

## A New Creation

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*So whoever is in Christ is a new creation:  
the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come.*

2Corinthians 5:17

Creation differs from evolution as the latter can be looked upon as the unfolding of potentialities that already exists in things created whereas the former is bringing into existence what does not yet exist. Becoming a new creation brings both of these aspects into play as our minds operate as subordinate centers of creative energy, subordinate to the manifestations of our Trinitarian God. This is assuming that just as the Trinity is harmonious within itself, we too, must be harmonious with IT in order to release the boundless potential of newness. Disharmony is prevalent in our cultural institutions, secular and religious, and in our human relationships. *It is the God of endurance and encouragement who grants us to think in harmony with one another, in keeping with Christ Jesus, that with one accord we may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*<sup>1</sup>

None of my actions can be at variance with the Spirit. This is not a limitation imposed on me since I can be guided by my own natural lines of individuality, but more importantly it is a safeguard for me. My creative energy must be based upon my recognition *that I am chosen for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in truth.*<sup>2</sup> The Spirit always acts purely and if I act wrongly I move in opposition to this and it is critical to recognize such movements. If we diligently search ourselves we will discover parts of us that have been damaged by our old ways. Usually we know with more certainty what is wrong with us while the Spirit aids us in understanding what is right. My thoughts and actions must flow with the life, love, beauty, and creativeness of the Spirit.

The body is the Temple of the Holy Spirit and in our *cooperation we are being built together into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.*<sup>3</sup> This enables me to create a favorable spiritual environment within myself so that *the Spirit of God dwells in me.*<sup>4</sup> Then the grace and power within will work in a variety of creative and beautiful ways and unsuspecting potentialities which lay hidden will manifest themselves. I do not add to the power of these forces but they become specialized according to my individuality. What is needed is for the Spirit to see itself in me as my individual consciousness works in harmony with it so that my life becomes one with the Spirit. My individuality needs to recognize that it springs

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<sup>1</sup> Romans 15:5

<sup>2</sup> 2 Thessalonians 2:13

<sup>3</sup> Ephesians 2:22

<sup>4</sup> 1 Corinthians 3:16

from such a Divine Source and that it can open itself up to a channel by which that source can flow continually. This guides me to becoming a new creation in Christ, a unique direct creation, and not just another member of a generic race. It is my belief in Christ that allows *rivers of living water to flow from within me*<sup>5</sup> leading to the principle of enduring spiritual life.

### **Obstacles to Newness**

If we allow the opinions of others to box us in according to their thinking it will prevent us from becoming the "new creations" embodied in the call from the Father through Jesus, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. "The Father is Source and Godhead; the Son is Logos and Divine Pattern and the Holy Spirit is the goal and unifying principle of the divine nature."<sup>6</sup> The mystery of the Trinity calls us to newness, and a revitalizing relationship with God, our Father, our neighbors, and ourselves. Obstacles to my change include rejection by others, precedence which often points to seeming impossibility, and getting stuck on personal unworthiness.

Jesus experienced rejection when he returned to his hometown: *When the Sabbath came he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished. They said, "Where did this man get all this? What kind of wisdom has been given him? What mighty deeds are wrought by his hands! Is he not the carpenter, the son of Mary, and the brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him.*<sup>7</sup> Jesus knew the disciples would experience something similar when he told them: *Whoever will not receive you or listen to your words--go outside that house or town and shake the dust from your feet.*<sup>8</sup> This action indicated a disassociation with the unbelievers and in the same way our prayerful rejection of negative opinions will return them to the source.

Precedence can be an obstacle to change as traditions are deeply entrenched in subjective minds. We need discernment to forget the past and live in the present, because our forgiven past fades with newness. There is a unique mold for my personal "new creation" with God who has unlimited power and sends guidance from the vast store of heaven's creative ways. Each of us is "one of a kind" and different; each of us is an ongoing mystery. The Father does not wish my "image" created in him to remain deformed spiritually, morally, or physically. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every*

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<sup>5</sup> John 7:38

<sup>6</sup> Bede Griffiths, *An Introduction to His Interspiritual Thought*, Wayne Teqsdale, SkyKLightPaths Publishing, 2003.

<sup>7</sup> Mark 6:2-3

<sup>8</sup> Matt 10:14

*spiritual blessing in the heavens, as he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and without blemish before him.*<sup>9</sup>

Another hindrance to "newness" is a feeling of personal unworthiness, something I can let go of when I realize my life is God's expression of creative love and a change for the better will glorify him and bring me to a better place. A firm confidence that God's blessings are within my reach is a good first contemplation. The prayerful thought, "*Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter my house,<sup>10</sup> but only say the word and I shall be healed,*" brings me to Jesus. In turn, I will praise the Lord by simply becoming what I was fully intended to be, and this is accomplished by reconciliation with the Father and healing through Jesus Christ.

