

Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.

CHRIST THE MAKER OF ALL THINGS NEW.

A Sermon

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C. H. SPURGEON,

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“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”—2 Corinthians, v. 17.

WE shall try to preach this morning of Christ as the Author of the new creation, and may we be enabled by the Holy Spirit to speak to his glory. To create all things new is one of his most famous achievements; may we not only gaze upon it but be partakers in it.

What says Solomon in the Book of Ecclesiastes? Does he not tell us there that “the thing that hath been shall be, and that which is done is that which shall be done, and there is no new thing under the sun”? No doubt Solomon was correct in this declaration, but he wrote of this world and not of the world to come whereof we speak; for behold, in the world to come, that is to say, in the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, all things are new. To the wisest mind, if unrenewed, there is nothing new, but to the humblest of the regenerated ones all things have become new.

The word “new” seems to harmonize sweetly with the name and work of our Lord Jesus, inasmuch as he comes in after the old system had failed, and begins anew with us as the father and head of a chosen race. He is the Mediator of the new covenant, and has come to place us in a new relationship towards God. As the second Adam he has delivered us from the old broken covenant of works wherein we lay under the curse, and he hath placed us under the new infallible covenant of grace wherein we are established by his merit. The blood of Jesus Christ is said to be “the blood of the new covenant”; there is thus a connection with newness even in the most vital point of our dear Redeemer’s person. The blood is even to him the life thereof, and apart from that blood he can bestow no remission of sin; thus there is a newness about that essential life-flood, for when he gives us to drink of his cup of remembrance he says “this is my blood of the *new* testament, which is shed for many

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for the remission of sins." "Now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the Mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises." The old covenant, the old ceremonial law, the old spirit of bondage, and the whole of the old leaven Jesus has purged out of the house, and he has admitted to a new dispensation wherein grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life.

When our Lord Jesus came into the world his birth of a virgin by the power of the Holy Ghost was a new thing, for thus had the prophet Jeremiah said of old in the name of the Lord, "How long wilt thou go about, O thou backsliding daughter? for the Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, a woman shall compass a man." Unto us a child is born who is the virgin's son, in whom we do rejoice because he cometh into the world without taint of original sin, after a new fashion, as never man was born before. Coming thus into the old world, he publisheth new doctrine, for his doctrine is called gospel, or good news. It is the freshest news that an anxious heart can hear; it is the most novel music by which a troubled breast can be soothed. Jesus Christ's teaching is still the best news of these days, as it was centuries ago. Though the world has had nearly 1900 years of the glad tidings, the gospel hath the dew of its youth upon it, and when men hear it they still ask, as the Greeks did of old, "What new doctrine is this?" Our Lord Jesus has come to set up, by the preaching and teaching of the gospel, a new kingdom, a kingdom having new laws, new customs, a new charter, and new riches, a kingdom which is not of this world, a kingdom founded upon better principles and bringing infinitely better results to its subjects than any other dominion that hath ever been. Into that kingdom he introduces only new men, who are made new creatures in Christ Jesus, who therefore love his new commandment and serve him in newness of spirit and not in the oldness of the letter. Moreover, Christ hath opened for us an entrance into the kingdom of heaven above, for now we come to God "by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh." When in days to come we shall meet him again there will still be novelty, for he has said, "I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." Indeed, concerning our Lord and Master everything is new, and was it not so prophesied? For did not Isaiah say, in the forty-third chapter, eighteenth verse, "Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it?" And to the same effect was his prophecy in the sixty-fifth chapter, seventeenth verse: "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy." This newness of everything was to be a leading feature in Messiah's reign, and it has already been so; but far more shall this be seen in the latter days. Doth not John in Rev. xxi. 5, say, "He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." Foretold in former ages as the Creator of new heavens and a new earth, our Lord shall at last, in the summing

up, be plainly seen to be the Maker of all things new. Do you wonder, beloved, that if a man be in Christ he is a new creature? If everything that Christ touches is made new, if he refreshes and revives, if he re-establishes and re-edifies, and new-creates wherever he goes, are you at all astonished that those who live nearest to his heart, nay, are in vital union with his blessed person, should also be made new? It would be very astonishing if it were not so.

