

# In Christ, New Creature

2 Corinthians 5:14-17



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**FOCAL** 2 Corinthians 5:14-17 For the love of Christ constraineth<sup>1</sup> us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: (15) And [that] he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. (16) Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we [him] no more. (17) Therefore if any man [be] in Christ, [he is] a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (18) And all things [are] of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

Our text begins with **the love of Christ constraineth (or holds us together)**. What gives us the power to keep on going when things seem darkest? What continues to push us forward, though the joy of life sometimes seems to be hidden behind a cloud? **The love of Christ holds us together.**

**ILLUSTRATE** Years ago when in the Air Force I worked on jet aircraft. The “jet” is different from the old “propeller driven” airplanes in that it is able to go much much, much faster than the “prop” job. The jet, however, is much more sensitive than the propellers of an older type aircraft. The jet engine has several “turbines” in it that spin very rapidly, and must be kept in perfect

1 Present Active Indicative of G4912, *συνέχω*, *sunechō*, *soon-ekh'-o*, From G4862 and G2192; to *hold together*, that is, to *compress* (the ears, with a crowd or siege) or *arrest* (a prisoner); figuratively to *compel*, *perplex*, *afflict*, *preoccupy*; - constrain, hold, keep in, press, lie sick of, stop, be in a strait, straiten, be taken with, throng.

balance. If anything gets into the turbines – stray nuts, bolts, pieces of wire, whatever – it could damage the turbines. Nicked turbines can come apart while the aircraft is in flight, causing the pilot to die. Because of this everyone who worked on and around these jets had to be *very careful* with their equipment. No tools nor spare parts were left behind. If anything was lost – a small piece of wire, a nut, a bolt, a tool – the aircraft was “grounded”. That meant it *could not be flown* until what was lost was found, no matter how long it took. Foreign objects in the jet engines could take a life!

The Christian way of life is a *supernatural* way of life. On the day that you trusted in Jesus Christ, believing on Him for salvation, you became a **new creature**. Things of this world are different for the Christian. Others may chase after sin, may offend God with their lifestyles, may allow the “foreign objects” of this world to go through their lives. If you are a Christian you are like the “jet” of this illustration, and sin is the “foreign object” that will damage your life.

**The Old Creature Is Dead,  
The New Creature Is Alive**

**FOCAL** 2 Corinthians 5:14 For the love of Christ constraineth us; because **we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:**

The **old creature**, the unsaved person, is **dead**. If you are saved you are **no longer dead**, but you are *made alive* by **Jesus Christ Who died for you**. Our text tells us in verse 14 that “**all were dead**”. What does this mean?

The Bible says in another place:

**Ephesians 2:1-2 And you [hath he quickened], who were dead in trespasses and sins; (2) Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:**

Death things follow the *Prince of Death*. Dead things obey *Satan* rather than God. Satan's ways are to rebel against God, to do what makes ME the most satisfied, to HATE my neighbor and LOVE myself. Dead things always say “me first”. None of you have ever seen a dead thing get up and do anything for anyone. Dead things are self absorbed. Like the dead animals you see by the side of the road, dead things do nothing but decay, and bring toxic smells and filth into the world. When you were **dead in trespasses and sins** you lived according to Satan. This is not your way now, dear ones, if you are saved.

**One died for all, because all were dead.** The Bible says of our Lord Jesus:

**1 Corinthians 15:21-22 For since by man [came] death, by man [came] also the resurrection of the dead. (22) For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be**

**made alive.**

The **first Adam**, our forefather, sinned in the Garden of Eden. He was given a *thing to do*, and a thing *not* to do. The *thing to do* was that he was to keep and cultivate the Garden of Eden, to keep Satan out of it. The thing he was *not* supposed to do was to eat of the forbidden fruit. The first Adam *failed* to do that which he was supposed to do, but did that which he was *not supposed to do*.

The **first Adam loved himself more than he loved God** – and in loving himself more he brought *spiritual death* on all his children.

The **second Adam, Jesus Christ** *did not love Himself more than He loved God*. The **second Adam** came to this earth for one main reason. He came to *suffer in our place*. He came because God the Father sent Him to come, and to die for us. Jesus said:

**John 10:9-11 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. (10) The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have [it] more abundantly. (11) I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.**

The **second Adam** came to be a *living sacrifice* for our

sins. The **second Adam** was given a thing to do, and He did it perfectly. Though Jesus came and healed – the records of the people healed by the Master are in this Holy Scripture – this was not the main reason He came. Though Jesus was a perfect example of how we should live our lives, this is not the main reason that He came. Jesus Christ came to **lay down His life** for us. He came to **take the penalty of sin that the first Adam caused** away from all who believe. He came **that we who are Christians might have abundant life**.

The **love of Christ** presses in on us, drawing us, reminding us of what He did for us. Without Jesus we were dead things, things without life or purpose. Our father Adam brought us to death – but Jesus *gave us abundant life*.

**The New Living Creature Serves The Savior  
Because He Is IN Christ**

**FOCAL** 2 Corinthians 5:15 And [that] he died for all, that **they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him** which died for them, and rose again.

If you are a Christian, then you **are alive and not dead**. If you are alive and not dead, then you **live to serve Jesus Christ**. Dead things cannot serve the living. Jesus told the confused Pharisees:

**Mark 12:27 He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living ...**

God is the **God of the living**, not the **God of dead things**. Dead things serve the prince of darkness, Satan. Living things serve the **God of the living**.

