

# A New Creation

by E.W. Bullinger

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Corinthians 5:17).

The Scriptures reveal to us many new things. In Isaiah 42:9, we read: "New things do I declare"; and God goes on to speak of the new song which is to be sung in view of His work for restored Israel. We read in Lamentations 3:22,23, "The Lord's mercies are new every morning." We read in Ezekiel 36:26, of "a new heart and a new spirit."

In the text before us we read of the new creature. We read in Ephesians 2:15, of "the one new man"; in Revelation 21 and 22, of "the new heavens and the new earth," also of "the new Jerusalem," and of a glorious time when it will be said, "Behold, I make all things new." Perhaps the most important of all these wondrous things is that which is spoken of in our text, because without this new creation, none of the other new things can be known or enjoyed. Having this, we have all the others.

## The contrasts, old and new

Let us consider, first of all, the contrasts — Old and New. The Second Epistle to the Corinthians seems to be an Epistle of contrasts; it abounds in them from beginning to end. Led by the Holy Spirit, the Apostle Paul contrasts, in chapter 1:5, the sufferings which abound in the child of God with the

consolations which abound in Christ. At the close of chapter 2, verse 16, we meet with a very solemn contrast, which is seen by the spiritual eye throughout the whole of God's Word. True, the carnal mind objects to, indeed hates, such contrasts between the living and the dead, between the regenerate and the unregenerate; but the Holy Spirit invariably marks these contrasts, and those who are taught by Him see them and love them (see verse 14). Note again, in verse 15, another contrast "We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish." It is we, not our testimony. The burden of the Word of the Lord showed the Apostle his insufficiency, while at the same time he knew that his sufficiency was of God.

The third chapter is full of contrasts; in verse 1 we have man's commendation and God's commendation; in verse 2 and 3, man's writing and the Spirit's writing; in verse 5, man's insufficiency and God's sufficiency; in verse 6 the letter and the spirit; in verses 7-9, condemnation and righteousness. The fourth chapter contains many wonderful contrasts and paradoxes; in verse 8, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair." One may say, "Ah! that is not I"; but look at the margin, "But not altogether without help." Can we not say that ? Verse 9: "Cast down, but not destroyed." We do fall, but not from grace, being upheld by "a Loving Omnipotent Hand." At the end of the chapter again we see wonderful contrasts; in verse 16, our outward man perishing, but our inward man renewed day by day; in verse 17 our present light affliction, our future weight of glory; in verse 18, temporal things and eternal things: things seen and things unseen.

Each of these leads us to the contemplation of the words of our text. In considering this vast and important subject, note:

### 1. The Connection

"Therefore" (Verse 17). This is the conclusion of the Spirit's argument, or of the truths He had declared for the instruction,

the comfort, and the edification of the saints at Corinth, and through them to the Church of God in all succeeding generations. His conclusion is that all old things, even those of Divine appointment, having served their purpose and waxen old, must pass away for ever, as of no value whatever in comparison with the eternal work of the new creation in Christ Jesus. Note next:

## 2. The Character of those spoken of

"If any man be in Christ." Observe, [in the King James Version] there are words in italics which may be differently supplied thus: "If any man in Christ be made a new creature," or a new creation; the R.V. margin gives: "there is a new creation." Now creation is a Divine work, and therefore this excludes all means, all modes, all distinctions. Truth by the Holy Ghost is a great leveller. Turn to Galatians 3:28 and 6:15. The new creation does not consist in an acknowledgement of a form of sound words, or delight in a clear creed, or in prizing the outward so-called means of grace. It is ten thousand times more than these. The cross of Christ is God's monument erected over the grave of all carnal ordinances, all sensuous ceremonies, all fleshly sacrifices, all earthly types, all fleeting shadows. The cross of Christ is God's monument over the grave where He has buried all human distinctions, all human modes, all human means in matters pertaining to His creation work.

IN CHRIST. This is a living union by the Spirit of God. It is not a mere profession of religion; it is not in self-condemnation but in Christ, justified and accepted (Ephesians 1:6). It is not in Adam dead, but in Christ alive (I Corinthians 15:22). In Christ by sovereign purpose; in Christ by sacred purchase; in Christ by spiritual power. Next look at:

## 3. The Condition

"A New Creation." What is it to create ? Not to change, not to renovate, not to reform, not to improve, not the old nature

adorned and beautified, not the flesh with its corruptions and lusts trimmed and trained; but it is the new and Divine nature imparted, with all its spiritual blessings and holy privileges. It is not the Old Adam made clean or religious, clothed and adorned. No! It is a something altogether NEW. Therefore, in Christ Jesus I am a partaker of the Divine nature; I am a partaker of His Resurrection-life, according to the Father's promise: "Eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Titus 1:2).