Let us direct our attention then to the teaching of the text, "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature."

I. We shall first consider with brevity THE GROUND OF THE NOVELTY which is here spoken of. It is, "If any man be *in Christ*, he is a new creature," not otherwise. No man cometh to be a new creature by any process apart from Christ. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature," but if any man be not in Christ he is not a new creature, nor can he become so except by connection with him of whom it is written that he is "the beginning of the creation of God." As in the old creation "without him was not any thing made that was made," so is it in the new. He maketh all things new, but the things that are apart from him have waxen old and are ready to perish, neither can they renew their youth. As well might the face of the earth hope to be renewed with spring apart from the sun, as for a soul to hope for spiritual renewal apart from Jesus. The wonderful newness produced by regeneration and new creation is the work of the Holy Ghost and his operations are all in union with the Lord Jesus and aimed at his glory. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him."

But how cometh it that a man is indeed a new creature if he be in Christ? I answer, first, it cometh necessarily from *the representative character of Christ* towards those who are in him. If you wanted a man to be made a new creature, and were omnipotent, what process would suggest itself to you? I think a double one. To make an old creature into a new creature there must first be the stroke which ends him, and then the touch which begins him anew: to put it more plainly, there must be death and then life. Now, has that taken place upon those who are in Christ? Of course it has, if it has taken place upon Christ himself, because he is the Head, and represents the members. As Adam acted for the seed in him, so Christ hath acted for the seed in him. See, then, beloved, Christ hath died; he came before the judgment seat with our sins upon him, the representative of those of whom he is the head; and in him death, which was the penalty of sin, was fulfilled to the letter, its bitterest dregs being drunk up. Jesus died. We are certain that he died, for the executioners brake not his legs because they saw that he was dead already, but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. We know that he died, for the jealous eyes of his enemies would not have permitted him to have been taken down from the cross unless the life had assuredly departed. He was laid in the grave, assuredly dead, under the dominion of death for the time being; and you and I who are in him, at that time died in him. "If one died for all then all

died." Such is the proper translation of that passage. We died, for he died in our name. Our sin, was punished in him by the death which he endured. See ye, then, brethren, we are dead, dead by virtue of our federal union with Jesus Christ. I mean not you all, unless ye are all in Christ Jesus. Judge ye whether it be so with you or not. But I mean as many as the Father gave to Christ, as many as Christ in his intent did specially redeem by becoming their substitute: these were in him, and in him they died, being crucified with him. In him also all his people rose again when he rose. On the third day he burst the bonds of death and left the grave on our behalf. See how the Holy Spirit, by his servant Paul, identifies us with all this. "Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." As far as he was our representative he was a new man when he rose. The law had no claims upon him: he had been dead, and so had passed out of its jurisdiction. The law never had any claim upon the risen Christ: it had a claim upon him when he came under the law, but when he had satisfied it to the last jot and tittle, by death, he was completely clear. Hath the law of our country any claim upon a man after he is dead? If a dead man can be raised again all his past offences are done with, he beginneth a new life, and is not under the old law. And so with Christ and so with us, for here is the point of union, we are risen with him by faith of the resurrection of Christ. We have been dead and buried, and now we are risen, and thus this, which is the very best and surest process for making a person a new creature, has been undergone by all God's elect, by reason of the representative and sacrificial death of Jesus Christ and his glorious representative resurrection on their behalf.

