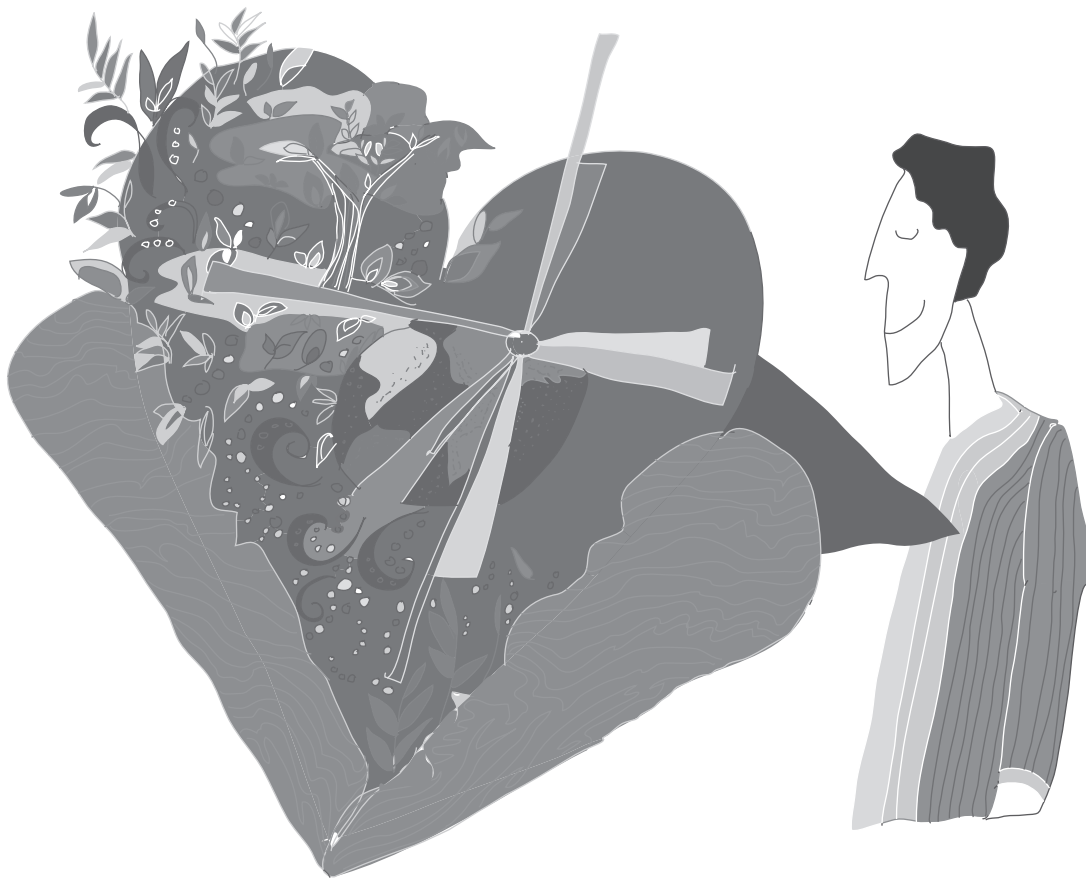


LESSON 56

A New Creation

2 CORINTHIANS 5:11 – 6:2



BIBLE TRUTH

EVERY CHRISTIAN IS A NEW CREATION

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read 2 Corinthians 5:11—6:2 from the Scriptures or read story 134, “A New Creation,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

3. OBJECT LESSON 1 15 MIN

Re-creation

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ three small tubs of play dough
- ✓ a new hairbrush (optional)

4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION

Select one of the object lessons to use to cover the teaching points.

5. OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN

Controlled by Our Love for Chocolate

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ one large, eight-ounce chocolate bar

6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

7. ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Seeds of New Life

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ paper
- ✓ crayons, markers, or colored pencils

8. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON 15 MIN

Where Is the Gospel?

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ photocopies of 2 Corinthians 5:11—6:2—one for each student
- ✓ pencils or pens
- ✓ an adult to share their testimony—choose someone who did not know the gospel as a child

TOTAL 75 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

Christ’s love moves us to be like him—False teachers moved into the Corinthian church in Paul’s absence and undermined his ministry and the gospel. Paul’s second letter to the Corinthians is designed to refute false teaching and affirm gospel truth. Paul wanted the Corinthians to remember that our obedience flows from our relationship with Jesus. Jesus died on the cross for our sins. Once God opens our eyes to see his amazing love in the death of his Son, we are transformed. We obey and follow God out of our love for Jesus. Paul said that Christ’s love controls us (2 Corinthians 5:14) and it moves us to want to be like Jesus and tell everyone about him.

The cross is the greatest declaration of love there could ever be. When our hearts open to the wonder of the cross, we are given the power to live for Christ. Jesus died on the cross so that we could die to sin and live for him. Our whole lives are changed by the gospel. When we live by the love of God in Jesus, we are compelled to live for Christ.

We are a new creation in Christ—We can’t work up obedience in our own strength. Merely knowing the facts of the gospel is not enough. We need the Holy Spirit to transform our hearts. Jesus said, “unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3). In 2 Corinthians 5:17, Paul describes God’s work as making us into a “new creation.” When the Holy Spirit comes and transforms us, it is as though we are being created all over again. Our old self, which was a slave to sin, has been changed. Now that the old has gone and the new has come, we are free to live for Christ. The word used for “come” does not mean “to arrive” or “to get somewhere.” Rather, it signifies change and could be translated “generated.” In other words, if anyone is in Christ, he is a brand-new creation. What was old has passed away, and something new has been generated. When a person becomes a Christian, he has been regenerated or recreated.

