

2 Corinthians 5:17 – Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

Most People Don't Look Changed

- Most church-goers don't look much different from those who don't go to church
- Most church-goers reach a plateau and then kind of stop changing

What's the Deal?

- Most people don't believe change is possible
- Most people don't actually want to change
- Most people aren't ready to fight to change

David Gathers 400 Disgruntled Men

- David is a type of Christ, in a way representing Him before He came
- 1 Samuel 22:1-2 – 1 David departed from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam. And when his brothers and all his father's house heard it, they went down there to him. 2 And everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was bitter in soul, gathered to him. And he became commander over them. And there were with him about four hundred men.
 - “in distress” = being in a difficult place...
 - lit. “in straits” (A narrow passage of water connecting 2 larger bodies of water. Notoriously difficult to navigate.)
 - “in debt” = they were broke and, even worse, owed money
 - “bitter in soul” = they were bitter, angry, and mad at the world
- What Does David Do with These Messed Up Men?
 - He takes them in and eventually turns them into one of the world's most formidable fighting forces
 - The Mighty Men (2 Samuel 23:8)
 - Josheb-basshebeth killed 800 enemies at one time
 - Eleazar, son of Dodo, who stood his ground when all of Israel fled, and fought the Philistines so long that his hand cramped up and stuck to the sword
 - Shammah, who stood alone in a bean field, refused to run away with everyone else, and singlehandedly defeated the Philistine army
 - Abishai, who defeated 300 enemies with his spear
 - Benaiah, called “a valiant man,” “a doer of great deeds”

This is Jesus' Heart Too

- Luke 5:29-32 – 29 And Levi made him a great feast in his house, and there was a large company of tax collectors and others reclining at table with them. 30 And the Pharisees and their scribes grumbled at his disciples, saying, “Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?” 31 And Jesus answered them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. 32 I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.”

He Calls Us Where We Are... And Then He Changes Us

- Now, we're “a new creation” (2 Corinthians 5:17)
- Now we're “more than conquerors” in Jesus (Romans 8:35-39)
- Now, we “can do all things” through Jesus (Philippians 4:13)
- Now, we have “the mind of Christ” (1 Cor 2:16)
- Now, we “reign in life” (Romans 5:17)

- Now, we are the “light of the world” and the “salt of the earth” (Matthew 5:13-14)
- Now, we are “blessed... in Christ with every spiritual blessing” (Ephesians 1:3)
- Now, we are “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for [God’s] own possession” (1 Peter 2:9)
- Now, we are “saints” (*hagios* = sacred, holy, set apart for God)

The Goal of the Christian Life

- Peter: from an impulsive fisherman who denied Jesus... to the Rock Jesus built His church upon
- Thomas: from Doubting Thomas... to the one who first brought the Gospel to Iran and India
- Matthew: from wealthy, hated tax collector (a traitor to the Jewish people)... to author of the Gospel of Matthew who preached Jesus to the Persians, Parthians, and Medes
- John: from simple fisherman... to “the disciple whom Jesus loved” and author of 5 books of the Bible
- James brother of Jesus: from a jealous skeptic who gave Jesus a hard time (John 7:4)... to a respected pillar of the church in Jerusalem, nicknamed “James the Just”
- Paul: from a legalistic persecutor of the church (a religious terrorist)... to a church-planting missionary who was willing to lay his own life down for Jesus and wrote more books of the Bible than any other single author
- 2 Corinthians 5:17 – Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.
- Galatians 2:20 – I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.
- Galatians 6:15 - For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.
- Jesus told Nicodemus the same thing – “unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3)

Such Were Some of You

- 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 – 9 Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, 10 nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.
- “repent” = *metanoëo* = literally, “to think differently afterwards”...
 - Bill Mounce: “to change any or all of the elements composing one's life: attitude, thoughts, and behaviors”

You May Still Fall at Times...

- Proverbs 24:16 – for the righteous falls seven times and rises again, but the wicked stumble in times of calamity
- 1 John 3:9 – No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God.
 - Amplified = No one who is born of God [deliberately, knowingly, and habitually] practices sin... and he [who is born again] cannot habitually [live a life characterized by] sin, because he is born of God and longs to please Him.

How Do You Get There?

- You gotta believe change is possible
- You gotta actually want to change
- You gotta be ready to fight to change

The Cup of Water – Deny Yourself and Take Up Your Cross

- 2 Samuel 23:13-17 – 13 And three of the thirty chief men went down and came about harvest time to David at the cave of Adullam, when a band of Philistines was encamped in the Valley of Rephaim. 14 David was then in the stronghold, and the garrison of the Philistines was then at Bethlehem. 15 And David said longingly, “Oh, that someone would give me water to drink from the well of Bethlehem that is by the gate!” 16 Then the three mighty men broke through the camp of the Philistines and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem that was by the gate and carried and brought it to David. But [David] would not drink of it. He poured it out to the Lord 17 and said, “Far be it from me, O Lord, that I should do this. Shall I drink the blood of the men who went at the risk of their lives?” Therefore he would not drink it. These things the three mighty men did.
- Matthew 16:24-25 – 24 Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 25 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.”
 - Book by David Crowder – Everybody Wants to go to Heaven, but Nobody Wants to Die

The Battle at Keila – Fight and Defeat What the Enemy is Doing in Your Life

- 1 Samuel 23:1-5 – 1 Now they told David, “Behold, the Philistines are fighting against Keilah and are robbing the threshing floors.” 2 Therefore David inquired of the Lord, “Shall I go and attack these Philistines?” And the Lord said to David, “Go and attack the Philistines and save Keilah.” 3 But David's men said to him, “Behold, we are afraid here in Judah; how much more then if we go to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?” 4 Then David inquired of the Lord again. And the Lord answered him, “Arise, go down to Keilah, for I will give the Philistines into your hand.” 5 And David and his men went to Keilah and fought with the Philistines and brought away their livestock and struck them with a great blow. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah.

Philippians 2:12-13 – 12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.