

What Is the New Creation?

2 Corinthians 5:17: *Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.*



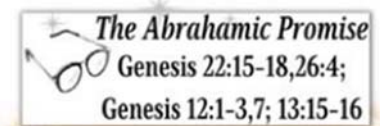
We don't know much about the spiritual world, especially before the creation of humanity. What we do know is that it was an entirely harmonious world with loyalty and obedience to God at its center. God foreknew that when pride crept into Satan's heart and was exposed, it would lead to a massive shift in the way things would run. In heaven, it would no longer be "business as usual." For now, the lessons of sin and disobedience would be unleashed. These painful but necessary lessons would, under God's power and providence, ultimately bring the whole of His creation back into the harmony it had left behind, only this time that harmony would be for eternity. How would God make this happen?

God knew His governing would need to expand in a way that never before existed, because what was out of harmony because of sin would need to be taught how to climb back into harmony. God would create a brand-new branch of spiritual government for this task. We will call this His "Ministry of Reconciliation." This ministry would be staffed by a brand-new creation who would have the training, humility and loyalty to aid the glorified Lord Jesus in accomplishing God's loving, just and wise plan.

This seems like the best superhero movie ever! The theme text refers to the *new creature*, but different translations refer to the *new creation*, so we will use the phrases interchangeably. What or who is this new creation, where does it come from and how does it work? The answers are all in Scripture, but sometimes just as a subtle hint. We can find some clues hiding in the Old Testament. Let's start off by looking at two of these.

For example, God made a special promise to Abraham, and with the first hint there would be two pathways, two salvations, including a new creation:

Genesis 22:15-18: *15 Then the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven, 16 and said, By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son, 17 indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. 18 In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.*




Abraham's *seed* or descendants are described in two parts: the *stars of heaven* AND the *sand of the seashore*. There is a suggestion here of both a "spiritual seed" with the stars and an "earthly seed" described by sand.

Through Abraham's only son Isaac, this spiritual and earthly power of blessing would expand to ALL the families of the earth! Is this just a thought or an actual, scriptural fact?

Having two specific and opposite parts, one heavenly and one earthly seems curious. But are we just reading into this? This is one of the reasons we study both the Old and New Testaments. The Apostle Paul will help us put this together. Paul builds on this promise to Abraham by explaining that if we are *in Christ*, then we are considered to be Abraham's seed (*descendants, heirs*), referring back to that Abrahamic promise.

Galatians 3:16,26-29: *16 Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, And to seeds, as referring to many, but rather to one, and to your seed, that is, Christ. 26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise.*

 **If the true disciples of Christ ARE Abraham's seed and therefore blessers of ALL nations, how does this come to be? What happens to put this privilege in place?**

 We know that in Abraham's promise, his seed will be blessed first before they will be privileged to bless others. *I will bless you...and in your seed all the nations (families, depending on the translation) of the earth shall be blessed.* There is an order in this promise. God states the one receiving a blessing (Abraham's seed – Christ and his faithful followers) makes the blessing of everybody else (all the nations/families of the earth) possible.

Let's fast forward to the second scriptural hint of this *new creation*, during the Exodus when the Hebrews were about to be released from Egyptian slavery. We remember the Ten Plagues, and how the last plague was the death of the firstborn. In order to save their own children and animals, God gave the Hebrews specific instructions for that night.

They were to take the blood from the Passover lamb and sprinkle it on their doorposts as a sign:

Exodus 12:12-13: *12 For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments—I am the LORD. 13 The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.*

The *firstborn* were saved that night, and the very next day, the rest of the nation was delivered out of the slavery of Egypt: showing two parts again. The Passover lamb is our second hint about this *new creation*. There was a deliverance of the entire nation as a result of the deliverance of the firstborn (as a result of the last plague, Pharaoh finally let the people go) but not until after the deliverance of the firstborn.

To recap:

- The blessing of the spiritual seed of Abraham (Christ and his church) enables the blessing of the rest of the world.
- The firstborn were delivered by the blood of the lamb first because it was their lives that were at risk. Because they were delivered, the rest of the nation was delivered.

To confirm our reasoning, we will look at several places where the Apostle Paul makes New Testament connections for us.

The firstborn are the first delivered by the blood of the lamb. Paul again makes connections for us:

Hebrews 12:22-23: *22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect.*

Paul recalls to their mind the firstborn saved in Egypt and spiritualizes it as the *church of the firstborn*. Can we be sure it's actually a Passover reference?

He specifically calls it the *church of the firstborn*. The Jewish Law had a lot of ceremonies around the firstborn. But there is an important sacredness to this *church of the firstborn* reference. At the original Passover, it was literally a balance between life and death.

