
Sermon Notes

January 1, 2017

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

New Leaf or New Life? 2 Corinthians 5:17

New!

- ❖ Most of us like “new”
 - new is not necessarily easy
 - sometimes we gravitate toward our default modes, coasting toward what's “old and familiar”
- ❖ Change can be hard, at times it's painful
- ❖ God is doing something new in and among us!
 - God is in the process of making all things new
 - not just church buildings, but church bodies
- ❖ The difference between a "new leaf" and a "new life"

In Christ

- ❖ What was Paul like before he became a new creation?
 - 2 Corinthians 5:16, Paul looked at Jesus in human terms
 - as a result, Paul persecuted the church and killed Christians

- ❖ This all changed when Paul met Jesus face to face
 - overwhelmed and overtaken by the light and life of Jesus
 - Paul no longer looks at Jesus from a human point of view
- ❖ How do we know if we are *in Christ* or not?
 - Jesus offers a diagnostic tool in John 5:24
 - believe the gospel message that God has sent Jesus to save you from your sins
 - belief that is fleshed out and evidenced by a change of direction/orientation in your life (like Paul)
- ❖ If anyone is in Christ
 - God's grace and mercy are wide enough to encompass anyone
 - but, this grace and mercy must be received

A New Creation

- ❖ KA-BOOM
 - *the old has passed away* (instantly/permanently)
 - *the new has come* (instantly/permanently)
 - old values, old ideas, old plans, old loves, old desires, old beliefs are replaced by new things

- ❖ A past completed action which has ongoing, continuous results in the present
 - we will still stumble, fall, at times fail miserably, but that does not diminish the fact that we are a new creation in Christ
 - our sin is forgiven, we are justified before God, we have the righteousness of Christ (now AND in the future)
 - we are empowered to live in the midst of the old creation with a new creation perspective
- ❖ God has no perfect instruments

The New Has Come

- ❖ New in quality
- ❖ A newness that will not grow old or wear out
- ❖ Resolve not to look at yourself and not to look at others from the outside in
 - look at yourself and look at others from inside out
 - look at yourself and look at others through the lens of the gospel
- ❖ Drip Jesus on others, bring the aroma of Christ with you wherever you go

Personal Application

1. What is your attitude toward "new"? Do you embrace or resist change? Why is this the case? What attitudes need to change in you with respect to this?
2. Read John 5:24. Using Jesus' words as a measuring stick are you "in Christ" or not? If not, what is holding you back from receiving the gospel message and inviting Christ to rule your life? Speak with a friend or leader you trust and ask them to pray with you that God will remove that obstacle from you.
3. If you are "in Christ", spend time thinking about and thanking God for "the old" that has passed away and for "the new" that has come.
4. What does it mean to regard someone according to the flesh? What are some ways in which you do that? How will you seek to change with respect to that?
5. How is God enabling and using you to share your new life in Christ with others? If nothing comes to mind about this, ask Him to bring someone into your life or for Him to put you into a new setting where He will use you for this purpose.