

UNDERSTANDING JESUS' GRACE

LESSON 12

**WE ARE A NEW KIND OF
CREATURE**

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LESSON 12 . WE ARE A NEW KIND OF CREATURE

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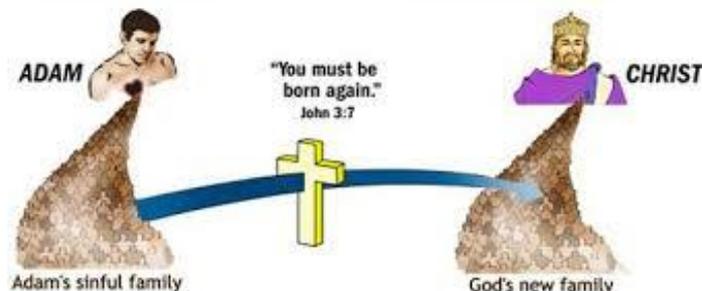
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We now know that we are children of our Abba Father. However there is more to this than meets the eye as not only have we become His adopted children but in some mysterious way we have taken on God's spiritual DNA and likeness. We are no longer just human but we have become a new spiritual being, a new creature in Christ.



1. BORN AGAIN

John 3:5-7 Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.'

John 3:3 (MSG) Jesus said, "You're absolutely right. Take it from me: Unless a person is born from above, it's not possible to see what I'm pointing to--to God's kingdom."

The wages of sin is death (Ro.6:23) and all of mankind spiritually died at the fall. The good news is that through the work of the cross new spiritual life is available to all who would receive it. This is God's grace to us. When we accept Christ as Lord and Saviour we die to self and are born again as new spiritual beings. Jesus taught the teachers of Israel, those preaching the Law, that they did not know or see the spiritual kingdom of God because they were spiritually dead in their sins and Law keeping. Only those who are born again, those whose spirit's are alive and joined to the Holy Spirit, can understand and see the things of the kingdom of God.

The Bible and God's ways cannot be accepted nor understood by those in the world because their spirits are dead in sin. We must be born again to enter and to see the thing of spiritual kingdom of God and understand the work of the cross.

1.1 GOD'S FAMILY

Gal. 6:10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

When we are born again, we become children of God and are included in the family of God. God is our Abba Father and all other believers are now our brothers and sisters in Christ. God's family is the Church (Heb.12:23) of Jesus, the first born Son. The Church includes all born again believers across the world, both the living and the dead. The Church is not something you join, it is something you are born into by the grace of God. At this time the Church may have many manmade divisions, but in the Father's eyes there is only one Church family. We need to love, value and honour God's family, it's precious and unique and God's gift. We are a communal people and Church life is vitally important to living in grace.

2. THE "NEW CREATION"

2Co.5:17- 21 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

(KJV) Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

(Gal.6:14) Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation.

When we are born again we are instantly a "new creation" or a "new person". The words "new creation" are from the following Greek words as defined by Strong's:

"New"; Greek *kainos*; new, as respects form, recently made, fresh, recent, unused, unworn, as respects substance of a new kind, unprecedented, novel, uncommon, unheard of.

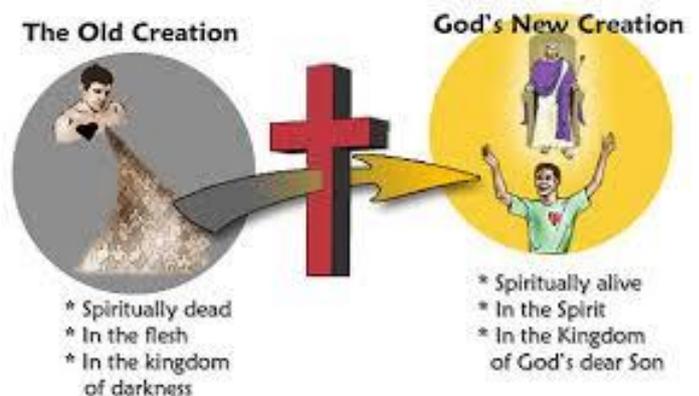
"Creation"; Greek *ktisis*; the act of founding, establishing, building, the act of creating, creation, of individual things, beings, a creature, a creation.

The new creation is a complete new type of human being, we now share in God's divine nature (2Pet.1:4).

