

**Christ the Center**  
**II Corinthians 5:17**

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“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).

Life in Christ is completely new and the presence of the Lord Jesus in our lives gives us a completely new dimension. Our old worldly and self-centered ambitions, outlook on life, and moral values are changed as we come to know Him personally and as His power becomes operative daily in our lives.

The verse begins with “therefore” and whenever you see a “therefore” in a verse you must try to understand what it is there for, so you can properly understand the meaning. Here Paul is referring back to the previous verses that taught some powerful and dramatic truths.

He taught that you and I who belong to Jesus must not live for self, but for “Him who died for us and rose again.” Then he goes on to remind us that our outlook on life should not be from a purely human point of view. Of course not! We are now children of the living God and we see things from the perspective of heaven.

This vital Bible verse goes on to show the universality of the claims of Christ. He speaks of “any man.” There is not a person alive who is not welcome in the kingdom of God. There are organizations, clubs, fraternities and sororities that some of us could not get into. But we are all welcome “in Christ.”

Jesus said: “all that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out” (John 6:37).

Note that you and I are “in Christ.” Paul had told the Ephesians: “But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved), and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:4-6).

What does it mean to be “in Christ?” It means that when we have repented of sin and turned, by faith, to the Lord Jesus and are trusting Him and Him alone for our salvation, we actually become part of Christ's body in the earth. We are members of the Body of Christ. Therefore you and I have brothers and sisters whom we have never seen, and in spite of the fact that they may be living thousands of miles from us, we are actually joined to them in the fellowship of the Lord Jesus.

He goes on to tell us that when we are in Christ we are new. We are a new creation. Just as God created the world by the word of His power, so you and I have become a new race of people in

this world; people who walk in newness of life in the midst of multitudes who are dead in trespasses and sins.

Because of that old things, old ways, old habits, old desires, old sins, have passed away and all things have become new. Of course they have! We are new because of our new life in Christ. We have a new name written in Heaven, a new heart, and a new nature. We live by new rules, with new goals and objectives in the new company of our fellow believers in Christ.

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