

ChristReformationChurch

Tillamook, Oregon

www.sermonaudio.com/crc

www.unholycharade.com

www.lightfordarktimes.com

The New Creation is Here

*April 1, 2018
(Easter Sunday)*

Sermon Text: 2 Cor 5:17

Scripture Reading:

We saw last week that Jesus preached the gospel of the kingdom of heaven and He demonstrated this good news by healing all who were sick or demon oppressed. The miracles of Jesus are the power and authority of the King of kings conquering the kingdom of this world and its ruler, the devil.

And this is the very thing we remember this Easter morning as we consider the resurrection of Christ from the dead.

If this present world kingdom and its ruling powers were to be defeated, the ultimate weapon they hold the sinner by is *death*.

Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. (Heb 2:14-15)

And again:

Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned-- (Rom 5:12)

Any “good news” then necessarily must include the remedy for death or else it is no real victory at all. The power of death and the one who holds it must be broken. Christ, through His atoning death on the cross, removed the sting of death (its power) and led the invasion of light and life into this fallen creation. Central to the doctrine of the Christian gospel then is *resurrection* –

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection

and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" (Joh 11:25-26)

This is why Paul told the Corinthians who were denying the resurrection:

1Co 15:12-14 Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? (13) But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. (14) And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain.

You see it very plainly here in Colossians:

Col 2:13-15 And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, (14) by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. (15) He **disarmed** the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

Disarmed. Satan and his servants have been disarmed. Christ accomplished this by conquering death which was

the devil's power to enslave us. This is what Christ told Lazarus' sister:

Joh 11:17-27 Now when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. (18) Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off, (19) and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother. (20) So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, but Mary remained seated in the house.

(21) Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. (22) But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you." (23) Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." (24) Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day."

(25) Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. **Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, (26) and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die.** Do you believe this?" (27) She said to him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world."

Christ's own resurrection from the dead proves that this victory has been won, that the devil's power is broken,

and that all who are in Christ *will never die*.

Resurrection as New Creation

Listen to this statement by the Apostle Paul that we considered in part at our Good Friday service:

Gal 6:14-15 But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. (15) For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, **but a new creation.**

Christian, you have already died. It's over. When Christ was crucified on the cross, YOU were put to death with Him. We see this taught repeatedly in the New Testament:

Rom 6:7-11 For one who has died has been set free from sin. (8) Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. (9) We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. (10) For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. (11) So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Col 3:3 For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

2Ti 2:11 The saying is trustworthy, for: If we have died with him, we will also live with him;

Now, that death, YOUR death in Him was REAL. You really did die. Or rather, *the person whom you used to be died*. You had to die. The Law of God demanded it. But the good news of the gospel and the grace of God in His Son given for us is that *the new YOU has been raised. Created as a new creation*. And THAT is what Paul means here:

“For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.”

That is Paul's way of saying, *you must be born again*.

Notice that Paul reminds us that as a new creation, we are dead to this present world. We are no longer part of it. No longer citizens of it – because to be a citizen of the world is to be a slave to the devil who rules it.

If you have been a Christian very long, you may be rather foggy about what you used to be before knowing Christ. But one thing is certain, you were alive to the world, alive in the world, one of its own. Your mindset was in conformity to the philosophies and values of the world. Your goals were goals that the world approved of. But

when Christ grabbed hold of you, put you to death, and raised you up a new person, that all radically changed.

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

This is why it is impossible and unthinkable for a Christian to continue to live in habitual sin as the normal course of his or her life. You are a new creation. A foreigner and alien in this world. Much of the New Testament is written to remind us of this and to call for us to live this new creation life out.

Follow along as I read this 5th chapter of Paul's second letter to the Corinthians:

2Co 5:1-21 For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, **we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.**

(2) For in this tent we groan, **longing to put on our heavenly dwelling,** (3) if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. (4) For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened--not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. (5) He who has prepared us for this very thing

is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

(6) So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, (7) for we walk by faith, not by sight. (8) Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. (9) So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him.

(10) For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil. (11) Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others. But what we are is known to God, and I hope it is known also to your conscience.

(12) We are not commending ourselves to you again but giving you cause to boast about us, so that you may be able to answer those who boast about outward appearance and not about what is in the heart. (13) For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. (14) For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: **that one has died for all, therefore all have died; (15) and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died**

and was raised.

