



Encounter with Christ



A New Beginning (Part 2)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again. I'm continuing today with our theme for this week: A New Beginning.

In my introductory talk yesterday I pointed out that at some time or other nearly all of us have wished that we could start all over again. This wish may be prompted by different situations or circumstances in the lives of various people. In one case it may be a marriage that has failed or is in danger of failing. In another case perhaps, the realization that we haven't brought our children up the way we ought to have done. Or it might be in the choice of a career. Sometimes it's expressed by making a New Year's resolution that doesn't last more than a few days. Or we may use the phrase "turning over a new leaf." Whatever it may be, but in all of that there is implicit the longing and the need for a new beginning in life.

Actually, whether we recognize it or not, the Bible clearly tells us two things. First of all, we all need a new beginning. Second, God offers a new beginning to all of us. So we find

ourselves confronted by two alternatives. The first is accepting God's offer and becoming overcomers, and therefore heirs of all. That's the good that's offered. The only other alternative to that is terribly evil. It is continuing in slavery to sin and facing consequent, final and eternal rejection by God.

Let me state those two alternatives again. It's so important that we're not in the least bit unclear about them. The first alternative, the good one, the right one, the one I'm recommending to you is accepting God's offer of a new beginning, and so becoming overcomers and therefore heirs of all. The second, the bad alternative, the one I want to warn you against is not accepting God's offer ignoring it or rejecting it and thus continuing in slavery to sin, and facing consequent, final and eternal rejection by God.

Today I'm going to share with you the key to the new beginning. I'm going to share with you how encountering the resurrected Christ produces a new creation. I think I need to say that again encountering the resurrected Christ produces a new creation. This is very clearly and beautifully stated by the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians chapter 5 verses 14 through 17 where Paul writes this:

"For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he [Christ] died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (NIV)

The translation I'm reading from there's an exclamation mark at the end of that last statement. "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" That's what we're speaking about the new creation which offers the possibility of a totally new beginning because the old has gone and the new has come.

Now I need to explain one phrase there used in that translation. Paul says, "So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view." More literally he says, "We regard no one according to what he is in the flesh." That also may not be fully clear to all of you. But Paul is speaking about two different worlds the world that we're all familiar with through our senses, what we would call this world, the world that we know in the flesh, in our body, through our physical senses. But Paul is drawing aside the veil that reveals another world, a world in the spirit, a world which only God's Spirit can usher us into. And in this world everyone who enters into it becomes by that fact a new creation. So what he's picturing is stepping out of one order of life into a new order of life. The one is the familiar world of the senses that we all know. The second is a new world that's brought about by a creative act of God.

And there's a line of separation between this world of the senses, which is the world in which we've all known defeat, failure, frustration, the world that in a sense holds us down, and holds us back, the world that offers us good intentions, but never the ability fully to carry them out. And the other world which is a new world, a world that is brought about by a creative act of God and remember there is only one person and one power that can create and that is God Himself. Now the line of separation between these two worlds and I want you to listen carefully now is the death and resurrection of Christ.

And so, in order to enter into this second new world of the spirit, we have by faith to pass with Christ through death and resurrection in the spirit, into this new world. And the key to this, the moment at which the transformation takes place, the transformation and the transition, is the moment of personal encounter with Jesus Christ. And when we encounter Christ

this way, it's not the historical Christ. It's not the Christ who walked the streets of Jerusalem, or the trails beside the sea of Galilee. It's not the Christ who was clothed in a certain dress appropriate to that culture and that age who spoke a certain language which probably was Aramaic. For if we were to meet that Christ, unless we understood Aramaic or possibly Greek, we couldn't understand what he was saying. But the Christ that we now meet, through the Holy Spirit is the eternal Christ, the eternal Son of God, uncreated, begotten, Himself one with God the Father, divine in His nature, without beginning of days or end of life, the divine, eternal, unchanging Son of God. And the encounter with the eternal Christ comes only through the eternal Spirit. The eternal Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, reveals to the searching, longing, believing heart the eternal Son of God, the eternal Christ. And in that revelation, there comes the new creation.

I've sought to describe to you this life changing encounter with Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit not the historical Christ, but the eternal, uncreated, Son who was always with the Father, in the bosom of the Father, the Christ who has neither beginning of days nor end of life. And I've said to you that it's this encounter which is the transition from the old order of the senses world to the new order, the new creation in which God gives to each of us who enter in a new start, a totally new beginning.

Now as I close my talk today, I just want to emphasize one more important point which is negative, but tremendously important. There is no substitute for this new creation. Nothing else can take its place nothing that can be done purely on a natural or human level. Let me say no religious ordinance or ritual or act is a substitute for the new creation neither being baptized nor being confirmed, nor joining the church, nor making vows, no matter what it may be nothing can be a substitute for this new creation. There are millions and millions of people in the world today who have done one or more of these things been baptized or confirmed or joined the church or whatever it may be. But they've never experienced the new creation. And without the new creation, all other things are inadequate and insufficient. I'm not saying there is no value in these other things. That's not what I'm saying. But I'm saying there's value in them only IF they produce the new creation. I believe it's very important for a Christian to be baptized. But being baptized is no substitute for the new creation. I've met many, many people who have been baptized by various different rites of baptism, but have never entered into the new creation. "Now is any man in Christ, He is a new creation." So you can be baptized without being in Christ. You can join the church without being in Christ, but if you are in Christ then you become a new creation. This is a supernatural transaction between you and Jesus Christ person to person, made possible only by the

Holy Spirit. And nothing else can ever be a substitute, so I want to ask you as I close today, "Have you ever experienced that new creation?" Do you know in you experience what it is to be made all over again? To have a totally new start through the personal revelation of Jesus Christ?

Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this same time. The title of my talk tomorrow will be: confronted with the truth about ourselves.

Radio Program

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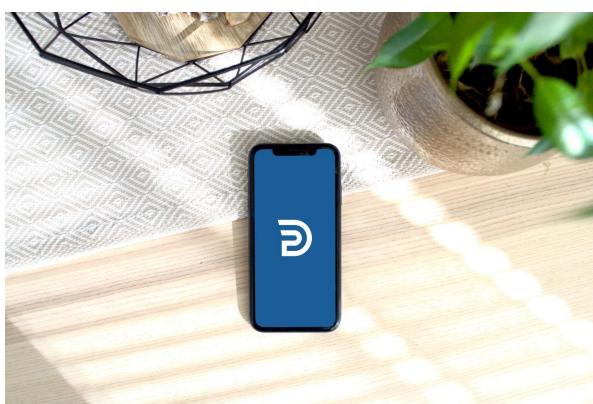
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