**New Creations (2 Corinthians 5:14b-21)**

 We are new creatures because of our life in Christ.

 Greetings to you on this First Sunday of the Resurrection season, as we enjoy a season of celebration according to the church calendar. Today we are beginning a new sermon series, beginning with the reason for the new life we have because of the Resurrection of Christ. Truly, when we read the passage, we can clearly see that Paul the Apostle is outlining a new life for us. That new life came about because of God’s work. We obtained that new life (and keep it) by understanding His salvation, in which He reconciled us with His Father and gave us a new ministry of reconciling people around us to God. Having said the above, today we’re going to speak about the meaning of being a new creation and how that can be put into practice in our lives. We are new creatures because of our life in Christ. Let us move on to this important truth about the Resurrection life.

 By our life in Christ, we are new people – we do not belong to ourselves anymore. It is true that in these difficult days, people are suffering from uncertainty, pain, various fears and pressures. It is true that this topic might seem a bit tone-deaf given the current situation of a pandemic affecting all our lives. However, establishing this act of God and comprehending it can put our inner life at ease and help us to grow in God’s knowledge and Jesus’ love.

 Jesus died for us, and we did also to our old life, that we would have hope (in Him) in this world. Christ died for all humanity, but only those that received Him would experience the life and blessings that come out of such a death. People today view Christ (and what He has done) through worldly, political, cultural and other lenses affected by their bondage to the immediate pressing issues. Even Paul the Apostle admits that he used to do so before he encountered Christ on the road to Damascus. But now, says the Apostle, the person that is in Christ is a new person. He that is united to Christ is a brand-new soul. The old person is gone, and the new has arrived. Whatever the person was before coming to Christ is no longer valid – because the person is completely renewed now. This is not a human achievement, but a gift from God. What’s more, these “new” people receive the blessing of being counted as reconciled with the Father through Jesus. He sacrificed Himself so that those who followed Him (in His teachings and Spirit) would be new people, and that in the end, they would be found righteous before God’s Final Judgment. All this is the kernel, the core of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

 There was once a couple, who knowing that a tornado was upon them and not having time to take cover, laid their baby on the floor of their living room and covered him with their bodies. The tornado struck with devastating force and leveled a row of homes, including theirs. The next morning, as rescue workers were rummaging through the destroyed homes, they heard a muffled crying. They came upon the lifeless bodies of the young couple, with their baby still safe beneath their bodies. They gave their lives for their child. This is what Christ has done for us.

 Therefore, if Christ has given us a new life and has conquered death, let us have the appropriate response to that reality. Let us have a new life full of worship – both corporate and individual. Let us have a new life full of hope and absent of fear and unbelief. Let us have a new life characterized by victory – remembering that the Lord has sent us His Spirit and that He has conquered the world with His Resurrection. May our new life be an expression of thanksgiving, because we were bought with the Blood of Christ, and we belong to Him now. Just as that couple sacrificed themselves and the child lived, your and my Savior died, knowing that it was going to hurt Him, but He knew that there was a resurrection coming after that. You and I are enjoying the benefits of that great blessing. By accepting Christ, we have a new life which is (hopefully) focused on glorifying Him in all aspects.

 May God remind each of us in this pressurized time period of the true life that we have in Christ, in which no fear can last long, no defeat can linger, no joblessness, family squabble, sickness or even death can get the best of us. Our new life is that eternal life which has already begun in us and will continue to get clearer every day.

Therefore, let us rejoice in our new life, remembering that whatever our trials and tribulations may be, in Jesus we will always go through them and have peace. Let us not forget this truth. By our life in Christ, we are new people – we do not belong to ourselves anymore.

So let us praise Jesus who obeyed the Father’s plan. Let us praise God the Father, who knowing the pain His Son would endure, saw and planned both His and our new Resurrected life. May that new life grow within us, may it rule over us, and may it be expressed to all those around us.

May the Lord bless you all. Amen.