But, beloved, there is another meaning. *We are made new creatures by an actual process* as well as by the legal process which I have described, and here also the same thing is done. We are made vitally one with Jesus Christ when we believe in him, and then do we spiritually die and are made to live again. Our faith apprehends the dying of Christ, and we feel at the same time the sentence of death in ourselves. We see how we deserve to die for sin, and we accept the sentence, confessing our guiltiness before the Most High, and there is proclaimed throughout the powers and passions of the soul a decree from God that the flesh shall die, with all its lusts. We write down sin as henceforth dead to us, and ourselves as dead to it. We labour to mortify all our evil desires and the lusts of the flesh, and all that cometh of the flesh. When we believe in Jesus a sword goeth through the very loins of sin, and the arrows of the Lord stick fast in the hearts of the King's enemies that lurk within our spirit. There also cometh a new life into us as we behold Jesus risen from the dead. When we believe in Jesus we receive from God a new vital principle, of superior and heavenly character, akin to Deity: there droppeth into our soul a sacred seed from the hand of the eternal Spirit, living and incorruptible,

which abideth for ever, and for ever bringeth forth fruit after its kind. As we believe in Christ living we live in Christ and live after the fashion of Christ, and the Spirit of him that raised up Christ from the dead dwelleth in our mortal bodies, making us to live in newness of life.

Now, beloved, do you know anything about this? Have you been made new creatures by death and resurrection? If you have been baptized you have professed that so it has been with you. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." In the ordinance of baptism, by burial in the water, and uprising from it, there is a setting forth as in a type and figure of our Lord's burial and resurrection, and at the same time it is an emblem of the process by which we become new creatures in him. But is it *really* so in your souls? Are you now henceforth dead to the world, and dead to sin, and quickened into the life of Christ? If you be so, then the text will bear to you a third and practical meaning, for it will not merely be true that your old man is condemned to die and a new nature is bestowed, but *in your common actions you will try to show this by newness of actual conversation*. Evils which tempted you at one time will be unable to beguile you now because you are dead to them: the charms of the painted face of the world will no longer attract your attention, for your eyes are blind to such deceitful beauties. You have obtained a new life which can only be satisfied by new delights, which can only be excited by new objects and constrained by new principles suitable to its own nature. This you will continually show. The life of God within you will make your actions instinct with holiness, and the end thereof shall be everlasting life. Your faith in Christ clearly evinces you to be a new creature, for it kills your old confidences and makes you build upon a new basis: your love to Christ also shows your newness, for it has slain your old affections, and captured your heart for Jesus only: and your hope, which is also a gift of the blessed Spirit, is set upon new things altogether, while your old hopes are things whereof you are now ashamed.

Thus it is that first by the headship of Christ you are legally dead and alive again; next by your vital union with Christ you are dead and alive again as a matter of experience, and now it is practically proven in your life from day to day that you are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God: in all these three ways you are new creatures by the double process of dying and quickening. You are under a new Adam, and so start life afresh as new creatures; you are under a new covenant, and commence to act under different principles, and so are new creatures: you are quickened by a new Spirit, and so in thought and word and deed are seen to be new creatures. But all this is *in Christ*, and if you are not in Christ you are still in the old world which must shortly be destroyed. As "by the Word of God were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth," so have you been created by Jesus, the Eternal Word, and quickened by his

Spirit, or else you still abide in death. If your faith has never laid her hand upon Christ's sacrifice for sin then your soul has never felt the regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit, and all the baptismal regeneration and all else of human invention that may now comfort you is but a vain deceit. Ye must be born again, but it can only be in Christ Jesus, for to "as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." O that we may all believe in him, and enter into the new life.

" Author of the new creation,
Come with all thy Spirit's power;
Make our hearts thy habitation,
On our souls thy graces shower."