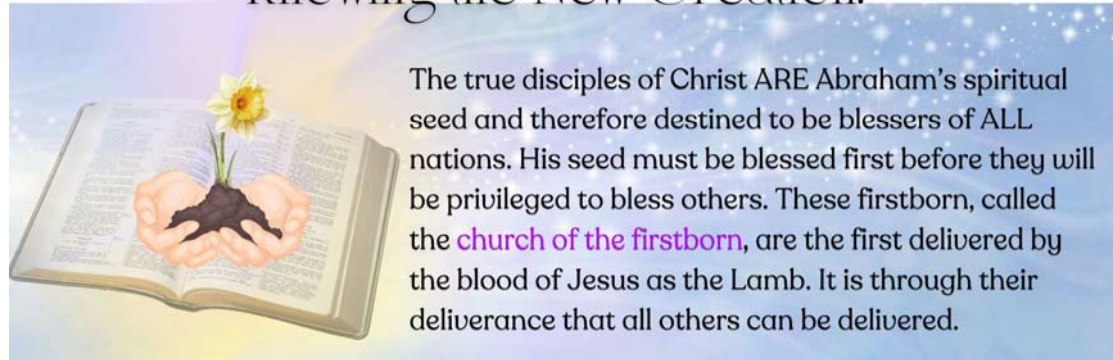
Paul plainly compares Jesus as the Passover Lamb slain for us:

1 Corinthians 5:6-8: *6 Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough? 7 Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed. (Definitely a Passover reference!) 8 Therefore let us celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.*



Old Testament scripture and New Testament fulfillment come precisely together to teach us important lessons about the *new creation*.

Knowing the New Creation:



This *new creation*—these *new creatures*—are the faithful followers of Jesus. This group goes by other scriptural names like *the church*, *the bride of Christ*, *the little flock*, *the royal priesthood* and many more.

We have a clear beginning, as we see in the Old Testament there is a basis for something significant promised.

We are just introducing the idea and already the *new creation* is proving to be not only fascinating but amazingly powerful as well!

All of this has a degree of familiarity to it as we are looking at Old Testament foundations. How does this bring us to a NEW creation?

The next step in our scriptural discovery is a fascinating one. The whole idea of a new creation implies something unique, something that has not been previously seen. The best way to recognize something never before seen is to have things that are familiar to compare it with so we can truly appreciate its uniqueness!

While we saw pictures of something promised in the Old Testament, we never had a clear idea of what was coming. We didn't know God's people would be going down an entirely new and different path.

Let's break down our theme text:

2 Corinthians 5:17: *Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new <2537> creature <2937>; the old things <744> passed away...*

The word *new* can be used in different ways. We will look at two of them from different Greek words. First, the Greek word for *new* used in our theme text:

Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon: 1a) as respects form 1b) as respects substance 1b1) of a new kind, unprecedented, novel, uncommon, unheard of

The idea of a *new creature* or a *new creation* is unprecedented; it's novel. When something is novel, it's different from what has gone before. This is what we want to consider.

Remember, we began by suggesting this *new creation* would be a new branch of God's government that never existed before. Well, that's different!

Another Greek word for *new* means something fresh with respects to age, as in when the Bible describes *new wine*, it means grape juice that has not yet been fermented.

New: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #2537 *kainos*; of uncertain affinity; new (especially in freshness; while 3501 is properly so with respect to age)

Here's one example of how the two Greek words for *new* are used in the same context:

Mark 2:21-22: (KJV) 21 No man also seweth a piece of new (a different Greek word) cloth on an old garment: else the new <2537> (meaning never before seen) piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse. 22 And no man putteth new <3501> wine (new, meaning unfermented) into old bottles: else the new <3501> (unfermented) wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new <3501> (unfermented) wine must be put into new <2537> (meaning never before seen) bottles.



A new creation, a new “something that’s never been there before.”

Let’s move on to the second word. Remember, our theme text in **2 Corinthians 5:17** called those in Christ a *new* (never before seen, unprecedented) *creature* or *creation*.

Creature/Creation: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #2937 *ktisis*; from 2936; original formation (properly, the act; by implication, the thing, literally or figuratively)

Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon: 1) the act of founding, establishing, building etc.
1a) the act of creating, creation 1b) creation i.e. thing created

The word is used here:

Mark 10:6: *But from the beginning of creation <2937>, God made them male and female.*

We have the original creation of the world and of Adam and Eve, but this is something different, a *new* kind of creation.

But didn't God “rest” on the seventh day when He was done creating? Yes, this *new creation* happened while He was resting! Is that contradictory? No, because God didn't rest because He was out of breath. He didn't need a break. When He rested, it means He looked at what He had created and said, *Behold, this is very good*. He was finished with that aspect of creating the earth and all that dwell on it.

He is a creating God. This *new creation* happens after the earth project. It's entirely different, entirely separated from that original creation.

Back to our theme text for the last definition:

2 Corinthians 5:17: *Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new <2537> creature <2937>; the old things <744> passed away...*

Old Things: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #744 *archaios*;
original or primeval

Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon: 1) that has been from the beginning, original, primal, old ancient 1a) of men, things, times, conditions

The contrast of this NEW creation to *old things* is dramatic.

For example:

Matthew 5:21: (KJV) *Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time <744>, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment.*

In other words, you've heard it by those supporting the old Law Covenant—that's the old, archaic way, but I say, *here's the new way*. There's a dividing line separating old and new. He is announcing a completely novel way to look at what was always accepted.


Jesus is the leader of the *new creation*. His teachings will show us what the *new creation* is.

