

Baptism and Membership Service of Grant Klockow, Jeremy Sarber, Danae Sarber

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 15 August 2021

Preacher: Jason Webb

[0:00] Well, there is no denying that God makes old things new. That's what we've seen tonight. God making broken down old things, wearing away things new.

If you have your Bibles, I would like you to turn to 2 Corinthians 5, verse 17. 2 Corinthians 5, verse 17.

If you don't have your Bible, I'm going to read it, but I hope you'll listen. It says, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.

The old is gone, the new has come. Paul is in the middle of saying that you can't look at people the same anymore after you've joined the church, after you've come to Christ.

In verses 15 and 16, he says no longer two times. You can't think that way anymore about these people. You can't look at yourself the same way anymore.

[1:07] Because the old is gone, and the new has come. Revelation 21 and 22 is the very end of the Bible. It's talking about the very end of things, and it shows a picture of the new creation, where the old order of things has passed away, and everything is new.

And what Paul is saying here is that when someone comes to Christ, that future reality breaks and goes back in time, as it were, and breaks into someone's heart, and there's a new creation where the old passes away, and everything is new.

That's what happens when you come to Christ. The glory of the age to come comes back and is born into you. The Spirit of God, the Spirit who raises the dead, who raised Jesus Christ from the dead, comes and lives in you.

And so you're born again. Now, born again doesn't mean that you maybe take on some new habits. You go to church.

You become more serious about religious things. That very well, those things very well might be the effects of being born again. But that's not what being born again is.

[2:27] Being born again means a recreation, a new creation, a coming to life of something that was dead.

And that's what we have seen and heard tonight. Two testimonies of new creation. Two testimonies of new people being born out of old people, old kinds of people.

A new creation, a new life. It's different. And it is the fresh start of all fresh starts. We love New Year's because it's a fresh start. We love maybe the change in the calendar, maybe coming to our birthdays or things like that, where we have a chance for a fresh start.

This is the fresh starts of all fresh starts. And that's what Jesus offers anyone here and everyone here. If you come to me, you'll be born again.

New creation. And a new creation is total. It's total. Creation is all that there is. So that's true of us personally.

[3:39] That's true of our world. You go out into the world and no matter how far east you go or how far west or north or south, no matter how high you go or how low you go, no matter if you're talking about animals or inanimate objects like rocks on the seashore, it's all creation everywhere you go.

And Paul says, what has happened to you is a new creation. And it's total. There's no part of you that remains untouched. No part of you that is left behind, so to speak.

It's a fresh start of all fresh starts. Now, do you need that? Do you want that? Do you feel like, if I could just begin again, I've messed up so much.

I've been going the wrong way for so long. I've done so many wrong and foolish things. And I know I'm not what I want to be. And I know I'm not what I should be.

Well, maybe you're saying, if I could just begin again. Well, then let me invite you to Jesus Christ.

[4:56] Because when you come to Jesus Christ, behold, you're a new creation. You're born again. What's new?

What's part of this new creation? You've heard hints. You've seen pictures and examples of what happens when someone is born again and made new into a new creation.

You've heard and seen some examples, even in Jeremy and Grant's testimonies, of what happens to a person. What could happen to you?

Well, you get a new standing with God. That's one of the first things. A new relationship with God. You're no longer enemies with God.

Can you imagine being friends with God? Real, real, for real friends. Now, think about what a friend is to you. A friend is someone that you like being with.

[5:55] They like being with you. A friend is someone that you like doing life with. And they like doing life with you. And you do things together.

And you do life together. And you have a good time doing life together. That's what a friend is. And that's what Christ can make you. That's what Christ gives to you.

He reconciles you to God. So you're no longer enemies, but being a friend. Now, a new relationship with God. That's what you can have.

That's part of the new creation. So no longer paranoid. No longer uncertain about where do I stand with God.

Not hiding from him. Not uncomfortable with even the thought of him. Uncomfortable even thinking about him. Not worried that he'll see you.

[6:54] That he'll want to hurt you and ruin your life. And I know that that's how some of you think about God. That you're either worried that he will hurt you.