II. I shall in the second place lead you to consider the ESSENCE OF THIS NOVELTY. "If any man be in Christ, he is a *new creature*." Read, and the reading will be accurate, "He is a new creation." This is a very sweeping statement. A man in Christ is not the old man purified, nor the old man improved, nor the old man in a better humour, nor the old man with additions and subtractions, nor the old man dressed in gorgeous robes. No, he is a new creature altogether. As for the old man, what is to be done with him? Can he not be sobered, reformed, and made to do us useful service? No, he is crucified with Christ, and bound to die by a lingering but certain death. The capital sentence is passed upon him, for he cannot be mended and therefore must be ended. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." You cannot change the old nature, it is immutably bad, and the sooner it is put away as a filthy and unclean thing the better for us. The believer, so far as he is in Christ, is a new creation: not the old stuff put into a new fashion, and the old material worked up into an improved form, but absolutely a new creation. To create is to make out of nothing, and that is precisely how the newborn life came into us; it is not a development, or an outgrowth, but a creation, a heavenly something called into being by a power from above. The new man in us is made out of nothing that was in us before, for nature does not assist grace but is opposed to it. Christ has not found light stored away in our darkness, nor life amid the corruption of our spiritual death. The new birth is from above, and the life produced thereby is a new creation, and not the goodness of nature educated till it becomes grace. They are getting up a notion in certain quarters that the children of pious parents, if not of all mankind, are the children of God by their first birth, and only want certain training and influences to be brought to bear upon them and then they will develop into Christians as they grow up into manhood and womanhood. One divine says that our children ought not to need conversion. This theory is false throughout, for the best of children are by nature heirs of wrath even as others. The grace of God in the soul is a new creation, and not the natural development of a pious education and training working upon the innate goodness of men: indeed there is no such goodness there at all; it is a dream altogether.

The new man in Christ is not the old creature washed and put out to school, and elevated by "modern thought and culture." No; the Ethiopian cannot change his skin, nor the leopard his spots; do what you will with him he will be an Ethiopian and a leopard still; but the new man in Christ is another creature altogether.

Mark you, it is not said that the man has something new about him, but he, himself, is new. It is not merely that in a spiritual sense he has new eyes, new hands, and new feet, but he, he, he, he, himself, is a new creation. Mark that. Do you not see then that salvation is the work of God? You cannot create yourself, and you cannot create anything at all. Try and create a fly first, and then you may dream of being able to create a new heart and a right spirit in another person, but even then it would be quite another matter to new create yourself. Is not the very idea an absurdity? Shall nothing create something? Shall darkness create light? Shall sin create holiness? Shall death create life? Shall the devil create God? None of these questions are more absurd than the idea of the sinner's being able to new create himself.

No, beloved, regeneration is an extraordinary work, demanding omnipotence to accomplish it; it is, in fact, a divine work, for it is the supreme prerogative of God to create.

"Know that the Lord is God alone,
He can create, and he destroy."

If any man be in Christ it is not only said that he is a creation, but a *new* creation, and the word here translated "new," as has been well observed, does not signify *recent*, but something altogether different from that which previously existed. A book may be new, and yet it may be only a fresh copy of some old work; but that is not the case in this instance. The creature is not a new specimen of the same kind as the old, but another and different creation. We might almost read the text as if it said, "If any man be in Christ he is a fresh creation, a new kind of creature altogether." The new creation differs essentially from the old, although the first is an instructive emblem of the second. The first creation was the work of physical power, the second a work of spiritual power: the first created for the most part materialism in its various forms, but the new creation deals with spiritual things, and manifests the sublimest attributes of the divine character. God in nature is glorious, but in grace he is all glorious. The second is a creation nearer to the heart of God than the first creation was; for when he made the world he simply said it was good, but when he makes the new creation, it is written, "He shall rest in his love; he shall rejoice over thee with singing." So gladdening to his heart is the sight of the new creature which his grace hath made, that he sings a joyful hymn.