Revelation 20:1-2: (KJV) *1 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old <744> serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years.*

When we compare how this *new creation* works in righteousness to *that old serpent*, the serpent's way is archaic and evil. The serpent's way will be done away with through the newness of God's *new creation*.

We see a dramatic effect in the words *new, creation* and *old*. This IS like the best superhero movie we have ever imagined because there is an incredible force seemingly coming out of nowhere to go to work on fixing and reconciling the world back to God.

We often hear about the story of creation told in Genesis, but we don't often hear Christians talking about this *new creation*.

 **Does the Bible tell us of any additional things or people God created? Are there OTHER new creations described? Do we see any secret scriptures about other universes or aliens?**



As far as we are told, there are no other new creations by God anywhere in that seventh day except for this one. This is the only new creation that didn't come directly out of what God did in those original creative days. This is entirely unique.

This *new creation* was not made by God when He originally created the world, but was it in His mind at that time?

We are given several telling details about how this new creation is founded in Jesus and how it works:

Ephesians 1:3-4: *3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,*



Note: *in Christ is the key to this new creation.*

4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him...

God had a plan for this second creation before He even started the first! That's amazing!

It's important to understand this *new creation* isn't replacing the old. God isn't abandoning the "everybody else" as a sinful failure and moving on with just these select few to try again. No, He has a beautiful plan that includes a pathway back for humanity as well, even non-Christians. We are talking about two different pathways.

The new creation doesn't abandon the old; it is for the sake of the old.

It was in the mind of God long before it was time for its actual formation:

Ephesians 1:4-5: *...4 In love 5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will.*

Let's pause for a moment. *He predestined us*—predestination is a big debate among Christians.



Does this mean that before the foundation of the world, God already predetermined that Rick, Jonathan and Julie living now, thousands of years later, would specifically be a part of this new creation with Christ? And conversely, that everyone else, through no fault of their own, is doomed?



No, that is entirely, directly contrary to everything God stands for. Man had and has free will. With that free will, everyone has the opportunity to obey God or not. We saw that in Adam. We saw that in Jesus. We see that everywhere in Scripture. Free will is given the opportunity to express itself.

That predestination is NOT of individuals, but of the role/position. In God's mind, He saw this *new creation*, this new branch of His eternal government that we are naming the Ministry of Reconciliation. He will put it into play in the future when He says it is the appropriate time.



Why would the new creation be ADOPTED as sons through Jesus? Why aren't they just sons? Why are they adopted?



Because they're coming from imperfect humanity not worthy of sonship. They have to be adopted because there has to be a change made away from their sinful pasts. They have to grow into that family. They didn't start there.

The new creation starts as part of the regular old creation, but it is a calling to something higher. They are “adopted” into that transition of glory in heaven. God knew He would call mere human beings to be part of this magnificent calling, the glory of which is likened to an adoption.

Ephesians 1:6: *To the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the beloved.*

What a responsibility and privilege to be a part of His grace!

This is hard to comprehend. If we are part of the grace of the Almighty Eternal Father and Creator of all things, He is paying special attention to us. How small are we? We are insignificant, and yet this idea of this *new creation* raises our insignificance to an amazing place. All of this will bring praise to the Creator. It is all done through Jesus and not because we are so smart or worthy.

Just to be clear, this *new creation* is a position created to be filled by the most faithful followers of Jesus. So, whenever we see scriptures speaking to that group, we can think of them as instructions to these *new creatures in Christ*.

The New Testament is written to the *new creation* as its recipients.

To be part of this *new creation* requires living in a different way—a sacrificial way.



God’s own spirit plays a vital role in this new way of life:

Romans 8:12-17: *12 So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— 13 for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.*

We talked about a figurative dividing line between the old creation of mankind and the *new creation* of the faithful followers of Jesus. The problem is, we are still human. We ARE that old creature! The idea is to “put on” the new creature by “putting on” the mind of Christ. If we follow in the ways of our natural desires, our own inclinations, our old nature, our old creature, we won’t be any better off than the rest of humanity.

If we want to be a part of that Ministry of Reconciliation, that special heavenly government we talked about, we have to live differently now.

14 For all who are being led by the spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, Abba! Father!

The gift of the holy spirit, God's power and influence in our lives, is God's pledge to us that we are called His sons.

16 The spirit itself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

Paul explains how those who follow Jesus' teachings and devote their lives to God are *fellow heirs* with Christ, and thus brethren to each other and to him.

Christ is the one who started this. In the Abrahamic Promise, Isaac was Abraham's immediate promised seed. Isaac represent Jesus. None of this exists without the sacrifice of Jesus first. We are *heirs* with him; he is not *heirs* with us. None of us deserves any of this. Jesus, however, deserves all of it. Putting to death the deeds of the body and living according to God's spirit brings sonship with Jesus.



This is higher than anything we can ever even possibly imagine. And again, we're only beginning to uncover the understanding of what this *new creation* really is all about.

As we dig deeper and begin to clarify more details, it is becoming more and more obvious how extraordinary the call to Christ really is.