(16) From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. (17) **Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.**

(18) All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; (19) that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. (20) Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. (21) For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

There you have the context. Listen to this central verse again:

(17) Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

This means:

1. Anyone. Any and all who are in Christ have been re-created by God, given a new heart and mind, life has been breathed into their soul by the Spirit. This is not something that just might be true, but rather IS true of every Christian, so that if this new creation has not occurred in a man, he is not a Christian and is still dead in his sins.
2. The new *has* come. As a new creation, your life and home are not down here, but up there with Christ. This means that you are not going to feel at home in this world, and that this world is not comfortable with YOU. In fact, this world hates Christ and all who belong to Him. It is enemy territory. You are living behind enemy lines, you might say.
3. The old has passed away. The things that you used to ultimately value and long for, no longer charm you. We often, until we understand this, keep trying to find meaning in those things but it doesn't work. That "dream" you once had as your life goal no longer draws you. Sometimes you wonder if there is something wrong with you, and in a sense, through the world's eyes, the answer is "yes." You aren't that person anymore.

4. In the new creation, there is no death. Even when you die, YOU don't die. Your body (this "tent" as Paul puts it) dies, but not you. You have eternal life and one day you will have a new dwelling, but it won't be a temporal tent. It will be a mansion with foundations, eternal in the heavens as the Bible puts it.

5. In the new creation, we enjoy peace with God. We have been *reconciled to Him*.

All of this *has come*. It hasn't arrived in its fullness, but it is here. The new order. The new world. The new creation. The new heavens and earth.

When Christ was here on this earth, He went through all the cities and towns announcing all of this – *the kingdom of heaven*. And as we saw last time, he not only spoke of it with his words, *he preached about it through His mighty works*. So what do the works of Jesus Christ tell us about the new creation, as opposed to this present one?

- No one will be crippled or blind or deaf
- No one will be oppressed by demons
- No one will ever be hungry or thirsty
- No one will be poor

- No one will ever have any kind of disease – not even “the common cold.”
- There will be no war
- No evil wicked person will ever be found again
- There will be nothing to fear
- Pain will be gone and there will never again be anything that causes pain. You won't even need a bandaid or an aspirin.
- There will never, ever be any sadness or grief. Only joy and perfect fulfillment.
- Nature will no longer be cursed, so there will never be anything that destroys crops, or stinging insects or poisonous snakes or man-eating beasts.
- There will be no *sin*. No one will ever wrong you again, and you will never do wrong to anyone yourself.
- Nothing in all creation will ever cause pain or injury. No one will drown, or fall off a cliff or die in a car accident. In fact,
- There will be no death. You will never see a dead body again. You will never be grieved at the loss of a loved one. There will be no hospitals, no funeral homes, no cemeteries. No one will grow old. There will be no anxiety or depression, and no mental afflictions. Pharmaceutical companies will be out of

business as will police departments, locksmiths, banks – in fact the entire monetary system will cease to exist.

We have been watching for the second time Ken Burns' great series on the Second World War. Mobile, Alabama almost instantly grew from a sleepy small town to a huge center of shipyards and ship building. People who had suffered so long in the depression migrated there and found jobs, even if they couldn't find housing. They lived in tents or shacks or shared a rented room in a boarding house with others, working and sleeping in shifts.

Many of the workers who came were African American and of course Alabama was a segregated, Southern culture with Jim Crow laws. Black and White water fountains, bus seating, and so on. Here was the country fighting the Japanese in the Pacific and Hitler in Europe, yet this racism persisted – even in the military in the early years of the war. And there were even some terrible riots in Mobile among the thousands of workers when the shipyard decided to allow black people to fill certain positions that only whites had held before. They finally had to actually segregate the entire shipyards.

There is none of this evil in the new creation. As new creations now, WE must never think or act with racial hatred. There will be no classes of social standing in the new creation either. No rich and poor, powerful and weak.

Everything that is wrong in this present world will be set right, all because of Christ's death for sin and His resurrection victory over death.

Let's close by reading about all this in the 8th chapter of Romans. Everything in this chapter is a direct result of the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

Rom 8:1-39 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. (2) For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. (3) For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, (4) in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

(5) For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. (6) For to set the

mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. (7) For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. (8) Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

(9) You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

(10) But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. (11) If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

(12) So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. (13) For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. (14) For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

(15) For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" (16) The Spirit

himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, (17) and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

(18) For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. (19) For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God.

(20) For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope (21) **that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.** (22) For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.

(23) And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, **the redemption of our bodies.**

(24) For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? (25) But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. (26) Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself

intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. (27) And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

(28) And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. (29) For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. (30) And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

(31) What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? (32) He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? (33) Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. (34) Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died--more than that, who was raised--who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. (35) Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? (36) As it is

written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." (37) No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. (38) For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, (39) nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.