



There is a very radical passage in the New Testament, found in St. Paul's second letter to the Corinthian church. Reassuring the community, he states the following:

*"The new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation."*

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First of all, it's interesting because Paul has just been talking about the resurrection and the future, glorified bodies we will inhabit one day in heaven, when we are fully united to Jesus Christ. This is of course a major aspect of the Christian hope. Yet I think what's perhaps even more fascinating is that Paul tells us that the New

Creation is already here. In other words, being with Jesus in heaven is something not *simply* to sit back and wait for, but in a very real sense, something that has already begun, because of the work of the Holy Spirit.

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Advent—we have already been reconciled to God and so the Kingdom of God is already in our midst. Here Paul is basically imploring the Corinthians (and us) to “*live like it then!*”

January 2021 is all about newness, isn't it? My New Year's resolutions typically run something like this: “I'm going to exercise more, I'm going to eat less sweets, I'm going to take up this new hobby, etc.” All of that is fine, and I wish you luck on whatever you've decided to accomplish.

As well as resolutions like these though, what if we really tried to live into the New Creation that Paul urges has already come? What if we deliberately and intentionally sought the Holy Spirit this year and let him transform every pocket of our lives? Imagine that, along with the dieting and self-improvement, you resolved in 2021 to spend more time in prayer, to read the Bible each day, to talk about Jesus with your family at dinner, to show your children how to forgive their enemies and to be charitable to the poor and the needy?

This is the message of reconciliation Paul is talking about. When we reconcile ourselves to God through Jesus, out of it will inevitably flow reconciling ourselves to our spouses, our children, our neighbors...heck, even our enemies! I believe that if you can center the New Year around *these* kinds of resolutions, you will be inviting the Kingdom of Heaven to exist in the present, in your own life, and in a world which is certainly feeling a little old right now. Be someone who by their life declares with Paul: “the New Creation has come!”

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