On the day that you were saved, the Lord called you into *active service for Him*. I'm glad that Jesus never stayed home and watched TV, or went to the gladiator fights, or did something else other than what the Father told Him to do. The Jesus Who loves me said, "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father". When do we see Jesus, and what do we see Him doing? He was always out with the people, teaching His disciples, loving the unloved. Jesus called the Church "my Church" (**Matthew 16:18**) and said that "the gates of hell shall not overcome it".

Imagine what would happen in America if Christians would leave their homes and their televisions, and go and be a part of Christ's Church. Imagine what would happen if, when Christians were not at Church (which is a Biblical command - see **Hebrews 10:25**), they were out doing what Jesus commanded. "GO into all the world. TEACH them what Jesus commanded. (**Matthew 28:19-20**) Oh, what a glorious world we would have if every Christian did their duty, if the love of Christ in them would bear fruit, if souls would be saved in the workplace and in the marketplace. We could return to a day when our children could go to school and not be molested or killed by Satan's henchmen. We could return to a day when you could turn on the television and see something that wasn't soft pornography, violence, and evil. We could return to a day when people had morality, when truth mattered, when the Bible was revered and we

were "**one nation under God**". We could see a day when we saw brighter days ahead for our grandchildren, a day when the apocalypse didn't seem to loom overhead like a dark and dangerous thunderhead.

**FOCAL** 2 Corinthians 5:15, 17 And [that] he died for all, that **they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him** which died for them, and rose again. ... (17)  
Therefore **if any man [be] in Christ, [he is] a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.**

Most people today view *physical death* as unnatural, a thing horrible, something to be avoided at all costs. Physical death is a part of life. God did not mean for us to live on this earth forever.

But you WILL live forever if you are a Christian, saved by faith in Christ. If you are **in Christ** then you look at all things a *new and living way*. If **in Christ** then **physical death is not the end, but the beginning**.

**ILLUSTRATE** **In Christ!** These are two of the greatest words in the Scripture, **in Christ!** How do I define these words? How do I explain them? I must turn to my Bible and look at the illustrations that God has given me.

**I am "in Christ" like Noah was in the ark.** God came to Noah and told him to "build an ark". God told Noah that all of creation was about to be destroyed under His

Divine Judgment. It's like the old song says<sup>2</sup>:

**Brethren, see poor sinners round you  
slumbering on the brink of woe;  
Death is coming, hell is moving,  
can you bear to let them go?**

God told Noah to *build an Ark, then get on it*. God provided the wood, the plans, everything needed – but Noah *still had to get on the boat!* Once he got “in the ark” he stayed outside of God's Divine Judgment. Once you get “in Christ” the Divine Wrath of God is stayed. You need not fear Beloved, you are **in Christ**.

**I am “in Christ” like I am in an ancient “city of refuge”.** God made a provision in His Law that protected the ancient Israelite from vengeance. If the Israelite *accidentally* killed someone, then the Law demanded that their Blood be shed. Yet God allowed the Levites to have the “cities of refuge”. If I accidentally brought judgment on myself I could run to a city of refuge. Once in that city no one could take my life – but I had to be in the city. **Jesus Christ is our city of refuge, He is our hiding place.** If I am **in Christ** I will dwell in Him, stay in Him. He is my Wall against the judgment of God.

**I am “in Christ” like the High Priest is in the ancient Holy of Holies.** The Israelites frequently went to the Temple offering sacrifices to God, and prayed in that Holy Place. But *only the High Priest* entered into the place where God was, the *Holy of Holies*. All others

knew there was God, but never entered into His presence. If you are **in Christ** God dwells in you, God lives in the Temple of your body (**1 Corinthians 6:19**). Others may say “I believe in God” - **fools, the demons believe and tremble! (James 2:19)**. The believer *knows* that God is real, for He lives in our hearts. We have been into the Temple, and are living in His presence – we who believe are **in Christ**.

**If I am “in Christ” then I am attached to Jesus like the branch is attached to the Vine.** Jesus said:

**John 15:5 I am the vine, ye [are] the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.**

The Life that flows through Christ flows through every believer trusting in Him. We do not bear **fruit from the tree that is death**. Our fruit is not hatred, strife, envy, sexual perversion, lying, or anything that resembles death. The fruit of the believer **in Christ** is the same fruit that Jesus bore: **love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance – against such things there is no Law (Galatians 5:22-23)**.

**If I am “in Christ” I am part of that great building of God.** Jesus Christ is the Cornerstone, ignored by many, but **chosen of God and precious**. We who believe are:

**1 Peter 2:5 ... lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to**

**offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.**

Each believer is a priest unto God, serving Him in love on this earth until that day He calls us home to be with Him in glory. Oh, how I long for that day! To see the Savior face to face, to kiss the nail scars on His feet and hands. To kneel with my brothers and sisters at His feet in glory – for I am **in Christ**.

Are you **in Christ**? If so, you are part of the fabric of Heaven. Faith and love have come together in your life as warp and weave. You are **in Christ**, and while you are in this world you represent Him to all those around you. God bids you to tell others about Jesus, that He alone is **the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:6)**. Life can only be found through the Door of Life. Serve Him, live in Him, tell others about Him, for one day you shall see Him in eternity. On that great day He will ask you how you lived your life for Him. What will you say?

May God touch your hearts with these words.



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