Or he's irrelevant. But it doesn't have to be that way. Christ will make you friends with God. And friends, just like I was talking.

Where you actually like him. And he likes you. And you like spending time together. He comes to reconcile you. He comes to give you peace with God. And so can you imagine living your whole life knowing that God is for you?

No matter what, God is for you. That's what it means to be part of the new creation. That's what the new creation is in part. But what about sin?

Well, part of the new creation is you get a new record. A new record in heaven. A new record with God. So how about all of your sins washed away?

[7:55] How about all of your sins thrown behind God's back so that he remembers them no more? He'll never bring them up to you, against you, again.

Because that's the old. That's the old relationship. That's the old record. And now we're talking about what is new. The old is gone. And the new has come.

And that is exactly what the cross is all about. Grant mentioned this in his testimony. Jesus takes our sin and really, really pays the price for them.

Pays for them. And so, because he really did pay the price for our sin, we're done with sin.

Sin is taken care of. And Jesus himself on the cross at the end says, it is finished. He was talking about a lot of things.

[8:56] Partly, he's talking about redemption is finished. I've accomplished it. He's also talking about our record of sin that was standing, that we're carrying.

It's finished. It's over. That's gone. And so think about that. All of your sin erased. Deleted. As if you could go into your web browser and you go to history and then you delete it all.

All that guilt, gone. And so now, freedom. Freedom. Real freedom. So slavery.

Slavery to guilt. Slavery to fear. Slavery to shame. Gone. Because that's the old you. That's the old way of living.

That's the old way of doing things. And it's gone. Galatians 5.1 says it's for freedom that Christ has set you free. For the experience of freedom.

[9:57] And that's what you get. And so you wake up. If you're a new creation, you wake up and you're free. You're free. You're free to come right to God as a child.

And be comfortable coming to God. Not as a guest. Not as a stranger. Not as an enemy. Not you're in trouble with the principal. But as a dearly loved child.

A cherished child. I want to say it right next to being a spoiled child. But not a spoiled child. Because no good thing does he withhold.

No good thing does he withhold from his children. He calls them heirs. Heirs of what? Heirs of God.

And so everything that belongs to God gets given to you.

And that speaks of two things. One, the richness of God. And also the generosity of God. He gives it all to you.

[11:00] And so we're talking freedom. Freedom from that distance. Freedom from that fear.

Freedom from that shame. Freedom to breathe. Freedom to rejoice.

Freedom to rest. Rest. One of the things that Jesus offers to sinners. Is rest. So that miserable slavery.

That miserable slavery to fear. And to worry. To those questions. That you push away. What about death? What about death?

What about what I'm doing? What about all my problems? I'm all alone. And no one can understand me. No one can help. That's the old.

And Christ has come to make you new. Christ will set you free. And then how about a new you on the inside? A new you on the inside.

[12:00] So we've talked about a record. And a relationship. But let's talk about what's going on on the inside. He says, I will put a new spirit in you. God comes.

And he takes up residence. And he moves in. And he moves in for a purpose. To change us. To strengthen what is good. And to weaken that which is bad.

And so if you come to Christ. He's not just going to give you. These laws and these commands. And these things to do. And say, well there you go. Try harder. Do that. And if you do that.

If you come to church so often. If you get really serious about this religion thing. Then it will be alright. You'll get to heaven somehow. No, he does something different than that.

He gives us his very spirit. And he changes what we want. He changes us on the inside. So that we begin to want to obey.

[12:57] And the spirit gives us new desires. And so the psalmist says, I run in the way of your commands. That's where I feel invigorated.

That's where I feel free. That's where I feel your pleasure. And you say, well I can never be a Christian. That's not who I am. And I would say you're absolutely right.

That is not who you are by nature. That's not who you are. But Christ has come to really make you new. Make you new on the inside.

And so that prayer will be natural. It will be like breathing. You'll want to talk to God. When Saul of Tarsus was saved, one of the key indicators that God had really taken someone who formerly hated Jesus and persecuted him.

