

“A New Creation” Teen Challenge

INTRODUCTION

God is in the business of creating new things. We see this in Genesis 1:1 when He created the heavens and the earth. The Hebrew word used here for create, *bara'*, means to make something from absolutely nothing. 2 Corinthians 5:17 states that if anyone is in Christ he is a new creation. When Teen Challenge visits New Life we have an opportunity to witness the new creations God has made through their changed lives. What is true for them is true for us, old things have passed away and the new has come. This study examines what it means to be a new creation in Christ.

Ice Breaker (Optional): Have you ever observed a new life coming into the world? If so, describe the experience.

Study Questions (45 MIN)

Q1. Read 2 Corinthians 5:16-21; Philippians 3:4-7; Galatians 6:14-15; Ephesians 4:22-24

Becoming a new creation doesn't mean we clean up our act to become the best that we can be, because the very best we can be still won't ever be enough to earn salvation. What were some of Paul's qualifications in which he might have boasted (Philippians 3:5-6)? What did he conclude about their value in Galatians 6:15? What is the "new creation" a reflection of according to Ephesians 4:22? What would you say changed most significantly as a result of your salvation?

Q2. Read 2 Corinthians 5:18-20; Romans 8:1

After 2 Corinthians 5:17 declares that we have been made a new creation, what do the next three verses tell us is our role in God's great plan? Consider the responsibility entrusted to us, that God would use us to make his appeal to reconcile the world to Himself. How does viewing yourself as God's ambassador change your approach toward the lost? How would you summarize the message God has sent us to tell the world?

Q3. Read Colossians 3:9-14; Ephesians 2:13-16

When we are made into a new creation, we are given a new relationship to fellow believers. In the third chapter of Colossians Paul contrasts the old self and the new. What would you say characterized the relationships of the old self? When we "put on" our new identity, how do those relationships change (Colossians 3:12-13)? Similarly, in Paul's letter to the Ephesians, the result of removing the distinction between Jew and Gentile is explained. What did God accomplish when He created one new man from the two? (see Ephesians 2:14-16) What barriers do you still find amongst believers and how can we help to remove those barriers?

Wrap-Up

When we give our lives to Christ, we die to the "old" self and He changes us into a totally new creation. Whatever our previous credentials, they are worthless compared to the righteousness and holiness of the new creation we become in Christ. This new creation is not only reconciled to God, but is entrusted as an ambassador to bring God's message of reconciliation to the world. When we "put off" the old version of ourselves, we do away with all of its evil practices and conflicts, and "put on" the character of God, extending love and unity to others.

Memory Verse

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

2 Corinthians 5:17 ESV

Prayer (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life: _____

Pray for your group members' needs:

Challenge: Look around you this week with God's eye, seeking to recognize those who need encouragement and reconciliation with God. Then allow God to use you to extend his message of hope to them.

2 Corinthians 5:16-17 ESV - 16 From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

Galatians 6:14-15 ESV - 14 But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. 15 For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.

Ephesians 4:22-24 ESV - 22 to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, 23 and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, 24 and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

2 Corinthians 5:18- ESV - 18 All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; 19 that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. 20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

Romans 8:1 ESV - 1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Read Colossians 3:8-14 in your Bible

Ephesians 2:11-16 ESV - 11 Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands-- 12 remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility 15 by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, 16 and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.

Prayers Con't: