"New Creation People"

2 Corinthians 5:14-19

STRENGTH for the Journey with Joe Stowell

Part of the RBC family of Ministries

Group Study Introduction

Use the following questions and exercises as your group time allows. Feel free to skip one or more questions in each section as necessary. If you have less then thirty minutes for group discussion, we recommend skipping the "Getting Started" section. Be sure to save time for prayer at the end of your meeting, using the "Strength through Prayer" section.

Getting Started:

Joe Stowell shares about how out of place he felt when he was visiting West Africa.

- Have you traveled to other countries, particularly Third World countries?

- Did you get the distinct impression that people do things differently in those cultures? If so, can you give an example?

Strength through Scripture:

Open your Bibles to 2 Corinthians 5 and have a volunteer read verse 17 out loud.

1. Joe says that when we join the kingdom of the new creation, we become part of a different culture. How would you describe that culture?

2. Have a member of the group read Colossians 1:13 aloud. How does it make you feel to think that God, by His grace, has delivered us, as believers, out of the domain of darkness and "transplanted" us into the kingdom of His dear Son?

3. When Joe confessed to breaking the alabaster banana, his friend and hostess said, "That's all right, Joe. In our house, people are more important than things." What does Joe mean when he calls Martha's words "a new world order statement"?

Notes:

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"

2 Corinthians 5:17

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4. To what extent might you be guilty of having your identity wrapped up in your career? How strongly do you desire to see your career as a means to advance the kingdom of God, enabling you to be a witness in the marketplace and to contribute to the kingdom financially?

5. Joe contends that being a new creation person is about servanthood. If you are married, what changes does the concept of the new creation person call for in your relationship with your spouse?

Digging Deeper:

If your group has enough time (i.e., you've listened to the audio on your own), answer one or more of these optional questions.

1. What does Joe mean when he says that the birth of Jesus resulted in more than just another person, but a whole new creation?

2. If we are new creation people, with a new identity paid for by Christ's life, why do we feel so at home in the old order of this doomed culture?

3. Have a member of the group read Mark 2:22 out loud. What does this parable have to say about new creation people and the old order?

Strength through Sharing:

1. Read the Call to Action below. How can you be more of an advocate for those who are broken, hurt, and lonely?

2. As Joe says, when we get a grip on our identity as a new creation person in Christ, our world will get a sneak preview of all that is new. How have God's Word and the Strength for the Journey studies encouraged you to grow in this area?

Notes:

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Strength through Prayer:

Spend a few moments as a group in silent, personal prayer. Thank God that, by His grace, He has delivered us out of the domain of darkness and transplanted us into the kingdom of His Son. Commit yourself to living out the responsibilities that come from being a new creation in Christ.

You may want to begin your prayer with these words:

"I give You praise, Father God, for delivering me from darkness and placing me in the kingdom of Your dear Son. I realize that being a new creation person is all about servanthood. May my identity be found in being Your servant—in my career, in my family, in my church, in my world. May my world, because I am a new creation in Christ, get a sneak preview of all that is new."

When you are finished with this time for silent, personal prayer, you may want to move into a time of group prayer, praying for one another.

Closing Call to Action:

You probably don't give broken things as gifts. But so often in our relationships or business dealings, we keep passing on the broken world order. We refuse to forgive; we're selfish; we're greedy. We have to stop that.

Rather than giving old broken things to people, let's decide that we're going to give the new stuff of Jesus to people—His love, servanthood, compassion, caring heart, justice— and then take the time and energy to be an advocate for those who are broken and hurt and lonely.

All the new things Jesus has given to us, you can give away in your world. When you do, watch your world blossom!

Notes:

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