Furthermore, we must note that if any man be in Christ he is a new creature, and the creation of him bears some resemblance to the creation of the world. I have at other times gone through that wonderful first chapter of the Book of Genesis, which is a Bible in miniature, and I have shown you how it sets forth the spiritual creation. Behold by nature we lie like chaos: a mass of disorder, confusion, and darkness. As in the old creation so in the new, the Spirit of God broodeth

over us and moveth upon the face of all things. Then the word of the Lord comes and says within us, as aforetime in chaos and old night, "Let there be light," and there is light. After light there comes a division of the light from the darkness, and we learn to call them by their names. The light is "day" and the darkness is "night." So to us there is a knowing and a naming of things, and a discerning of differences in matters which before we confounded when we put light for darkness. After a while there cometh forth in us the lower forms of spiritual life. As in the earth there came grasses and herbs, so in us there come desire, hope, and sorrow for sin. By-and-by there appeared on the globe fowl and fish, and beasts, and living things, and life beyond all count. So also in the new creation, from having life we go on to have it more abundantly. God by degrees created all his works, till at last he had finished all the host of them, and even so he works on till he completes in us the new creation and looks upon us with rejoicing. Then he bringeth to us a day of rest, blessing us and causing us to enter into his rest because of his finished work. We could draw a very beautiful parallel if we had time, but you can think it out for yourselves.

Now, notice very carefully that if *any man* be in Christ he is a new creature, and this certifies that a new creation has taken place upon every man who is in Christ, whether by nature he was a Jew or Gentile, a moralist or a rake, a philosopher or a fool. When a man is converted and brought to Christ he has invariably become a new creature. If he has believed in Jesus only three minutes yet he is a new creature; and if he hath known the Lord seventy years he can be no more. A new creation is a new creature, and in this matter there is no difference between the babe in grace and the father in Israel.

As this creation is common to all the saints, so is it *immediate and present*. "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature": it is not spoken of as a something that is to happen to him in the last article of death, wherein some seem to hope that many wonderful changes will be wrought in them; but he who is in Christ is a new creature *now*. "Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth anything, but a new creature": and that new creature is now possessed, and I may add consciously possessed too: for albeit that there may arise occasional doubts upon this question, yet in a man's inmost self he finds cause to know that there has passed upon him a marvellous change which only God himself could have wrought.

This change is *universal in the man*; the new man is not full grown in every part, nor in fact in any part, and yet in all the portions of his regenerated nature he is a new creature. I mean this, if any man be in Christ it is not his mental *eye* that is a new creation merely, but he himself is a new creation. He has a new heart according to the promise, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you." He hath new ears, hearing what he refused to hear before; he has a new tongue, and can pray with it as he never prayed before; he has new feet, and these delight to run in the ways of God's commandments. I refer of course only to his inner man, that is altogether new, and not any one part of it only. If a man be merely enlightened in understanding, what is that? It is good, but it is not salvation; a new brain is not all that is wanted to make a new man. A new man

is spiritually new-created from head to foot. Though but a babe in grace, and not fully developed in any one part, yet he is new, "created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

Thus have I tried to show you the essence of the novelty.

III. Let us next consider THE EXTENT OF THE NOVELTY. "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature; *old things are passed away, behold all things have become new.*" It seems then that not only is the man a new creature, but he has entered into a new creation; he has opened his eyes in a new world. Imagine Adam falling asleep at the gates of Paradise just under the cherubim's flaming sword, with the thorns and thistles springing up before him, and the serpent's trail behind him: and then further picture him lying there in a deep sleep till the Lord touches him, makes him open his eyes, and causes him to find himself in a better paradise than the one he had lost. It was not so in reality, but can you imagine such a thing? If so, it may serve as a symbol of what the Lord has done for us. We are made new, and find ourselves in a new world.

