

“But After That Faith is Come. . . II.”

Pastor Sam Richards

Notes on Sermon for 20 February 2022 / 27 February 2022

Texts: Galatians 3:23-29

Solomon wrote that there is **nothing new under the sun** (Eccl. 1:9) but is that true? In what world would that be true? The ninth century BC, certainly not the world to come with the advent of the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul writes of a new world when he declares **now that faith has come** for it is the coming of the Lord Jesus, who is the Maker of all things new, that something new really occurred! It has better principles, and better results. The law took us up to this threshold, it led us to Christ and we witnessed a huge change. Now, **justified by faith in Christ we became sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus** and that was as new as new can be. Christ gave to those **who believed in Him the power to become sons of God**. It was an act of creation, technically a second creation, requiring just as much divine omniscience and omnipotence as the first creation!

Let's catalogue some of the ways in which new is new in the New Testament. It was new because it was established on new and better principles. It was a new, infallible covenant newly established on His merit and on that merit alone. It was new in terms of the virgin birth, born in a new fashion, in an original, unique and unprecedented manner. ***He came without the taint of sin and that was new, exceptional, unique!***

He is the beginning of the creation of God . . . the Amen, True and Faithful Witness, the beginning. He began it all and yet He is still beginning. And you, Christian, have been created by the word of God, by the Eternal Word who Jesus is. This makes us new. By faith we are made anew. ***Begotten in a day.***

It came with new doctrine (the gospel is that new doctrine), occasioned new music—He is the new song! He is the rejoicing prophesied of Jerusalem centuries before! Suddenly, the heavens filled with new anthems of praise, glorifying God! This new revelation was advanced with new methods (of preaching, teaching and testifying). It propounded new laws, initiated new customs, new sacraments, a new charter and new riches . . . it was a new and living way, through the veil, victorious over the grave, celebrating resurrection power **if any man be in Christ he is a new creation**. *This does not happen any other way!*

Wonderful! Newness comes with regeneration . . . as a work of the Holy Spirit in which, with Christ, it comes about to the glory of God. That is why spring comes, babies are conceived and we are born.

And this transformation is not a development: the redeemed man is not “a natural man sobered up!” Or a recovering addict! He is not a reformed sinner; he hasn't been reprogrammed, or conditioned, trained, educated, or re-integrated through a therapeutic intervention. There's more to it than a re-scripting of one's

life narrative, a talking cure. We become an entirely new creature; we go from a human being to a being in Christ—or a person in whom the being of Christ has taken up being.

And what results is a higher order of being, a new spiritual order of being, which transcends everything earthy, material, and physical. We are awed by a beautiful sunset, but as splendid as it may be; it's only natural, all optics and refraction of light waves; it is surpassed by sights in heaven by many magnitudes. Such glory was on the risen Christ that He walked in resurrection splendor, as we shall see face to face in eternity. But for now, Christ the hope of glory, resides in us and we are the glimpses of Him that others get to see . . . for now.

In the first creation everything was new—uniquely, distinctly created as is. The second creation is very like that. Except that what God initially declared “good,” in the second creation He now rejoices over the redeemed! When we are born-again we are absolutely, wondrously changed; and we no longer are what we were before. “What can’t be mended, must be ended.” It is a “death and resurrection” process. Simultaneously, apart from Him everything has waxed old, is beginning to perish; they cannot renew their strength, cannot renew their new. Thus we are to understand that “the offices of Moses are now at an end! By new we don’t mean merely more recent! We mean utterly and completely different as in “another—as in world, kingdom, earth,” or as in “other—of a different order”

Therefore “new creature” is something altogether new, never before seen on earth—special and distinctive, utterly unique. Perhaps as something supra- or post-carnal, an absolutely different reality. So it is not “refashioned, reassembled, new and improved (as in a laundry detergent, or medicine, or the latest edition of a textbook *so labeled as to promote sales*), not enhanced, reformulated, or augmented, or fortified. This is way beyond a restart, or re-branding, or reset; remake, or radical makeover. So it is beyond a new development, modification and alteration—even mutation—or a new generation of I-Phone. It is not something in stock, in the warehouse, brought out of storage and repurposed. No, the language we prefer to employ is “called into being,” “created from above,” created ex nihilo . . . out of an absence of everything precedent and prototype? . . . by the word of God. And definitely not the product of education, re-education or brainwashing, psychological conditioning . . . it is not latent within us, so theories of unfoldment are useless to explain it . . . social causation and socialization cannot explain it. It doesn’t come from our genes, or our DNA, modified, engineered or not.