**Becoming part of this new creation brings a very close relationship with God.
Are we in the fullest sense God's "children" now?**

This is an important question and the answer needs some explaining. Obviously, several of the scriptures we have already read have clearly declared those who have God's spirit are His children now. However, there is another dimension to all of this. While there IS a sonship now, it is only a precursor to the heavenly sonship promised.

According to Scripture, Christ's faithful followers are God's "sons," but there is something different, bigger and better coming.

This whole process of the development of the new creation was opened up to us by Jesus just before he gave himself to be crucified:

John 14:1-3: *1 Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me. 2 In my Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. 3 If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am, there you may be also.*

The preparation aspect of the encouraging words of Jesus shows us how this *new creation* is being developed as a result of Jesus' own sacrifice and faithfulness.

We notice that Jesus had to leave, meaning die as a man, and prepare a place for his faithful followers, his church, this *new creation*, somewhere for the Ministry of Reconciliation to operate from. He was the first man resurrected as a spirit being to heaven. All those who died previously were NOT promised a heavenly reward, even the faithful people like Moses and Abraham.



He's going to prepare a place for this *new creation*. This tells us that in heaven there was no place yet for them. Why? This is a NEW creation. It began as a result of Jesus' sacrifice. Figuratively, Jesus had to go build rooms, set up the place and procedures for the administration of the work this *new creation* is going to do. He needed to make it ready for them so that when they come, there is a place to go. It's new. It wasn't part of what was there originally. We need to recognize the power and the privilege of the calling to this. Let's get back to the original question.

We are sons of God now, but what happens later?

1 John 3:1-3: *1 See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know him (Jesus). 2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when he appears, we will be like him, because we will see him just as he is. 3 And everyone who has this hope fixed on him purifies himself, just as he is pure.*

We are children of God, but it has not yet appeared (we are not sure) what we will be. Should we be worried about this? Though the spiritual realm is mysterious, we are assured we will be like him (Jesus). Even though we don't know too much, if we know we will be like him, that's enough for us!

While living as sons of God now and waiting for that change, we are in a state of difficult transition:

Romans 7:21-25: *21 I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good. 22 For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, (in other words, the new creation) 23 but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. 24 Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? 25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.*

It is refreshing how blunt, transparent and honest the Apostle Paul is with his failings. He's admitting to the constant struggle between his "old man," who wants things his way (which is really Satan's way) and his "new man" who wants things God's way. Anyone trying to follow Christ is a living contradiction of transition, a "liminal" space where we aren't fully on one side or the other. Times of transition can be especially challenging and vulnerable. We always need to wear our armor of God so we are not attacked.

This is the proving ground. To inherit a place in the *new creation* is not like purchasing a winning lottery ticket. It isn't, "I believe, so I'm saved! I'm good! I can say and do anything I want and I get a free ticket to heaven." Not even remotely close. On the contrary, it is a lifelong fight towards spirituality and maturity. It is a choice, a fight against our own inclinations and Satan's manipulations, and a transition to a higher, more spiritual character. It comes with trials and failure along the way, but it is worth the struggle.



That's why there is so much written in the New Testament to encourage us. There are trials and failures, there are difficulties and trauma, and we need to look for the Lord's leadings to grow through those things. God is just not going to arbitrarily give this massive privilege to somebody because that person is a good guy! It is about growing into this character God can trust forever with the responsibility for others of His creation. This is what this *new creation* is being prepared for.

These promises and struggles show us that our present sonship is NOT complete.

Though we are sons of God here and now, we anxiously wait for true and complete spiritual adoption:

Romans 8:23: *And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. (More on the context of this verse shortly.)*

This opportunity was first offered to those of the Jewish nation of Israel, but as a nation they rejected Messiah, and the call went out to the Gentiles with Cornelius being the first Christian convert.

The Apostle Paul teaches that as we prepare for our adoption, we must be continually shedding our earthly framework.

Again, we see the struggle highlighted in this change:

2 Corinthians 5:1-5: *1 For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down (meaning our earthly life; these bodies we dwell in), we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven, 3 inasmuch as we, having put it on, will not be found naked. 4 For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed but to be clothed, so that what is mortal will be swallowed up by life. 5 Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave to us the spirit as a pledge.*

Having God's spirit is a great encouragement in trying circumstances that are for the purpose of our growth.

Notice how often the Apostle Paul uses the word *groan* in these scriptures. The word also means "a sigh." Living in our weaknesses and imperfections— mental and physical— makes us yearn for our heavenly goal to be set free from sin's bondage.

This doesn't mean the Apostle Paul wanted to commit suicide. He valued life and was trying to use this life in every way pleasing to God in order to qualify for this *new creation* after he died. The groaning is not because the trials and failures are overwhelming us completely. The groaning is our struggle to get past them, to put ourselves in a better mental place of looking at them.

Rick's Experience

Have you ever had a day where you're groaning a lot at your own experiences? As a matter of fact, today was actually one of those days where it just seemed like the feeling of being easily overwhelmed was a lot more present than it usually is. When that happens, I say, *Ugh, come on!* But, I need to look at that and say, *I can do better. I can do better in Christ by God's grace. Lord, give me strength. Give me wisdom, give me more of Your spirit so I can overcome the biggest trial of my life, which is me! Give me more of Your spirit so I can overcome ME.* The groaning is important—it helps us to refocus ourselves.

