coach during the week. Then revisit the issue(s) when the group gathers next time.

**3. The "Disciples Who Dig Deeper" section provides some optional or alternative study and discussion activities.** As a group leader, you can choose to focus on the "Disciples Who Dig Deeper" section, include part of that section in your group meeting, or not use it at all. Try to give the group sufficient notice so they can be prepared for the meeting.

**4. The "Love your neighbors" section encourages participants to love neighbors inside and outside the group better.** As a leader, discuss this section frequently.

**5. The "Disciples who make disciples" section provides a helpful idea, and encourages participants to be disciples who make disciples.** Leaders should regularly encourage the group to review and discuss this section.

**Next week we start a new series - Ephesians: "In Christ You Are..."**

Ephesians 1:1-2 :: "In Christ" (Overview)