



Foundation of the Christian Faith
Course: Salvation
Lesson Eight

Title: New life

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

Introduction: There are two Greek words that describe the start of new life in Christ. One word is translated 'quickened' and the other is translated 'regeneration'.

1. The Greek word 'suzoopoieo' literally means 'to make alive with'. It refers to the believer receiving the life of Christ at his or her conversion. It is translated quickened. Ephesians 2:5, 'Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)' The new life with Christ is shown in contrast to being spiritually dead in sin. Colossians 2:13, 'And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, has he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;'
2. The Greek word translated Regeneration is 'palingenesia'. This comes from two words 'palin' meaning again, and 'genesis' meaning birth. The word is used in the context of the old being removed completely by something new. It refers to new life where the old has been taken away. Titus 3:5, 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Jesus used this word to describe the future state of the world. Matthew 19:28, 'And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That you who have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.'

Both these words are used to refer to the new life of Christ in the believer but the first refers to being made alive in contrast to spiritual death and the second refers to being brought into a completely new life. Ephesians 2:7, 'That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.'

Illustration: Natural conception and birth

A baby has new life from the moment of conception. But the birth of the child doesn't happen immediately. The baby must grow within the womb of the mother then when the time is ready the child is born and a new life begins. The baby begins his or her new life at the time of birth but life began at the time of conception.

Quickening – refers to the impartation of new life. It is like conception.

Beginning a new life – refers to the experience of a new life.

Spiritually these two events can happen instantaneously but not necessarily.

Example of the Apostle Paul, Acts 9. Paul was 'made alive with Christ' and 'came into a new life' through his encounter with Jesus on the Damascus Road.

Main Points:

1. A New Creation (2 Corinthians 5:17)
 - a) New birth produces new life.
When Jesus spoke with Nicodemus, He told him that he needed a new birth, '...Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' John 3:3b
This is the message of Christianity, 'You must be born again'.
Being made alive with Christ and coming into a completely new life.
It is possible to believe everything concerning the Bible and the Lord Jesus Christ, and yet never receive new life.

Story: 'You must be born again.'

When my friend and I purchased a tent for gospel meetings in the 80's, my wife made a banner with the words 'You must be born again'. Over the years my friend has held many gospel crusades in the tent and this banner has always been hung at the front sending a clear message. It is a message that should always be preached.

George Whitefield (1714-1770), the great English evangelist was once asked, 'Why do you always preach, "You must be born again"?' George Whitefield simply replied, 'because you must be born again'.

- b) Jesus did not come to make us better.
He came to make us completely new – a new creation.

Story: Prison in Romania.

Building in Aiud prison.

Richard Wurmbrandt was a prisoner in Aiud prison for 4 years.

The part of the prison where he was held has now been renovated.

I thought the building was new but one of the staff told me it was not new; the old building had been renovated.

This gave me the theme on which to speak for the day: Jesus did not come to renovate. He came to make us completely new.

Testimony: Karla Faye Tucker.

The documentary film of the executed murderer Karla Faye Tucker.

In prison Karla Faye Tucker received Christ and became a new creation.

The officer who arrested her after the murder said that the Karla Faye Tucker he arrested for murder was not the same person that was executed by lethal injection.

The old Karla Faye Tucker was crucified with Christ and buried with Christ and she was raised a new creation in Christ Jesus.

She had to suffer the consequence for her terrible crime but in Christ she became a new creation. This is the wonderful message of the gospel that we are justified by faith in Christ alone.

2. A New Heart.

a) New Covenant written on the heart

Hebrews 10:16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;

17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

Difference between psychology and the gospel.

Psychology seeks to change thinking in order to change behaviour.

The Gospel changes the heart.

- New life grows - Old life drops off as new life increases
- Discipleship – learning Christ
- Relationship – Learning to trust. Knowing Christ

Christian Life - Put on the New Man (Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10)

b) Walking in newness of life. The liberty of Christ (Galatians 5:1)

Paul speaks about travelling in birth again for the Galatians, Galatians 4:19.

They had received new life but they were not living in the freedom of new life.

A local church needs to have mothers, fathers, midwives.

Religion promotes meritorious works.

New life is the life of faith – walking in the Spirit and producing the fruit of the Spirit.

Contrast – the life of faith or following good works and religious ceremonies.

The Quickening power of the Holy Spirit that brings New Life to the believer is like conception.

Newness of life is like coming to new birth.

Question:

Is it possible to go back from walking in newness of life?

Yes – this is what the Galatians did.

That is why Paul spoke about travelling in birth again for the Galatians. Galatians 4:19

When we have new life in Christ then we must stand in the freedom we have in Christ. Galatians 5:1

3. New Purpose

Reaching others - Lifted to lift others.

Created in Christ Jesus for good works Ephesians 2:8

Those who have received new life have a message that will bring new life to others.

Examples:

- Prisoners who have received Christ in the Philippines. A man who had been a gang member in the Philippines, and was in prison for 14 years for murder, showed me the tattoo on his back that he received when he was in the gang. He was only allowed to have the tattoo when he had killed a man. He told me he killed three men altogether. He came to Christ in the prison and is now helping to lead others to Christ.
- Personal Testimony: A woman I used to work with said to me 'I never thought anything good would come out of you'. I was lazy at work and often drunk. But the first person I led to the Lord was a woman who had worked there. Babs had cancer and a few weeks before she died I went to her house and prayed with her to receive Christ. She said to me 'The doctor has said he could not understand how I've lived so long', but after I prayed with her for salvation she took my hand and said 'but now I know'.

God not only gives new life but He gives us a new purpose to reach others for Christ.

Summary:

A believer in Christ

1. ...is a completely new creation. Not a restoration of the old.
2. ...has a new heart. With new desires producing holiness.
3. ...has a new purpose. Created for good works. Able to lift others.

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