This new creation is NEW! Flesh and blood must be left behind for our adoption to actually take place:

1 Corinthians 15:50-57: (condensed) *50 ...flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 52 ...the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. 53 For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. 55 O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting? 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; 57 but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

These scriptures point to the glory to come. They are speaking of putting down the things of the earth—of sin and the things of this world—and swallowing them up in the victory of Christ where the imperishable takes over that which is perishable. It's a *new creation*. It never happened before. God is offering it here and now.

OLD CREATION AND NEW CREATION COMPARISONS:

OLD

- Flesh and blood
- A perishable body
- Death must occur
- Death waits for all

NEW

- Spiritual body
- An imperishable body
- Life at the proper time will be instantaneous
- Death is defeated through the gracious gift of immortality

The old creation is made of flesh and blood. The new creation will receive a spiritual body.

The old creation has a perishable body, it can and does die. The new creation receives an imperishable and immortal body.

In order to no longer be part of that old creation, death must occur. While we're still in this mortal life now, it's the death of our own wills in favor of doing God's will to be physically transformed. Though a literal death must occur. For the *new creation*, life at the proper time will be instantaneous. We just read in **1 Corinthians 15:52** about changing natures in the *twinkling of an eye*.

For the old creation, death waits for all. There's no escaping it. No matter how hard we try or how healthy we are. For the *new creation*, any future possibility of death is defeated through the gracious gift and reward of immortality.

Again, we look at this *new creation* and realize this is offered to the followers of Jesus during this age while the gospel message is going out. They are to become part of God's future holy government, part of the Ministry of Reconciliation. They're given very specific work to do later.

Knowing the New Creation:



The new creation has a sonship relationship with God now, though it is not complete. **While begotten of the spirit we are not yet born of the spirit**, so our sonship is still in its developmental phase. **Once born of the spirit**, the adoption, sonship, power and glory of God can **never be taken** from those faithful ones.

Let's talk briefly about what we mean by "begotten" and "born of the spirit." Being "born again" is a popular phrase among Christians. In some cases, "born again" is more accurately translated as "begotten from above," meaning a changed relationship with God when the power and influence of His holy spirit is given to us.



The term "beget" is taken from the natural birth process where a life is first conceived, or begotten. After growth and development, the child is finally born. For the Christian, receiving the holy spirit is the begetting part. We grow and develop and are later "born" as spirit beings after death and resurrection in heaven. (See Bonus Material for more on this topic.)

As we digest the many details of what this *new creation* is, let us just sit back and marvel at how miraculous and loving this inheritance truly is.

So, our sonship is not yet complete. What must we do to complete it, and what does all of this change lead us to ultimately be and do?

As we have already seen, the life of a true disciple of Jesus is one of challenge and growth. Notice how little we have seen of any earthly benefits for us here and now, compared to how utterly powerful our future will be if we are faithful to it. The necessary changes are many, and the reasons for those changes are profound.

It is not about what we "get" in this life; it is about what we become through God's grace, power, spirit and providence so that our inheritance—that spiritual adoption—actually means something eternally significant.

Before we consider some of the changes that come with being part of the new creation, let's take a moment and consider the invitation to the new creation:

John 1:11-13: *11 He came to his own, and those who were his own did not receive him.*

Most of the Jewish people of Jesus' day opted to stay under the old Law Covenant and rejected the Messiah.

12 But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name, 13 who were born (better translated as begotten), not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

This adoption as children of God was first offered to the Jewish nation exclusively. Because most rejected the offer, it became open to the Gentiles with Cornelius as the first Gentile convert. We today would not have had this opportunity if the Jewish people hadn't rejected the Messiah as a nation.

Think



It's not because we are so smart, special or good; we were just available, and God saw the potential He could develop. None of us is worthy. We only have the opportunity because others rejected it.

Running for (KJV) *the prize of the high calling (upward call in some translations)—being part of the new creation—means we think differently* than we ever thought before.

Philippians 3:14: I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Here is the context of our theme text:

2 Corinthians 5:13-14: *13 For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are of sound mind, it is for you. 14 For the love of Christ controls us...*

We're driven by something entirely separate than what our life used to be.

Just because we claim to be Christian, everything we used to do is not blessed by God. We have to **think differently**. Every thought must be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. That's what this *new creation* is about. It is not about making us comfortable in our present life, with our old activities and desires. It is about developing us so that we can bring others to reconcile with God through Christ later. We must **think differently** than before we came to Christ.

It means that we see others differently:

2 Corinthians 5:14-16: *14...having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; 15 and he died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for him who died and rose again on their behalf. 16 Therefore from now on we recognize no one according to the flesh; even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know him in this way no longer.*

See



When Paul was known as Saul of Tarsus, he knew of Jesus as a man, *according to the flesh*, and persecuted his followers. He did whatever he could to eliminate Jesus' message. Now he is saying, *I don't look that way at my brotherhood any more. I see how God is working in them, not what I don't like in them. I see them now in the spirit.* That is how we are supposed to look at others. This is how we can learn to love our enemies.