Life was promised in Christ for His people before the world began; and in due time it is communicated to them through the ministry of the Word. How this is brought about, the poor child of God very often, knows not, and when questioned about it, he can only say, like the blind man in John 9:25: "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." Once I was blind and dead to God's Christ, God's covenant, God's salvation; I was dead to all interest in the precious atoning blood, to justifying righteousness, regenerating grace, and restoring mercy, also to that peace, which passeth all understanding. But now, in living union with Christ, I love to dwell on those glorious verities which are found alone in Him and through Him. I love the company of those who delight in the Father's eternal love, the son's redeeming grace, and the Spirit's regenerating mercy.

A new Divine nature (II Peter 1:4) is not a mere influence, is not a mere passing religious feeling induced by ravishing music or pathetic story, but a real existence in living union with a crucified, risen, exalted, glorified, coming Lord. What a glorious union! One with the person of a glorified Christ! No words can describe it better than John 17:21-23: "That they all may be one; as Thou Father art in Me, and I in Thee; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one even as We are one. I in Thee, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one;

and that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me" (John 17:22,23).

This is a glorious, marvellous, mysterious Oneness, which can never be understood until we stand perfect and complete in the light of His glory. Then we shall know even as we are known, for His Father is our Father; His righteousness is our righteousness; His nature is our nature; His home is our home; His glory is our glory.

#### 4. The Deliverances Enjoyed

"Old things are passed away." What are these "old things ?" (1). Blessed be God, that old thing, SIN, which before I was in Christ manifested its power and maintained its authority over me, is gone — passed away. Do you ask, How did it pass away ? I can answer you only in the words of Isaiah 53:6, "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all"; and Hebrews 9:26, "Now once in the end of the world hath He appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."

(2). That old thing, THE CURSE OF THE LAW, has passed away. How? Read Galatians 3:13: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us. for it is written 'Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.'" In thus becoming a curse for His people, He became "The end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Romans 10:4). What expressive words! "The end of the law!" What does it mean? Why it means that He went to the end of all the Law's requirements, which He satisfied by the perfect obedience which He rendered to its precepts; that He went to the end of all the Law's penal threatenings which He silenced by the sufferings which He endured. What is the end of a debt? The payment! And Christ took over and paid every debt owed by His people, and thus ended it. Hence every transgression and even sin over which my chastened Spirit has grieved, is passed away !

(3). That old thing, CONDEMNATION. All that was due to me was borne by my sinless Surety, by Him who said, when they sought and found Him: "If ye seek Me, let these go their way" (John 18:8). Hence: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1).

(4). That old thing, FEAR OF DEATH, is passed away, for "Jesus Christ... hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel" (II Timothy 1:10). Christ hath abolished death, and brought to light, and procured for us, life and immortality; and "When Christ, who is our Life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory" (Colossians 3:4). Yes, old things have passed away. My old notions of salvation by merit; by co-operation — I doing something and Jesus Christ the rest — all such thoughts have passed away! My old, degrading views of Christ have passed away in the light of His Glorious Gospel, and I see Him "altogether lovely," His salvation perfect, His righteousness complete, His intercession all-prevailing, His glorious coming sure. He is the beginner and the finisher of faith, the performer of all things for me in the presence of His Father and mine.

Look now at:

## 5. The Privileges Possessed

"Behold all things are become new." Yes, the man in Christ is a new man, with a new life in a new world. "All things are become new." He has life in Christ, he has immortality in Christ. He has life instead of death, salvation instead of sin, justification instead of condemnation, acceptance instead of banishment, peace instead of enmity. We have new affections, fixed upon things above; new hopes, entering within the veil; a new song put in our mouth; and a new heart with which to praise Him for setting our feet on the Rock of Ages, for ordering our goings, for holding our hand, for guiding our feet into the way of peace.

May it be ours to know the blessedness and power of these divinely "new things," and to go on our way rejoicing, while waiting for that great proclamation to go forth — "Behold I make all things new," and walking in newness of life, to the praise and glory of God.