What about *the old things*? The text says they have passed away, and the Greek word gives the idea of their having passed away spontaneously. I cannot liken it to anything that I know of better than the snow which melts in the sun. You wake up one morning, and all the trees are festooned with snowy wreaths, while down below upon the ground the snow lies in a white sheet over everything. Lo, the sun has risen, its beams shed a genial warmth; and in a few hours where is the snow? It has passed away. Had you hired a thousand carts and horses and machines to sweep it away it could not have been more effectually removed. It has passed away. That is what the Lord does in the new creation: his love shines on the soul, his grace renews us, and the old things pass away as a matter of course. Where are your old views about which you used to be so positive? Where are those old opinions for which you could freely have knocked a man down? Where are those old sneers against God's people? Where are those old pleasures which you took so much delight in? Where are those old engrossing pursuits? Had you a hard tug to get away from these bonds? Where are those old joys, those old hopes, those old trusts, those old confidences? Was it difficult to shake off these? Ah, no! Beneath the power of the Holy Spirit they have passed away. You hardly know how it is, but they have gone, and gone completely. As a dream when one awaketh you have despised their image, and your heart knows them no more. It is marvellous in this new creation how the Lord makes confusion and old night to fly. You may call for them and say, "Chaos, where art thou?" and no answer comes back, for old things are passed away. Our Lord Jesus Christ causes all this. Where his blessed face beams with grace and truth, as the sun with warmth and light, he dissolves the bands of sin's long frost, and brings on the spring of grace with newness of buds and flowers.

But when you remove the old what is to take its place? Do you not observe that *new things have come*, "Behold all things are become new." Now the man has new views, new notions, new ambitions, new convictions, new desires, new hopes, new dreads, new aims, new

principles, and new affections : he is led by a new spirit and follows a new course of life ; everything in fact about him is as if he had come fresh from the hand of God. Even as with the cleansed leper, his flesh came again to him as the flesh of a little child, and he was clean, so is it with the heart renewed by grace.

Beloved, it is delightful to read in the Book of the Revelation and anticipate the things which are to be hereafter. How full that book is of novelties which illustrate our subject, for there you read of a *new name* which the Lord bestows upon those who overcome. Perhaps some of you used actually to be known by some nickname or vulgar epithet while you lived in the world and were a lover of it. Now in all probability you are called by quite a different name among your Christian friends. Saul the persecutor is called Paul when he becomes an apostle. Moreover, there is a new name which the mouth of the Lord shall name, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. You have been named with the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and you wear henceforth that name by which the whole family in heaven and earth is named. Grace also has taught you a *new song*, "He hath put a new song into my mouth and established my goings." You are rehearsing the music of that glorious band of whom it is written, "They sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof." Now are you a citizen of a *new city*, the new Jerusalem which cometh down out of heaven from God, which shall be established among the sons of men, in the last days as the world's metropolis, concerning which they shall say, "The temple of God is with men and he doth dwell among them."

Beloved, each one of you has now become part of *one new man*. Do you know what I mean by that ? There were once the Jews and the Gentiles, but now, saith Paul, Christ "hath broken down the middle wall of partition ; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace." The mystical body of Christ is the one new man, and we are members of that body. Henceforth we have communion with all saints, and to us "there is neither Greek nor Jew, bond nor free, but Christ is all, and in all." Even now we have commenced to live in a new heaven and walk upon a new earth, and we are anticipating the time when literally on this very earth whereon we have struggled there shall be set up a new condition of things, for the first heaven and the first earth shall have passed away and there shall be no more sea. Rolled up like a scroll shall yon blue heavens be, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat ; nevertheless, we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, to which in expectation we are always drawing near, and pressing forward with inward yearning, for already in Christ Jesus we are a part of that new creation which is more fully to be revealed.

