

## **A New Creature In Christ**

**By Elder David Pyles**

*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. – 2Cor 5:17*

This important scripture is a summary of things said earlier concerning the perspective of one who is a true Christian as opposed to one who is not. The conclusion is that the perspective is changed in everything. Nothing is interpreted exactly the same as before. Consideration of statements leading to this conclusion will show how extensive and radical the change can be.

In particular, the prior verse stated: “*Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more,*” (2Cor 5:16-17). Hence, Christ changes our perspective of every man. Paul said we no longer know men after the flesh, meaning that all natural relationships have been superseded by spiritual ones. Out of Christ, distinctions in race, wealth, social standing, etc. may be considered important, but they are reduced to insignificance by the commonalty we have as sinners saved by Christ, and by the fact that all such are brothers and sisters in His blood-bought family.

Another change in perspective can be seen in: “*But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us,*” (2Cor 4:7-8). All men suffer afflictions from the frailties of their mortal bodies, but not all men suffer these afflictions for the same purpose. For those outside of Christ, bodily afflictions reflect the curse of sin. For those who are saved in Christ, their bodily weaknesses serve to confirm that their salvation is altogether of His power and grace. This shows the importance of affirming salvation by grace without qualification. To deny it is to deny the very reason for our present existence.

This principle carries even to death: “*For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh,*” (2Cor 4:11). So the death of a Christian is not to be interpreted the same as the death of an infidel. In the latter case, death is the result of the curse of sin acquired in Eden. In the former, this curse was removed by Christ at the cross, but the person dies because they are being carried down the same path that Christ travelled. He died, but was then gloriously raised from the dead. Such will be the case of those who truly believe on Him.

This powerful change in perspective is sufficient to transform everything from defeat to triumph: *“Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place,”* (2Cor 2:14-3:1). Outside of Christ, all things terminate in defeat. Inside of Christ, all things terminate in triumph. What could be a more radical change than this?

Paul continued: *“For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life.”* Hence, the saved person has a very different perspective of the gospel than the unsaved one. To one it will be a refreshing fragrance; to the other a loathsome stench. Paul did not say the gospel was the savour of death unto life, nor of life unto death, but of life unto life and of death unto death. Preaching itself does not give spiritual life, nor can it take spiritual life away, but it will serve to manifest either state, because a born-again person will have a very different perspective of it than one who is not. Indeed, *“if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”*