This *new creation* idea is not something easy or convenient. It's not something we can catch up with on the weekend. We have to **think differently**. We have to **see others differently**.

It means that we live differently. Returning to our theme text:

2 Corinthians 5:17-18: *17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. 18 Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.*

Finally we get to this scripture we've been talking about since the beginning—*the ministry of reconciliation!* We likened this to a branch of God's future, holy government. This is what it's all about! God's ultimate accomplishment is the reconciliation of the world, but He begins His work with an elect class.

Live



Because of Jesus' sacrifice and merit on their behalf, his followers (the firstborn) are reconciled in this life back to God. In turn, just like in the Passover picture, their work will be reconciling all of mankind back to God. There will be judgment, restoration and rehabilitation work needed on behalf of all mankind being raised from the dead. It will be a huge amount of work.

God is creating this new branch of government because there is a new job that needs to be done that never had to be done before.

Let's continue with the differences between our old lives and our new life in Christ.

We need to:

- think differently
- see others differently
- live differently

Living differently means our objectives, expectations and efforts all must change:

Romans 6:3-9: *3 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into his death?*

- I walk behind him as a follower. I follow his path of self-sacrifice.

4 Therefore we have been buried with him through baptism into death...

- I put away my previous earthly ambitions. It's no longer all about me; it's about serving God through Jesus.

...so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

- Am I walking in newness of life, or am I still holding onto what my old creature loves? The new creature divests itself of those old things in order to inherit what is infinitely more valuable.

5 For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection,

- Talk about an expectation! This doesn't mean we will all die on a literal cross. It's a picture of a life of sacrifice: giving up what we want and doing what the Father wants as best as we are able.

6 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with...

- We face this struggle every day, just like the Apostle Paul. There's an expression: "The problem with a living sacrifice is it keeps crawling off the altar." We are constantly fighting internally, trying to be the most faithful we can.

- We fight against our own natural desires, external temptations, keeping our emotions in check, dealing with the mundane issues of just housing and feeding ourselves and keeping a job and having to interact with other humans who can be just awful. Battling this dual nature is the struggle of each true Christian. And the battle continues until death.

...so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; 7 for he who has died is freed from sin. 8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him, 9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over him.

These verses show us that living differently means, again, our objectives, our expectations and our efforts all must change. We cannot be what we were if we want to be part of that new creation. If we are called, we are called to leave behind what we were.

We have a glorious future if we follow God’s leadings through His spirit in us:

Romans 8:18: *For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.*

Whatever it cost us to give up our own will, to keep our will submissive to God, to be faithful to the principles for which Christ stands—all of that is part of the *sufferings of this present time*—the sufferings of Christ. Jesus symbolically gave up his earthly life when he was baptized at Jordan. This is not just “be nice” and we will go to heaven.

Romans 8:18 reminds us of the many times Paul brings up groanings, and it’s okay to groan and to suffer because we are working towards Christlikeness.

This *glory that is to be revealed to us*, is the glory of all we have described. It is the unique spiritual glory that God has reserved for His *new creation*.

This future glory has an eternal purpose. This ministry of reconciliation—God’s future government—is not to just be united with Jesus; it is to work with him:

2 Corinthians 5:19: *Namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.*

This scripture is so comprehensive! It covers the Lord's favor to true Christians here and now, as well as His ultimate favor to all the families of the earth when they will be restored. God will forgive the world's sins, and they won't be counted against them.

God is reconciling the world to Himself. To understand this special branch of government God is creating, read **Romans 8**.

This reconciliation purpose, what the heavenly new creation does for the earthly creation, is clearly expanded in Romans:

Romans 8:19-23: *19 For the anxious longing of the creation <2937> (the old creation) waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God (the new creation). 20 For the creation <2937> (the old creation) was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it,*



*in hope 21 that the **creation <2937>** (the old creation) itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God (the new creation).*

Remember the Passover. Remember when the firstborn were delivered and that opened the door for the deliverance of the rest of Israel? That's what is happening here. The old creation, the world, is suffering, *subjected to futility*. In other words, whatever they try to fix in this present evil world is not going to work. They are frustrated and are waiting for something they cannot yet see. They are waiting to *be set free from their slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God*.

*22 For we know that the whole **creation <2937>** (the old creation) groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. 23 And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body (the new creation).*

This leads us full circle, back to our discussion about the two pathways. We were shown the comparison of the *stars of heaven* and the *sand of the seashore* in the promise to Abraham. Then we saw the deliverance from Egypt with the firstborn delivered first; and because of their deliverance, the rest of the nation received their deliverance.

Here in **Romans 8**, we again see the two different groups. The world, the old creation, is waiting, hoping, groaning and longing for a time of peace and safety, and it will be dependent on the *new creation*, being finally adopted as sons, being placed into that heavenly government to help reconcile everyone back to God who has ever lived.

This governmental agency of God, this *ministry of reconciliation*, is not like the governments of this world. Its ultimate purpose will be so that His entire creation can glorify Him.