Christ commissions us to speak for him—When God regenerates us or recreates us, we become his ambassadors (2 Corinthians 5:20). An ambassador’s job is to speak on behalf of the ruler of one country to people in another country. When God saves us, we become citizens of his heavenly kingdom. We are called as ambassadors to take the gospel message to those in the world who do not believe. In fact, we are to “implore” others to be reconciled to God. We are to tell others the gospel—that God made Jesus, who had no sin, to be sin for us so

that in Christ we could be righteous! We are to convince others. We are to appeal, to urge, to passionately implore them to turn to God. We are to explain to them that there is no time to wait; today is the day of salvation.

A LITTLE BIT MORE

Ambassador

An ambassador is a spokesperson for another, often an official or ruler, and is usually appointed to the office by the ruler. Countries often have an ambassador for each of the other countries they relate to. The ambassador's job is to speak for the king or president or ruler. The ambassador does not make up his own message; he communicates the ruler's message. We have been appointed ambassadors for Christ. We have been commissioned to take God's message, the gospel, to the people God places in our lives. The message we take is one of reconciliation, that is, God has made a way for man to have peace with God, through the sacrifice of Jesus.

Where Is the Gospel? _____

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

This passage, and indeed all of 2 Corinthians 5, is filled with the gospel. Through Christ's work on the cross we have been reconciled to God. That, in short, is the gospel!

"For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21). Read the verse again, replacing the pronouns: "For [your name]'s sake God the Father made Jesus to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Jesus [your name] might become the righteousness of God." The gospel is God's call to each one of us to turn from our sin and trust in Jesus.

This is the message of reconciliation that has been entrusted to us. We call this message the gospel. The message applied in our lives so transforms us that we become new creations (2 Corinthians 5:17).

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read 2 Corinthians 5:11—6:2 from the Scriptures or read story 134, “A New Creation,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 15 MIN

Re-creation

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ three small tubs of play dough
- ✓ a new hairbrush (optional)

The object of this lesson is to help the children understand the concept of making a new creation—of re-creating something.

Ask for three volunteers. (Make sure these volunteers are not sensitive types.) Give each of them a portion of the dough and ask them to fashion an image of themselves. Give them a few minutes and take time to tease them a bit about their creations.

While you are waiting for them to finish, ask the children who created us and what it means to create something. When they have finished, tell the class that God created Adam and Eve perfectly, but when they sinned everything else was affected by their sin. The whole creation was marred.

Take each of the figures and pound it with the bristles of the brush (if you have one) or poke it a few times with your fingers until it is still recognizable but significantly disfigured and misshapen. Then explain that sin affected us but did not take away the image of God completely.

Now, ask the volunteers to re-create their images. While they work, talk to the class about how God re-creates us when we become Christians. Read today’s assigned passage and discuss what God did to re-create us. Explain the gospel and that God causes us to come alive in Christ and places his Spirit to live in us.

TEACHING/DISCUSSION

Select one of the object lessons to use to cover the teaching points.

OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN

Controlled by Our Love for Chocolate

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ one large, eight-ounce chocolate bar

This object lesson will help the class understand what it means to be controlled by something, in this case chocolate. Make the connection to being controlled by the love of Christ to live for him.

Recruit volunteers to memorize 2 Corinthians 5:14–15. Before memorizing the passage, interview some non-volunteers, asking them why they didn't want to take on the challenge.

Now pull out the chocolate bar and tell the class that anyone who can memorize 2 Corinthians 5:17–18 gets a piece of chocolate. See if any of those who didn't volunteer at first feel suddenly compelled to memorize. Interview your previous volunteers and ask them if they are freshly motivated.

Give anyone who wants to a few minutes to memorize the passage. Then go over the whole passage as a class, helping them all to memorize it. Distribute the chocolate.

Talk about what it felt like to be controlled by a desire for chocolate. Then explain to the class that we as Christians are controlled by the love of Christ because of his sacrifice on the cross. The cross should be for us a greater motivator than a chocolate bar.

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Seeds of New Life

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ paper
- ✓ crayons, markers, or colored pencils

Draw a picture of a seed sprouting with leaves just opening up. Have the class write the words to 2 Corinthians 5:17 across the top of their pictures.

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day's Scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 15 MIN

Where Is the Gospel?

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ photocopies of 2 Corinthians 5:11—6:2—one for each student
- ✓ pencils or pens
- ✓ an adult to share their testimony—choose someone who did not know the gospel as a child

Read through the passage as a class. Pass out the paper and pencils and instruct the students to underline all the portions of verses that contain the gospel.

Then discuss the following questions:

- **How should this section of Scripture affect the way we live?**
(Because we have been changed by the gospel we should live for Christ like people who have been changed. Because we have been commissioned as ambassadors for the gospel we should share the message with others.)

- **How do we know if we have been changed by the gospel and made into new creation?**
(The Bible tells us that Christians want to live for Christ. That is what Paul meant when he said that Christ's love controls us [2 Corinthians 5:14]. The Bible also says that when we become Christians God places his Spirit into our hearts [2 Timothy 1:14] in such a way that we know he is there [2 Corinthians 1:22].)

Talk about fears that can stand in the way of our sharing the gospel. Ask the students to share how they have seen the transforming power of the gospel change someone.

Invite a person from your church to share their testimony with the class.