*God created man in his image; in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them.*<sup>11</sup> Up to this point in my life I have distorted this image but the Father calls me through Jesus, his Divine Pattern, to be reshaped according to the unique image intended for me, and Jesus offers a unique spiritual mold that I can conform to, one that is specially suited only to me. It is the Father who calls me to Jesus: *No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draw him...*<sup>12</sup> In turn, Jesus says: *I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*<sup>13</sup> Jesus is the first stop on the way to the Father, an action I approach with awe, reverence, and the greatest care. It is *Jesus who is able to keep me from stumbling and to present me unblemished and exultant*<sup>14</sup> to the Father. We can look at ourselves as "prodigal sons and daughters"<sup>15</sup> who need the healing of repentance as the younger son and the healing of reconciliation as the older, knowing we will be welcomed with open arms by the Father. The Father's love is not like the tide, sometimes in, other times out, but rather like the current in a river always impacting us. *As proof that you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"*<sup>16</sup> The Father seeks to restore me in his image who is Jesus Christ, his Son and my Lord.

Jesus describes the Kingdom of Heaven as a great banquet prepared by a king who becomes frustrated and impatient with the many persons who refuse his generous invitation. His soldiers round up strangers to attend and yet there is one

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<sup>9</sup> Ephesians 1:3-4

<sup>10</sup> Luke 7:6

<sup>11</sup> Genesis 1:27

<sup>12</sup> John 6:44

<sup>13</sup> John 14:6

<sup>14</sup> Jude 24

<sup>15</sup> Luke 15:11-32

<sup>16</sup> Galatians 4:6

who is rejected: *He said to him, 'My friend, how is it that you came in here without a wedding garment?' But he was reduced to silence. Then the king said to his attendants, 'Bind his hands and feet, and cast him into the darkness outside, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.'* *Many are invited, but few are chosen.*"<sup>17</sup> While it sounds harsh it is understood that at the entrance to the banquet there were proper garments for the guests and in walks a man that failed to show the proper respect to the king. With this thought in mind I need to put on my best self and come with a repentant heart to the Lord. Consider: *Therefore, brothers, since through the blood of Jesus we have confidence of entrance into the sanctuary by the new and living way he opened for us through the veil, that is, his flesh, and since we have "a great priest over the house of God," let us approach with a sincere heart and in absolute trust, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed in pure water.*<sup>18</sup> It's not that I need to be perfect in approaching Jesus since I would never be able to do so; however I try to do my best and simply be honest about my faults and shortcomings. If I refuse the invitation I exclude myself through a closed heart and mind. The Father's invitation is for me to identify with Jesus Christ. In the healing of the centurion's servant Jesus remarked to his followers about the great faith this man had shown: *Many will come from the East and the West and will find a place at the banquet in the kingdom of God with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, while the natural heirs will be driven out into the darkness.*<sup>19</sup>

### The Divine Pattern

It is Jesus, the Divine Pattern Maker, who will help us become properly dressed for the Father's banquet. *We put away the old self of our former way of life, corrupted through deceitful desires, and are renewed in the spirit of our minds, and put on the new self, created in God's way in righteousness and holiness of truth.*<sup>20</sup> Paul's message to the Colossians has a similar ring: *It is he whom we proclaim, admonishing everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. For this I labor and struggle, in accord with the exercise of his power working within me.*<sup>21</sup> Isaiah also points to the Father: *A highway will be there, called the holy way; No one unclean may pass over it, nor fools go astray on it. ....It is for those with a journey to make, and on it the redeemed will walk.*<sup>22</sup> Jesus Christ, Son of God, Son of Man, is the great exception to man as we know him but then again he is the exception which proves the rule.

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<sup>17</sup> Matthew 22:14-15

<sup>18</sup> Hebrews 10:19-22

<sup>19</sup> Matthew 8:5-13

<sup>20</sup> Ephesians 4:22-24

<sup>21</sup> Colossians 1:28-29

<sup>22</sup> Isaiah 35:8-9

In the process of becoming "new" we reconcile ourselves with the Father and receive his healing through the Son as the Great and Advising Spirit guides us. To be reconciled means we establish a new friendship as we settle and resolve our differences; this brings acquiescence, i.e., we humbly accept our faults and misconceptions as they are revealed to us. *Have patience with all things, but chiefly have patience with yourself. Do not lose courage in considering your own imperfections but instantly set about remedying them - every day begin the task anew.*<sup>23</sup>