It is second birth. **You must be born again, born from above, born in Christ.** A womb was involved the first time, not this time, this time we are born of the Spirit. The natural has been superseded by the spiritual. A change of essence is what we need, and that new essence is the Spirit of Christ who indwells us. He Himself being new, makes us new. It is an universal change; that is pervasive and total. We are not made a little new, or partly new, but

wholly and entirely new—a new creature. God has chosen to take from the material world, of matter, stuff, grass and herbs and animal stock—mere dust, nothing physiological—all to create a companion being designed for eternity, completion, purity, peace and rest. We have been Sabbathized!! In heaven circumcision counts for nothing, *new life counts for everything*.

- In all parts changed, not in all parts perfected
- New heart, eyes, ears, tongues, hands, arms and feet of the inner man
- Enlightenment is not salvation—neither mastery, nor learning supply it
- A new brain doth not a new man make
- Gratification and Satisfaction are not salvation
- Adoption as sons is a transition to assimilation and to everlasting unity in Him

We become **new creatures** *first* through the representation of Christ: what He went through for us, we go through with Him—when He died, we died to sin . . . and having identified with Him in His death we now rise when He rose, we rise to newness of life. He acted for us; He made us *beneficiaries of that through faith in Him*. Now it is true that “grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life” because it did so through Him.

We become new creatures, *secondly*, through appropriation. As the law had no claim on Him, it has no claim on us! When we, by faith, accept the sentence of death, confess our complicity . . . then it is decreed in heaven: as the flesh shall die and the lusts thereof; we are empowered to mortify all our evil desires and lusts. Indeed, on our behalf, the sword of truth pierces the loins of sin and it expires. Yes, even the hearts of all God’s enemies are pierced with His arrows. *This is death. On the basis of this death, Paul can declare: the world is dead to me*. And now from heaven, there comes new life—direct from God into our supine souls *and He raises us to new life! We live, we grow, we bear incorruptible fruit*. New conversations follow, new delights appear, new objects of desire, new principles take hold . . . *indeed all things suitable to the new creature!* We are instinct with holiness, bear the scent of eternity, the aroma of life unto life, a deepening love of Jesus from a captivated heart . . . new hopes framed in escalating novelty.

New Adam—New Life

New Covenant—New Principles

New Spirit—New Thoughts and Words and Deeds

New Being—**It is Christ who lives in me**

When God does what God alone can do, let all the world rejoice! Isaiah 65: 16-21 is coming to pass with ***rejoicing and gladness***:

16 “Because he who [a¹]is blessed in the earth

Will [b]be blessed by the God of truth;

¹ Footnotes

a. Isaiah 65:16 Or *bless(es) himself*

And he who swears in the earth
 Will swear by the God of truth;
Because the former troubles are forgotten,
And because they are hidden from My sight!

17 “For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth;
 And the former things will not be remembered or come to [c]mind.

18 “But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create;
For behold, I create Jerusalem for rejoicing
And her people for gladness.

19 “I will also rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in My people;

And there will no longer be heard in her
 The voice of weeping and the sound of crying.

20 “No longer will there be [d]in it an infant *who lives but a few days*,
 Or an old man who does not [e]live out his days;
 For the youth will die at the age of one hundred
 And the [f]one who does not reach the age of one hundred
 Will be *thought* accursed.

21 “They will build houses and inhabit *them*;
 They will also plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

The point of all this is that everything that changes **now that faith has come**; when Jesus dies which is when He finishes the rescue mission for which he was sent: the redemption of Adam’s fallen race, a brave new world comes into being brimming with power, with potential and novelty. For behold, I create Jerusalem rejoicing/

And her people gladness. The sun of righteousness has risen and the winter of sorrow, sadness and sin is melting away—its shapes, its covering evaporates.

Called to Him and born-again, we now get to clothe ourselves **in Christ**. That is because the two supreme divine prerogatives (creation and salvation) are joined in Him. He is, in a sense, what He does; He is Creator and He is Savior. Here is an old song, we can sing anew:

Psalm 100

1 Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth.
 2 Serve the Lord with gladness;
 Come before Him with joyful singing.
 3 Know that the Lord [b]Himself is God;
 It is He who has made us, and [c]not we ourselves;
 We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.

b. Isaiah 65:16 Or *bless(es) himself*

c. Isaiah 65:17 Lit *heart*

d. Isaiah 65:20 Lit *from there*

e. Isaiah 65:20 Lit *fill out*

f. Isaiah 65:20 Lit *one who misses the mark*

4 Enter His gates with [d]thanksgiving

***And* His courts with praise.**

Give thanks to Him, bless His name.

5 For the Lord is good;

His lovingkindness is everlasting

And His faithfulness to all generations. Amen.