IV. Fourthly let us consider THE RESULT OF THIS NOVELTY. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." Well, the result of this novelty is, first, that the man is already a great wonder to himself. You know the Pythagorean doctrine of the transmigration of souls, the soul passing first into one body and then into another, and so existing under different conditions. We do not believe that fiction for a moment, but

if it had been true, the memories of such souls must have been stored with varied information, surpassingly strange to hear. Ours is another transformation, it is death and resurrection : the old passing away and the new being created : but how remarkable are the experiences of the men who have been so transformed ! Here is a man who is a new creature, and he has a very distinct recollection of the time when he was something far other than he now is. What a change he has undergone ! Suppose a swine could suddenly be turned into a man and yet recollect what it did when it was one of the herd ; what an experience it would have to tell ! If you could take a hog from the trough and turn it into an emperor, that would not be half so great a change as is accomplished when an unregenerated sinner becomes a saint ; but I warrant you the emperor would not find much cause for glorifying in his former swinish state ; he would be silent and ashamed when others mentioned it. If he alluded to that state it would always be with the blushes of humiliation and the tears of gratitude. If anybody began to talk about it, and he knew that there might be others about him that might be helped by hearing what the Lord had done, he would begin to tell in a gentle, modest way how the Lord transformed him from a swine into a monarch, but he would never, never boast : how could he ? In such a case the poor swine would have no responsibility, and could not be blamed for wallowing in the mire, but this cannot be said of us ; for when we acted as swine we knew better, and sinned wilfully. Still, what a change it is ! How I wonder at myself ! How I marvel at the goodness of my God ! How I adore that sacred power which has made me the child of two births, the subject of two creations : he first made me in the fashion of a man, and then made me in the image of the man Christ Jesus. I was first born to die, and then born to live eternally. Let us bless God and be full of lowly wonder this morning.

The next result of this new creation is, however, that the man does not feel at home in this present evil world, for this is the old creation, and the new man, the twice-born man, feels as if he were out of his element and not in a congenial country. He dwells in a body which is nothing better than a frail, uncomfortable, easily removed tent, in which he groans, earnestly desiring to enter his own house at home, the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Wherever he goes things seem out of order with the rule which is set up in his soul. He loves not the world, neither the things in the world ; the world's glories do not charm him, and its treasures do not enchant him. Earth's music grates upon his refined ear, which is tuned to heavenly harmony ; its dainties do not delight the taste, which has learned to enjoy the bread of heaven. The new creatures pine to be in the new creation. And beloved, while we are pining we are preparing : the Spirit of God is working us to this selfsame thing, and filling us with groans and pangs of strong desire, which indicate that we are becoming more and more fit to be partakers with the saints in light, who see the face of the Beloved without a veil, and drink in ever new delights.

Mark you once more, while the new creature is thus watching and waiting for the new creation he is meanwhile extending an influence more or less unconscious over the old world in which he dwells. Just as our Lord has gone to heaven to prepare a place for us, so we, his people,

are stopping here to prepare a place for him. We are winning men from the world to Christ, we are raising the tone of morals, we are spreading light and truth on all sides by the power of the Spirit, and so we are helping to make the world readier to receive the great King. We are seeking out his jewels, we are bringing his rebellious subjects to his feet. The life that is in us seems out of place in this mortal frame, for the body is dead because of sin, and therefore we groan, being burdened. As for the world itself, it is not our rest, for it is polluted. It seems a dreadful thing for the living Spirit to be dwelling in this graveyard of a world, but there is a necessity for us to be here. We are linked with a creation made subject to vanity, because it was thus subjected, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope that the creation itself also "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." We are here as links between the spiritual and the material, and we are working out divine purposes for the fuller display of the divine glory. Wherefore comfort one another with these words, and as new creatures in Jesus Christ look for the new heavens and the new earth, and for the coming of your Lord and Saviour. Know ye not that when he shall appear then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Let us even now bow before him and salute him with the language of our hymn.

"To thee the world its treasure brings;
To thee its mighty bow;
To thee the church exulting springs;
Her Sovereign, Saviour Thou!

"Beneath thy touch, beneath thy smile,
New heavens and earth appear;
No sin their beauty to defile,
Nor dim them with a tear."

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—2 Cor. iv. 17, 18; v.

HYMNS FROM "OUR OWN HYMN BOOK"—907, 391, 474.