*Come now, let us set things right, says the LORD.*<sup>24</sup> Divine Currents, previously unknown to us bring perspectives that may even be contrary to those held previously. Emotions and points of view that may have endangered and controlled our lives will be relegated to lowered influences and are held under control. *We take off the old self with its practices and put on the new self, which is being renewed, for knowledge, in the image of its creator.*<sup>25</sup> Jesus says *no one pours new wine into old wineskins since the will burst and both be ruined.*<sup>26</sup> Our "old self" must be replaced by the "new self" fashioned after Christ so that his graces and power will not harm us in any way. The change, concealed from the eyes of others, enables us to continually grow stronger after the image and likeness of the Lord. The theologian notes:<sup>27</sup>

*.....a Christian will not be tested as to whether he renounced the world, whether he fasted, whether he performed vigils, whether he prayed, whether he wept, or performed and other such good deeds in the present life; but he will be carefully tested as to whether he has some kind of likeness to Christ....*

Our efforts in renewal need to be true, sincere, constant, even though they be small and this is not necessarily an easy matter since they also need to be well placed and that means being receptive to the whispers of the guiding Spirit. *While from behind, a voice shall sound in your ears: "This is the way; walk in it," when you would turn to the right or to the left.*<sup>28</sup>

In a dynamical system energy is inputted in order to get a desired output. It is a misconception to think that only large inputs of energy will create dramatic results because when resonance occurs from small well-placed inputs the resulting effect can be quite spectacular over time; i.e., the forcing frequency is in harmony with the natural frequency of the system. A child on a swing exemplifies this as

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<sup>23</sup> Saint Francis de Sales

<sup>24</sup> Isaiah 1:18

<sup>25</sup> Colossians 3:10

<sup>26</sup> Mark 2:18-22

<sup>27</sup> St. Symeon, The New Theologian, 10<sup>th</sup> Century

<sup>28</sup> Isaiah 30:21

she naturally kicks her feet at the right time to steadily increase the amplitude of the swing. If the timing is incorrect the amplitude quickly diminishes. So our actions, small as they may be, need to resonate with the formative power that resides with the Holy Spirit and in harmony with the Will of the Father. We are reminded of Jesus' words: *Since you were faithful in small matters, I will give you great responsibilities.*<sup>29</sup> Each of us is one in the community and when each is doing the right thing at the right time, however insignificant that may appear, the good of the community is served to a greater extent than we can imagine. We are members of the body of Christ and each of us has our responsibilities.<sup>30</sup> *May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to think in harmony with one another, in keeping with Christ Jesus, that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*<sup>31</sup>

If, on the other hand, our actions are out of harmony with God's will, the resonance dissipates and this renders them as less life-giving and our power stream fades into negative possibilities. Furthermore, the spiritual stream flowing through and from us must be free from every trace of wrongdoing otherwise it is rendered contaminated and will affect the community. Such failures occur when we use our spiritual gifts for personal gain.

Becoming a "new creation" is not some superficial makeover but one where we adopt changes that are real and lasting so that the Father and the Holy Spirit bring us into the likeness of the Son. What Jesus is we strive to become and when we are ready he brings us to the Father.

Saint Louis de Montfort puts it this way:

*It is certain that growth in holiness of God is your vocation. All your thoughts, words, actions, everything you suffer or undertake must lead you toward that end. Otherwise you are resisting God in not doing the work for which he created you and for which he is even now keeping you in being. What a marvelous transformation is possible! Dust into light, uncleanness into purity, sinfulness into holiness, creature into Creator, man into God! A marvelous work, I repeat, so difficult in itself, and even impossible for a mere creature to bring about, for only God can accomplish it by giving his grace abundantly and in an extraordinary manner.*

*Chosen soul, how will you bring this about? What steps will you take to reach the high level to which God is calling you? The means of holiness and salvation are known to everybody, since they are found in the Gospel. .... These means are: sincere humility, unceasing prayer, complete self-denial, abandonment to divine Providence, and obedience to the will of God.*

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<sup>29</sup> Matt 25:21

<sup>30</sup> 1 Corinthians 12

<sup>31</sup> Romans 15:5-6

Can I place my care completely in God's Providence? The dictionary defines Providence as the care, guardianship, and control exercised by God over our affairs. Can I accept that all the unfolding events in my life are in accordance with God's will? Either he intentionally sends events into my world or knowingly allows actions of others to take hold. This means that nothing will happen to me without the explicit or implicit permission of God. Furthermore the unlimited power of God is such that all that he permits will, with his guidance, eventually turn to my advantage. The psalmist says, *To do your will is my delight; my God, your law is in my heart!* <sup>32</sup>

*The one who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." <sup>33</sup>*



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<sup>32</sup> Psalm 40:9

<sup>33</sup> Revelation 21:5