



BUILD CHARACTER

NEW CREATION

Spiritual Outcome Defined:

Embraces, enjoys, and lives out of one's true identity in Christ, combating lies of the enemy with God's truth and God's power.

Spiritual Outcome Described:

We've heard the phrase, "You can't teach an old dog new tricks." It comes up when we see a person stuck in their ways. A person may be able to fake being something they're not for a short while, but it's just a matter of time before their true self comes out. It's for this very reason that when we address building

character, we recognize that Scripture does not call us to *change*, because change is impossible. The calling of Scripture is not to change but to die, and to then

*"Now, with God's help, I shall become myself."
-- Soren Kierkegaard*

experience a new life in Christ. Paul wrote, "I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20). Paul did not seek to change his old self, rather, by entrusting his life to Christ his old self was crucified on the cross with Christ, so a new self would be raised with Christ to live a new way.

To the Romans Paul wrote, "We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life" (Romans 6:4). The authentic Christian life is not a life of muscling our way to change our behaviors. Such living is both frustrating and futile. The authentic Christian life is miraculous. It is the life that learns to live out of the new creation. "If anyone is in Christ," Paul wrote, "he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Corinthians 5:17). The enemy knows this reality and combats it with the same strategy he has used for thousands of years. He lies to us about ourselves. Jesus referred to our enemy as "a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44).

We should not be surprised then, that when it comes to new creation living, we must identify deeply embedded lies about ourselves, and replace these lies with Scripture's truths. Warped thoughts lead to warped living. Understanding and embracing the wondrous work of Christ in our lives leads to a new kind of living that would be impossible if left to our old selves. But we are not left to our old selves. We have been raised with Christ that "we too may live a new life" (Romans 6:4).

Evidence of this Spiritual Outcome in a Person's Life:

- Knows and confidently claims Scripture's teachings on one's identity in Christ.
- Is aware of personal points of vulnerability to the enemy's lies and knows the truths that correct these lies .
- The conviction that one can and will live differently because of the work Christ has done in one's life.
- Has a growing ability to help others identify lies about themselves and is able to point them to Scripture's truths that correct these lies.

Guidance

Read each passage multiple times. Then write your observations about the passage and any thoughts you have from the discernment question. What do you notice in the passage, and what does this reveal about your life?

John 3:1-8

Observations:

Discernment Question: Have you meditated on the reality that if you have trusted Christ, the Spirit of God has birthed new life in you? How have you seen this new life in your daily life?



Romans 6:1-14

Observations:

Discernment Question: Just as we died with Christ on the cross, we rise to new life in his resurrection. How has this newness of life made you different from your old self?

2 Corinthians 10:3-5

Observations:

Discernment Question: How do you experience divine power in your daily life?



Ephesians 2:1-10

Observations:

Discernment Question: How have you seen “death-like” living in your old life and newness of life in your experience of Christ?

Philippians 4:8

Observations:

Discernment Question: What do you think about? What do you meditate on? Is it reflective of your new life in Christ or your old life apart from Christ?



Colossians 1:21-23

Observations:

Discernment Question: One day you will be presented holy and blameless before God in Christ. How does this reality influence your daily living?

1 John 3:1-3

Observations:

Discernment Question: How has being made a child of God, and having hope for Christ's appearing, inspired purification in your life?



Next Steps

What are practical next steps you will do from what you have discovered in this survey of Scripture on our new creation in Christ? Include insights offered from others in your Life Group that could be applied in your own life as well.



Scripture Memory:

2 Corinthians 5:17 NIV

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

Ephesians 2:22-24 NIV

You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

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