He said, Ananias, you can go find Saul. Behold, he's praying. He's praying now. Paul had said his prayers a million times. And now he's praying.

[14:08] He'll change your heart so that doing good will be something that you want to do. Jeremy just said, now I hate my sin.

I hate my sin. So yes, we do sin, but we hate it. And yes, sometimes we don't do the good things that we want to do, but that's what we long to do.

So we say with the psalmist, oh, that my ways were steadfast, then I wouldn't be put to shame when I consider all your laws. That's what I want to do.

God changes the gravity of your heart. Before you're a new creation, you have gravity that just sinks you down into sin.

But then when you're a new creation, you're more like a helium balloon. That, yes, it can get knocked down, but it just rises.

[15:05] And it always is rising up. That's the spirit of God changing us. And he makes you into a new kind of person. And so you say, I can't do it.

And I know that. And God knows that. And that's, you say, that's not who I am. And Christ says, come to me and I'll change who you are.

You'll be you. You'll just be a new you. You'll be a new you. And how about light? How about light?

One of the features of creation, the first thing that happened was that there was light. And we're talking about the new creation. And Jesus says, when you come to me, that's what you get to. So do you feel dark on the inside? There is a lot of darkness. There's a lot of fear. There's a lot of confusion.

[16 : 16] And in your clear moments when things aren't so cluttered, it's pretty frightening in your own head. It's frightening being alone with your thoughts.

I don't know how many times I've heard people telling me, at nighttime it was the worst. I knew I wasn't right with God.

I thought about death. Why is it that the nighttime is so often the worst? It's because for the first time, now you're thinking seriously. And so when you're sitting there and you're thinking seriously, you say, it is pretty dark.

If you're honest, you'd say, I'm not sure why I'm alive. I don't know what my purpose is. If you're honest, you'd say, it's hard for me to go to bed at night.

So you watch Netflix and YouTube until you go to sleep exhausted because the darkness creeps in. And you feel so hopeless.

[17 : 23] What do you do? You come to Christ who brings the new creation. He's the light of the world and he'll turn you into the light.

Wake up, oh sleeper. Rise from the dead and Christ will shine on you. And so what am I talking about? I'm talking about life. I'm talking about purpose.

I'm talking about hope. I'm talking about the fear of death giving way to sunshine. And so now you're not walking life and you could describe your life as a dead and dark alley.

Now it's a green grass in the sunshine. That's what I'm talking about. Life and light. And so the Lord says, let there be light and the light shines.

And now you see your way forward. Now you carry hope with you wherever you go. That's the new creation. That's what really happens when someone becomes a Christian. They become new.

[18 : 29] And that's what we're seeing here tonight. And that's what we've heard tonight. A new life, new creations. And all of them came to Christ. And I just want you to ask very seriously, how did it turn out for them?

How did it turn out for them? Ask yourself. They came to Christ. How did it turn out? Are they sad? Are they worse off?

Did nothing change? No. Christ lit them up. Turned them on.

Made them alive. Made them new. He made them new. And I'll tell you this. If you come to Jesus Christ, repenting of your sin and giving yourself, throwing yourself upon his mercy, he'll do the very same thing for you.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has gone and the new has come.

[19 : 41] Praise the Lord. Let's pray. Our Heavenly Father, we do thank you that as the God of creation, you are also the God of recreation.

And when we are sunk in death and sin and depravity and guilt and fear and darkness, that you reach down into that darkness and you had mercy.

And you went pursuing sinners. Thank you for what you've done in so many of our lives here to change us, to rescue us, to make us new, to make us alive.

Thank you. We praise you. We thank you for Grant and Jeremy and Danae. And we pray that you would bless them as they join with us. And we pray that you would be honored not only in their lives, but be honored in saving sinners even here tonight.

Reach out your strong arm of salvation and wake up people who are asleep. Wake up people who are dead. Wake up people and pursue people who are running the wrong way and bring them to yourself and give them new life.

[20 : 56] We pray this for your glory and for your honor, that you might have the victory, that you might have the glory. In Jesus' name, amen.