If we are called to this level, the NOTHING (outside of our own foolishness) can undo the new creation work God has begun in us:

Romans 8:39: (KJV) *Nor height, nor depth, nor any other **creature <2937>**, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Nothing can separate us, that is, except OURSELVES. We need to follow through and be as faithful as we can. These are high stakes. We can forget how serious this is as we go about the everyday problems in our lives. The world is changing. We can see what's happening in the news headlines. If God calls us, we have the opportunity to be a part of the solution in the biggest way ever known to God's creation.

Revelation 2:10: *...Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.*

The call to be part of the new creation is all about being with Jesus, not only where he is, but in the work he is set up to do:

Isaiah 9:6-7: *6 For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on his shoulders; and his name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal father, Prince of Peace. 7 There will be no end to the increase of his government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.*

There will be no end to the increase of his government or of peace.

The new creation is God's ministry of reconciliation in the government that Jesus carries on his shoulders to bring peace to the world. This is a prophecy. This is God's word. When God says it, He means it. It IS going to come to pass. The new creation is an integral part of being with Jesus and bringing peace to the world.



Knowing the New Creation:

The new creation has been planned by God from before the creation of humanity.



His purpose for it has always been clear and has always been based upon the magnificent loyalty of His son Jesus. It has been to call some of his frail imperfect human creation to come up higher, to be faithful disciples of Christ and to become part of His heavenly family. **All of this was for the purpose of bringing all of His creation back to the glorious position of harmony with Him!**

The *new creation* is something that never happened before. It is laid out for us plainly in Scripture so we can understand its development. No wonder Jesus said to his apostles as he was calling them, *Come follow me, I will make you fishers of men*. He called them to work with him, both in the present, but much more importantly, in the future. In the future in God's kingdom (and look at all the Old Testament prophecies that talk about God's kingdom and God's government), they are in God's Ministry of Reconciliation—they're to bring the world to a place where they can bring honor and glory to the heavenly Father. Amen.

**So, what is the new creation?
For Rick, Jonathan, Julie and Christian Questions
...Think about it!**

All scriptures cited are from the NASB1995 translation unless otherwise noted.



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Finding the true meaning and implications of being “born again”

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- What were the ten plagues of Egypt? <https://youtu.be/qjTgGOc2eWw>
- When will God's kingdom be here? <https://youtu.be/cWTh5Bg4kXE>

What is spirit begettal?

The phrase *born again* is found in **John 3:3**: *Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. A more accurate translation for born again here is "begotten from above." It does not describe a second birth; rather, it refers to the changed relationship with God when the power and influence of His holy spirit is given to us.*

Being "begotten from above" is a process of our spiritual development: God first calls us to follow Jesus. If we accept the call, the next step is to dedicate, or consecrate, our lives to doing God's will. God then "begets" us with His holy spirit, if we are accepted.

The term "begets" is taken from the natural birth process where a life is first conceived (or begotten) and after growth and development is finally born. A faithful Christian's life is similar to this natural process. Receiving the holy spirit is the begettal part. We are now considered *sons of God*. This is described in **1 John 3:2**: *Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. Our spiritual growth and maturity as Christians is compared to a gestation period.*

Finally, after a life of devoted service to God and growth in the image of Christ, we are "born" as spirit beings after death and resurrection in heaven.

Spiritual growth and birth are described by the Apostle Paul in **Romans 2:7**: *To them who by patient continuance in well doing (the growth) seek for glory, honor and immortality, eternal life (the birth).*

When Jesus said we must be *born again*, he meant that a life of faithfulness to God would result in a heavenly reward and a spirit birth.

Here are a few word studies to help us understand the concept of *new creature*:

Old Things: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #744 *archaios*;
original or primeval

Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon: 1) that has been from the beginning, original, primal, old ancient 1a) of men, things, times, conditions

All uses: (King James Version)

Matthew 5:21: *Ye have heard that it was said by them of **old time <744>**, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment*

Matthew 5:27: *Ye have heard that it was said by them of **old time <744>**, Thou shalt not commit adultery:*

Matthew 5:33: *Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of **old time <744>**, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:*

Luke 9:8: *And of some, that Elias had appeared; and of others, that one of the **old <744>** prophets was risen again.*

Luke 9:19: *They answering said, John the Baptist; but some say, Elias; and others say, that one of the **old <744>** prophets is risen again.*

Acts 15:7: *And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a **good <744>** while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.*

Acts 15:21: *For Moses of **old <744>** time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.*

Acts 21:16: *There went with us also certain of the disciples of Caesarea, and brought with them one Mnason of Cyprus, an **old <744>** disciple, with whom we should lodge.*

2 Corinthians 5:17: *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: **old things <744>** are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

2 Peter 2:5: *And spared not the **old <744>** world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;*

Revelation 12:9: *And the great dragon was cast out, that **old <744>** serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.*

Revelation 20:2: *And he laid hold on the dragon, that **old <744>** serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years.*

New: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #2537 *kainos*; of uncertain affinity; new (especially in freshness; while 3501 is properly so with respect to age)

Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon: 1a) as respects form 1b) as respects substance 1b1) of a new kind, unprecedented, novel, uncommon, unheard of

Some uses: (King James Version)

Matthew 9:17: *Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into **new <2537>** bottles, and both are preserved.*

Matthew 13:52: *Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things **new <2537>** and old.*

Matthew 26:28: For this is my blood of the *new <2537>* testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

Matthew 26:29: But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it *new <2537>* with you in my Father's kingdom.

