The shields of the earth belong to God; He is highly exalted



Crystal Hopper of Billings, MT with her uncle Stan Zech of Great Falls, MT at the Todd Cooper memorial 48th St. Church of Christ, Billings, MT

"Now when evening came, His disciples went down to sea, and after getting into a boat, they started to cross the sea to Capernaum. And it had already become dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them."

John 6:16



This Wednesday, August 22nd – 7:00 p.m. – Teachings from Titus – Phil Sutton



Question of the week:

What was the status of the former idolaters, adulterers, homosexuals, thieves, covetous, drunkards, fornicators, etc. in the congregation at Corinth?

Last week's question: The book of Ezra splits into two parts, the first being the return from captivity in 536 BC, and the second another group in 457 BC. Who were the leaders of the two groups? *Answer: Zerubbabel (Ezra 2:1,2), and Ezra (Ezra 7:11).*

ATTENDANCE LAST WEEK:

Bible School – 99 Morning Assembly – 115 Evening Assembly – 84 Wednesday Night (8/15) — 90 Butte Lord's Day — 17 Great Falls Lord's Day — 52,101



Comfort/encouragement from Second Corinthians ...

Power of the New Creation

The "Jesus who is" is the Jesus who is seated at the right hand of power on high. As awesome as Jesus was during the days of His earthly sojourning, He had voluntarily emptied Himself and placed Himself a little lower than the angels for the benefit of the souls of men. Jesus in glory, then, is much more awesome than Jesus in the flesh could have been. Paul, in writing to the brethren in Corinth, has carefully lined up his points of reasoning: 1) Christ died for all, therefore all died; 2) those who therefore live because of Christ should no longer live for themselves; 3) they then should live for Him who not only died but who rose again on their behalf; 4) even though the apostles had known Christ

in the flesh, that is not who He is now and how He is to be known now; 5) if a person is in Christ, he is a new creation and is to be known by who he is in Christ.

- *Old things passed away* Christ died so that the old sinful self could be buried with Him. This is hugely powerful and is to be strongly and repeatedly impinged on the mind of the brother who is forgiven through this process, and also strongly and repeatedly impinged on the minds of those who are interacting with this brother in Christ. "The old things are passed away," states the inspired apostle. Not only are all sins forgiven and the past gone, but the old self is also obliterated (buried). If it is buried, then it no longer exists. This dovetails with the encouraging and life-giving words of Paul to the brethren in Colossae: "For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God" (Colossians 3;3).
- *New things have come* Although there is tremendous power in elimination of the old self, that is getting rid of a problem but not providing a solution. The excessively great power is found in the surrounding words: if any person be in Christ, he is a new creation; and that new things have come. The new creation is

not simply the "old creation" forgiven; God actually performed an entirely new creative act in the inner man, in the realm not seen by physical eye. This new creation is something more than "mere man," a next step up from man in the flesh. Remade in the image of Christ in glory, this new creature is capable of walking in the footsteps of Christ and carrying the torch of the gospel for spiritual victory.

Conquer the next section of the devil's domain, and plant the triumph flag of Christ on new territory!

But for the power connected with being a new creature in Christ to become operative, the "born from above" child of God needs to renew or reprogram his mind. "In reference to your former manner of life," Paul had instructed the brethren in Ephesus, "lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth" (Ephesians 4:22-24). God does "the heavy lifting," but He doesn't do all the lifting. The loving Father expects His children of faith to be active in their salvation and transformation. Hence the apostle would also write, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect" (Romans 12:2).

This new creation is prepared for spiritual warfare: warfare against any personal lusts of the flesh or of the mind, and warfare in taking the gospel into a hostile and alien world. As the prophet Ezekiel looked to future saints (from his perspective) coming up out of the watery graves of their immersions and being given the indwelling Spirit of God, he saw that "they came to life, and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army" (Ezekiel 37:10). Not only stand your ground, fellow new creation, but conquer the next section of the devil's domain, planting the triumph flag of Christ on new territory! JAY WILSON