

Sunday, March 27, 2022
Rev. Linda Maconochie
“Joy in Change of Perspective”

If anyone is in Christ, that one is a new creation. The old has passed away and the new has come! That is the Good News for today. As we have been reconciled with God, we look at ourselves and our world differently. We look at ourselves and our world from a new perspective.

Jane was my roommate in college. I was a transfer student, so we were randomly placed together. We couldn't be more different from one another. Jane was quite a partier and she smoked. I was not much of a partier, and I never smoked. How would we live together and make it work? At first, I thought there was no way that it would work. But over time it did. I hung out with the campus ministry kids and other students preparing for ministry. Jane got to know my friends and started hanging out with us. Through our conversations, our activities, and worship experiences, Jane began looking at her life and became a follower of Jesus. Her life changed. She gave up smoking, she changed her perspective on life. She had a new focus. The old was gone and the new had come. Jane was still fun loving and a lot of fun to be around, but now she had a new purpose and a new perspective on life.

I believe that most of us haven't had that experience of a dramatic life change when we stood before the church at confirmation or when we became new members of the church and we proclaimed that Jesus was our Lord and Savior, but we too are new creations in Jesus Christ. Perhaps we didn't have bad habits that we gave up suddenly with God's help, but we are changed into new creatures called to have a new perspective on our own lives and on the world.

Paul wrote this letter to the Corinthians because he was hurt by what was happening in Corinth. Paul had been in Corinth and had preached to the people and began a church there. But now the church was beginning to listen to other preachers that were leading them in the wrong direction. The people of Corinth thought that Paul was weak and that he didn't keep his word, so they were beginning to look to other preachers. Paul was hurt by all of this and wrote this second letter to the Church at Corinth to remind them of all that he had taught them. He wanted to remind them that they were new creations in Christ and no longer viewed things from a human point of view.

Paul knew all about being a new creation. His story is a dramatic one of a complete change in perspective. We know that Paul, was Saul, and that he persecuted Christians. He was doing all he could to stop this new group of people that were following Jesus. We know that he used

violent methods to stop the Christians from meeting together. But all of this changed on the Damascus Road. Paul was knock off his horse and was made blind. He had a dramatic experience of God's presence, and his life did a complete 180. He now was a Christian. His perspective on life changed.

As Christians, whether we had a dramatic experience of God or a more gradual journey of faith, have become new creatures and had our perspectives for our individual lives and our lives in community changed. We are new creations in Christ. The old has passed away and the new has begun.

There is joy in knowing that we are new creations and can look at ourselves and our world from a new perspective.

We see ourselves from God's perspective. We know that we are created by God, God loves us abundantly, and that all the things we do wrong can be forgiven. What a great way to live life. We know that God has blessed us with gifts of time and talent and treasure to share in such a way that we can make the world a better place. We know that if we need to change bad habits that God is with us supporting us through the changes we must make. And we know that even when we make mistakes, we can ask for forgiveness and be forgiven.

We see our world from God's perspective. We see all people as our siblings. No longer do we look at someone from the outside, but we see them on the inside. No longer do we judge someone based on their race, or nationality or their gender for all are one in Christ Jesus. There is joy in knowing that we can be in relationship with many different people and our world view is expanded.

One of the churches I served was in Dearborn, MI. Dearborn has the largest population of people from the Middle East outside of the Middle East. I learned a lot about the Muslim faith and about the people. My children went to a school where they were the minority. We had off from school on the Muslim holidays and everything letter came home from school in Arabic and English. When I was registering my children for school there was a man there trying to register his son. They didn't speak English, so the principal cam out and registered the child using Arabic. The experience of living in Dearborn, enriched who I am and broadened the worldview of my daughters and myself. We saw our neighbors and classmates as children of God, and it was a joy.

We are called to see others from God's point of view and when we do our lives are enriched and expanded.

Scott Hoezee writes, we are bearers of God's saving grace with the Holy Spirit living inside of us. Of course, we don't treat each other like pieces of meat. Of course, we do not every think that broken relationship is no big deal. Jesus died so that fractured relationship, dysfunctional families, lost friendships and ruptured social circles could be restored.

We are new creations in Christ Jesus, and this comes with responsibility. We are entrusted with the ministry of reconciliation. Reconciliation involves a change in relationship from bad to good. God restored us in our relationship with God by bringing about a change in our lives. Now we must bring about change in our relationships with other people, with our family and friends.

Where are there broken relationships in your life? These are sometimes very painful, but we are called to look at them and see if there is a way to be reconciled. To see if there is a way to renew a friendship, or family relationship, or to see others as children of God.

Paul is wanting to renew his relationship with the Corinthians after he was hurt by them. We can learn a lesson from him. If there is someone who has hurt us, we can reach out and share what is bothering us and ask for the relationship to be reconciled.

When a relationship that has been broken is restored there is joy in our lives. As our perspective is changed we can see the other in a new light and begin to reach out to care.