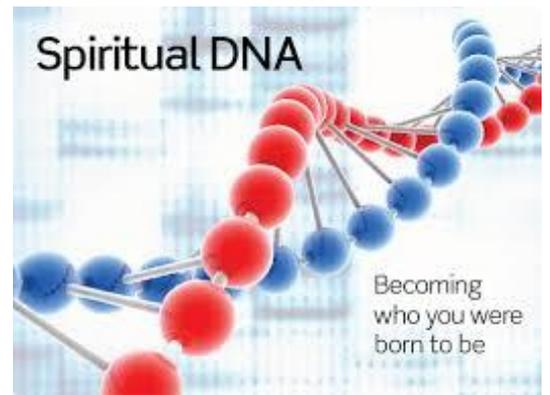
2.1 OUR SPIRITUAL DNA IS GOD'S

Gal 3:16 The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The Scripture does not say "and to seeds," meaning many people, but "and to your seed," meaning one person, who is Christ.v19 What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come.

1Pe 1:23 For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.



The Greek word for seed also means sperm i.e. that which carries all the potential of new life. Being born again as a new creature comes about through spiritual conception. The Word of God's good news of his love for us expressed in Jesus and his grace comes to us and brings about spiritual conception in our hearts. God plants the seed of Jesus in our hearts and the Holy Spirit brings that seed to life. Like a sperm, the seed brings with it a unique DNA, a unique new code of life, the Word, Jesus Christ. God's seed is Jesus in us and it is He that completely changes our very nature, our very being. In fact the new seed of Christ kills of our old corrupted sinful genetics and replaces them with something completely new; the character and likeness of our Abba Father. This not only has spiritual implications but physical as well. We can now live in an increasing expectation of health and physical prosperity as our spiritual DNA frees us from the physical genetics that may have caused ill health. This is the miracle of the Word and the Spirit within us.



2.2 A COMPLETELY NEW VESSEL OF GRACE

Luk.5:37-39 And no one pours new (neos) wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, new wine must be poured into new (kainos) wineskins. And no one after drinking old wine wants the new, for he says, 'The old is better.'"

Jesus used the analogy of old and new wine skins to emphasize the fact that he had come to do a completely new thing. In Jesus time wine was fermented in leather wine skins which would stretch as fermentation took place, once stretched the wine skin would have to be discarded otherwise it would burst if filled more than a few times with new wine. Jesus used this analogy to represent the Law system being replaced by grace and the old human by a completely new type of human that could be filled with God's Spirit. The old wine skin of Law and the old self has to be discarded if one is to be born again. The new creation is not about regenerating the old, it's actually about death of the old and resurrection as something completely new and different. In the above scripture the word new as in new wineskin is the same word as used in 2 Co.5:17; a completely new type, never seen before, not regenerated from something old.



Another analogy is that grace and the new creature is like a brand new 4x4 model car, that is designed specifically to go wherever and do whatever is necessary, as opposed to a revamped old car that just doesn't have the power or capacity to do the job or carry the load. So too the new creature in Christ, designed and made for the kingdom of God and intimacy with Abba.

2.3 WE ARE ALIENS AND OUR HOME BASE IS HEAVEN

1Pe 2:11 Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul.

Heb 11:13 All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth.

Sometime we feel like strangers in the world. This is normal because now we are not just physical beings but spiritual as well, and we long to see spiritual reality manifesting here and now.

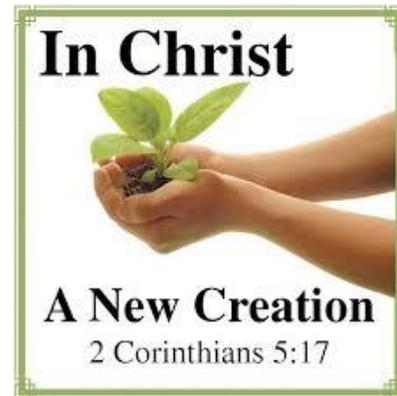
As new creatures in Christ we are aliens on the physical earth. We are born again both into a new species and a new home; heaven. Our longing is to be with our Abba Father and to see heaven and His presence come to earth (Re.21:1) in a complete renewal of all things. As aliens we will suffer persecution from those who are not saved and from those of the Law. However grace empowers us to love those who persecute and reject us and the ways of grace.

