

Simply Christ
Gospel Newsletter
Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ

October 19, 2021

Neither Jew nor Gentile

This past Sunday, I was thinking on Paul's words, *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God..."* II Corinthians 5:17-18. I have often quoted this verse while showing that those who are in Christ do not continue to sin because *"old things are passed away."* As I pondered these things, I began to question what Paul was speaking of when in the previous verse he said *"Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh..."* II Corinthians 5:16. Why was this statement important enough for Paul to include it in this passage? I found the answer in the next previous verse where Paul said, *"And he died for all..."* II Corinthians 5:15. Suddenly it hit me as to why the Apostle was adamant that everyone in Christ is a *"new creature."*

The Apostle Paul was very clear that a great mystery of the gospel, which for *"ages was not made known unto the sons of men,"* was that *"the Gentiles should be fellowheirs (with the Jewish believers), and of the same body (with the Jewish believers), and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel."* Ephesians 3:6. This revelation was the basis of his controversial message that

“Christ died for all!” The early church did not accept this until Jesus chided Peter and commanded him to go share the gospel with Cornelius, who was a Gentile. Acts 10.

What made this revelation even more controversial was Paul’s assertion that not only did Christ die for both Jew and Gentile, but there was in fact *“no difference”* between Jews and Gentiles. He spoke clearly, saying, *“...there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.”* Romans 10:12. He reaffirms this when speaking of *“...the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference* (between Jew and Gentile): For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” Romans 3:22-23.

Someone could rightfully point out that Paul’s statements that *“there is no difference”* is based upon *“all have sinned.”* This is very true, but it is from this point forward that this message of *“no difference”* gets even stronger. When Paul speaks of those who are *“in Christ,”* he says, *“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.”* Galatians 3:28. It is shocking to realize that he did not say there are both Jews and Greeks in Christ. He said **“There is neither Jew nor Greek in Christ!”** How can it be that not only are there no Gentiles in Christ, but there are also no Jews in Christ?

The key to understanding this is found back in Paul’s statement, *“Therefore if any man be in*

Christ, he is a new creature.” The Greek word translated “*creature*” means “*original formation*.” Those who are in Christ are not just “*changed*”. They are a “*new*” and “*original*” creation. Some who are in Christ may have been born Jewish, but no one is Jewish in Christ. Others in Christ may have been born a Gentile, but no one is a Gentile in Christ. Remember, “*there is neither Jew nor Greek*.” Everyone who is in Christ is a “*new creation*.” There are no blacks, or whites, or Asians, or Europeans in Christ. There is no one who is of a great spiritual lineage, and there is no one who of a base heritage. This is why Paul says, “*...henceforth know we no man after the flesh...*” Those who are in Christ are not known by their fleshly lineage. We know them by the spirit which they have received from God.

Paul continues speaking of those in Christ, saying, “*old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God...*” II Corinthians 5:17-18. The KJV translators did a disservice by adding the word “*things*” in this passage even though it was not in the original text. What Paul actually wrote was: “*the old is passed away; behold, all are become new. And all are of God!*” Let’s examine these statements.

“*the old is passed away*” Paul said, “*...our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*” Romans 6:6. When your “*old man* (or woman)” was crucified with Christ, sin, which filled the “*old man*,” was destroyed and you were made free.

“all are become new” Paul said, *“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.”* Galatians 6:15. The question is not whether you are a Jew or a Gentile. What matters is *“Has Christ made you to be a new creature?”*

“all are of God” Everyone in Christ is a new creature, and every new creature in Christ became a new creature by being *“born of God.”* John 3:3. All are of God. They are the children of God!

Those who are born of God are not defined by earthly ancestry. Paul reminds us that Christ took the two, Jews and Gentiles, and made *“one new man.”* He said, Christ *“...abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace.”*

Ephesians 2:15. There is only *“one body”* Ephesians 4:4, there is only one *“Church”* Hebrews 12:23, and there are only one *“people of God.”* 1 Peter 2:10. These are not identified by denomination, nationality, ethnicity, or creed. They are made up of all those who over the past 2000 years have been born again of God’s Spirit.

I believe that before the second coming of Christ, there will be a great turning of Jewish people towards Jesus Christ. Yet, there will never be Jewish Church, just as there has never been a Gentile Church. There is only *“The Church”* of the Living God, and it is only populated with *“new creations.”* Anything else is just religious flesh, and it will *“profit nothing.”* John 6:63.