



*“So, if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!”
2 Corinthians 5.17 NRSV*

Dear Friends,

When something is new it is special. When we lived in New Jersey, we leased a brand-new semi-detached home in a 55 plus community. It was fun watching it be built, and to pick out carpet, appliance color, and some other things for it. It was neat to be the first ones to live there.

When we have gotten new cars in the past, I’ve enjoyed the new car smell. One car I bought many years ago managed to keep that new car smell for quite a while, so much so that others who rode in it mentioned it to me.

But when we speak of new things can we speak of people, who have been around a while, being made new? Paul seems to think so. The scripture above is from Paul’s second letter to the Corinthian church, which thrived on spiritual novelty, rather than focusing on the real change that Christ, by the work of the spirit could make in their lives.

Paul spoke from personal experience. The old “Saul” or later Paul had been a zealous believer in his old faith to the point of persecuting Christians, and, in the case of Stephen, the first martyr of the church, approving of his death. The encounter with Christ on the Damascus Road literally changed Paul into a new and different person.

For me the greatest change to Paul by Christ, was his “new” orientation from persecution and destruction to promoting forgiveness, grace, and most importantly love in the Christian communities he founded.

Paul though is just one example of the “new” change Christ can make in one’s life by the power of the Holy Spirit. Christian history is full of men or women who did a “180 degree” turn in their lives when they had an encounter with Christ, becoming that “new” creation. These folks eventually became a positive witness for the church and were a blessing to those around them.

We are in a new year. With the new year we sometimes talk about “New Year’s resolutions” to improve on something in our lives. Yet let’s face it, the resolutions many times get broken too soon after we make them.

Perhaps the better route in 2019 instead of resolutions is to remember as children of God in Christ, God can make “all things new” in our lives”.... just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.” Romans 6:4b

Your Brother in Christ,
John

Sunday Worship Services
9:00am - Heritage (Traditional)
11:00am - Celebration 2 (Contemporary)
Sunday School 10:00am



January 2019