2.4 THE PARADOX OF THE SPIRITUAL KINGDOM WITHIN

Heb 10:14 For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.

2Co 5:16 So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view

The physical realm and body that we live in opposes the authority and reign of our inner "born again" spiritual person. The Apostle Paul was, next to Jesus, probably the best model of the "new creation" Christian. Yet we see that he too still struggled with sin (Ro.7:15), even though he was a new creation, even though he could write that he was dead to sin. Paul knew that the programming of his old sinful nature still had an amazing way of popping up from time to time and resisting God's will (Ro.7:18). We are new creations and the old has passed away (2Co.5:17) yet we still have to put off the ways of our old self (Eph.4:22). We are saved (Eph.2:8) yet we have to work out our salvation (Phil.2:12) practically in day to day



living and thinking. We have to appropriate the full benefits of "sozo" (the salvation package) so that we can experience full abundant life now (Jn.10:10). Our spiritual person has been perfectly sanctified in Christ (1Co.6:11) but in the physical and mental realm we are still being sanctified (1Thes.5:23) in our thinking and actions. We are perfect in Christ (Heb.10:14) and yet we all know that we all battle with our imperfections in the physical and mental realms.

Therefore we fix our eyes on Jesus and see ourselves hidden in him. We no longer see ourselves according to the flesh, our old self, but according to the spirit, our new self in Christ (2Co.5:16). This is how we live life in the Spirit. By the Spirit we are called to see prophetically who each and every person can be in grace.

2.5 PUTTING OFF THE OLD WAYS

Eph.4:22 -23 (NKJV) put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

When we examine the concept of "the new creation, the new man" in the context of the whole of the New Testament we will see that we are instantly a new creation and a new creature when we are born again. We are instantly saved, immortal, righteous and holy - just as Jesus is. This is because these characteristics and truths are now part of, at the same time we are called to apply these truths into our lives and to enter into a process of putting off the conduct and thinking of our "old self" and to be transformed to be like Jesus (2Co.3:17) not just in our spirits and identity but in our thinking, actions and living. We have to choose to co-operate with the Holy Spirit in this ongoing process of deleting the old habits and thought patterns that are a leftovers of our old dead nature and old generational inheritance. When doing this it is important to abide in grace and not allow any of our wrong actions or thoughts to condemn us, or warp our identity. The old self is no longer us - it's dead on the cross, so don't be fooled into going back into that wrong belief. Stay focussed on Jesus and his grace and deal with any issues that the Holy Spirit reveals - but only if and when he does. We don't need to go on spiritual witch hunts into our past. What we need to choose to believe is that we are now set free from the past and generational issues, we have a new Father, a new

- 1Pet.2: 9-10 I am a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation.
- 1Pet.2: 11 I am an alien and stranger to this world I temporarily live in.
- 1John3: 1-2 I am now a child of God and resemble Christ.
- 1John5: 18 I am born of God and the evil one cannot touch me.
- Gal.2:20 I am dead to old self, and alive in Christ

We are not just followers of Christ, or believers in God, we are much more. We are beloved children of God. We are a new species, born again spiritual beings. We now carry the spiritual identity and DNA of our heavenly Father. We are the bearers of God's seed, Jesus. Through the Word, Jesus, we have the ability to reproduce, to plant the seed of life within those who are lost. We do this by simply sharing the good news of Jesus' grace as we are representative of our Abba Father.

This identity is an unshakable foundation on which we now base our lives. Next we will look at an even more amazing truth that Christ lives in us and we have a permanent union with Him.



4. GOUP EXCERISE AND QUESTIONS

Answer the following questions at home and ten discuss them in your study group.

- i. Read Co.13:1-13 and list the character of love, in light of the truth that "God is Love".
- ii. What is our first love?
- iii. How did God express his love to the world?
- iv. What does Abba mean?
- v. Who is the perfect example of Abba?
- vi. How and when do we become God's children.
- vii. What is the relationship between creation and the ;sons of God"?
- viii. What part does grace have is our sonship?
- ix. List five characteristic of the heart of a son.
- x. How do we enter the kingdom of God?
- xi. Who or what is the family of God?