Matthew 27:60: And laid it in his own *new <2537>* tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.

Mark 1:27: And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what *new <2537>* doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.

Creature/Creation: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #2937 *ktisis*; from 2936; original formation (properly, the act; by implication, the thing, literally or figuratively)

King James Version translates this word creature: 11 times, creation 6 times, building 1 time, ordinance 1 time

Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon: 1) the act of founding, establishing, building etc.
1a) the act of creating, creation 1b) creation i.e. thing created 1b1) of individual things, beings, a creature, a creation; 1b1a) anything created; 1b1b) after a rabbinical usage (by which a man converted; from idolatry to Judaism was called);
1b1c) the sum or aggregate of things created; 1c) institution, ordinance

All uses: (King James Version)

Mark 10:6: But from the beginning of the *creation <2937>* God made them male and female.

Mark 13:19: For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the *creation <2937>* which God created unto this time, neither shall be.

Mark 16:15: And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every *creature <2937>*.

Romans 1:20: For the invisible things of him from the *creation <2937>* of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

Romans 1:25: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the *creature <2937>* more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

Romans 8:19: For the earnest expectation of the *creature <2937>* waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

Romans 8:20: For the *creature <2937>* was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,

Romans 8:21: Because the *creature <2937>* itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Romans 8:22: For we know that the whole *creation <2937>* groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

Romans 8:39: *Nor height, nor depth, nor any other **creature <2937>**, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

2 Corinthians 5:17: *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new **creature <2937>**: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

Galatians 6:15: *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new **creature <2937>**.*

Colossians 1:15: *Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every **creature <2937>**.*

Colossians 1:23: *If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every **creature <2937>** which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister.*

Hebrews 4:13: *Neither is there any **creature <2937>** that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.*

Hebrews 9:11: *But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this **building <2937>**.*

1 Peter 2:13: *Submit yourselves to every **ordinance <2937>** of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;*

2 Peter 3:4: *And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the **creation <2937>**.*

Revelation 3:14: *And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the **creation <2937>** of God.*

Study QUESTIONS

Ep.1324: What Is the New Creation?

<https://christianquestions.com/doctrine/1324-new-creation/>

See:  CQRewind
SHOW NOTES

1. Why did God need to develop a “brand-new branch” of spiritual government? What are we calling this new branch? Who would “staff” this government agency?
2. What does the Abrahamic Promise tell us about God’s plan for all mankind? How are Abraham’s descendants described? What does this hint at? Who does Paul identify as the seed of Abraham? Explain the order of blessing in this promise. (See Genesis 22:15-18, Galatians 3:16,26-29)
3. How does the Exodus out of Egypt echo the conditions of the Abrahamic Promise? Who are the two groups saved in the Exodus? How were the firstborn saved? How and why was the second group saved? Who does Paul identify as the Passover Lamb slain for us? (See Exodus 12:12-13, 1 Corinthians 5:7, Hebrews 12:23)
4. What are two meanings of the word translated “new” in the New Testament? What is the definition of “creature/creation”? How could something be created after God *rested*? Explain how “new” is contrasted with “old” in Matthew 5:21,22 and Revelation 20:1-2. (See Mark 2:21-22, 10:6)
5. When did God conceive the idea of a new creation? What is its purpose? How do we know predestination is not speaking of individuals? Where do those who become part of the new creation come from? How do we know what is required of those who want to be part of the new creation? What does God give to these followers of Jesus? Who was Isaac? Whom did he represent? (See Ephesians 1:3-6, Romans 8:12-17)
6. How does Jesus comfort his disciples just before his crucifixion? What do we expect it to be like for those true followers of Jesus in the future? While we are waiting for our complete adoption as sons, what should we expect in our present lives? Contrast our *old creature* we are setting aside to the *new creature* we are striving for. (See John 14:1-3, 1 John 3:1-3, Romans 7:21-25,8:23, 1 Corinthians 15:50-57, 2 Corinthians 5:1-5)
7. How are we invited to become part of this special class? What are the three changes in our old lives that we must undergo to grow into a *new creature*? Discuss how Romans 6:3-9 gives us guidelines in living differently. (See John 1:11-13, Philippians 3:14, 2 Corinthians 5:13-18)
8. What is the work of the “ministry of reconciliation”? How does this fit with the illustration of the Passover in Egypt? What two groups do we see again in Romans 8? What is the world’s condition? What are they waiting for? What is the part of those faithful followers of Jesus?
9. What is the only thing that can separate us from the love of God? (See 2 Corinthians 5:19, Romans 8:19-23,39)
10. Do you see yourself in the new creation at this time? If you have a desire to become a truly faithful follower of Christ, what do you need to change/improve in your life? (See Revelation 2:10)