

# Light the re Ministries

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## **We do not know Christ after the flesh anymore**

The title of this article has to do with a common misunderstanding in the Body of Jesus Christ in terms of the meaning of 2 Corinthians 5:16.

**2 Corinthians 5:16 (King James Version)** Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.

The common interpretation of the above scripture is that we know Christ no longer as crucified, but as the risen Lord and thus do not see Him as the crucified Christ anymore. We should consider Him no longer on the cross, but seated at the right hand of the Father, in glory.

This is not what this scripture says. To correctly interpret this scripture consider verses 16 and 17 together.

**2 Corinthians 5:16-17 (King James Version)** Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. (17) Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

The apostle Paul is not referring to the crucified Christ, but to Jesus after the flesh, the natural man. He is saying that we knew Him as a man, born as a Jew in the tribe of Judah, the son of Mary, but now after His crucifixion, death and resurrection, we no longer regard Him according to the natural man, but the spiritual man. He is no longer Jewish, born of the tribe of Judah, nor is He the son of Mary. We know Him now as the risen Lord, the King of Kings, the firstborn of many brethren, the Son of the living God.

That is why Paul tells you, that we know no man according to the flesh anymore (2 Corinthians 5:16), but every man that is in Christ (verse 17) "is a new creature". The Greek word translated here as "new" is the word "kainos". According to w the Thayer's Greek Definitions it means:

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G2537 καινός kainos

1) new

1a) as respects form

1a1) recently made, fresh, recent, unused, unworn

1b) as respects substance

1b1) of a new kind, unprecedented, novel, uncommon, unheard of

The context here is clear. When a man has accepted Christ as His Lord and Savior, he is no longer considered after his natural birth, position, education, race, color or creed. He is now like Christ a son of God and seated with Him in heavenly places (Ephesians 2:8). You are no longer natural, but spiritual and take your identity from Christ and conduct yourself as a son of God and a citizen of His Kingdom.

Even more important, you are no longer a man under the old covenant, the law, but a new creature, born again under the New testament. You are under the dispensation of Grace, where anyone can be saved, by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ and calling upon His Name Romans 10:8-13. You are no longer either Jewish or Gentile, but one new man in Christ.

**Galatians 3:28 (King James Version)** There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

**Colossians 3:10-11 (King James Version)** And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: (11) Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

**Galatians 6:15 KJV** For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

The same therefore applies to our knowledge of Christ. It no longer matters that He was Jewish according to natural birth, nor where he was born, what tribe, what language or culture or indeed how he lived in the natural. We do not pursue Him according to natural knowledge, but spiritual understanding.

Consider the following scripture in this regard:

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**Philippians 3:3-10 (King James Version)** For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. (4) Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: (5) Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; (6) Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. (7) But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. (8) Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, (9) And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

(10) That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

The apostle Paul here equates the flesh to his natural birth and disposition (verse 5 and 6) and then continues to say that he counts the things of the flesh, his birth, tribe, religion, understanding of the law and other natural pursuits as nothing compared to being in Christ. Read this scripture together with 2 Corinthians 5:16-17 and you will see that this is the same context in which we know Christ no longer after the flesh.

This means that he is also saying that we, who were Gentiles according to the flesh, do not know Christ as a Jewish Messiah, but as the Christ, who will save the entire world, not just the Jew. When Jesus came, He came to the lost sheep of the house of Israel and not to the Gentile world. However when they rejected Him as their Messiah, He turned to the World and now all can be saved.

**Romans 1:3-6 KJV** Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; (4) And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead: (5) By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name: (6) Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:

Consider also:

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**Matthew 10:5-6 KJV** These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: (6) But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

**Matthew 15:24 KJV** But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

This is in stark contrast to His command to His disciples, after He was raised from the dead.

**Matthew 28:19-20 KJV** Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: (20) Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Jesus is no longer the Jewish Messiah, but the Christ who according to 2 Corinthians 5:19 has reconciled the whole world to God.

**2 Corinthians 5:19 KJV** "...To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself

Paul cannot be referring to the crucified Christ in 2 Corinthians 5:16, because then he would be contradicting himself. The same apostle Paul wrote as follows:

**1 Corinthians 2:2 (King James Version)** For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

**1 Corinthians 11:23-26 (King James Version)** For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: (24) And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. (25) After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. (26) For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

We know that all scripture is God breathed and inspired by the Holy Spirit (2 Timothy 3:16), so the above is not the opinion of the apostle Paul, but the instruction and revelation of the Holy Spirit.

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When misunderstanding 2 Corinthians 5:16, we devalue and undermine the revelation of the power of the cross of Jesus Christ.

**Galatians 6:14 (King James Version)** But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

To us He is and always will be the Lamb of God, the crucified Christ. That is why Johan saw Him, in Revelations, as the Lamb that was slain. Because of His death on the cross, we are sons of God, members of His household and have been made the righteousness of God. We cannot separate His death on the cross from His resurrection. We always look to the cross as a testimony of what was done for us. We draw our strength from looking at Him on the cross, knowing that on the cross He paid the price and did a finished work. On the cross He became the curse, so that you and I can be free from the curse and receive the promise of the Spirit, become partakers with Him of the things of God (Galatians 3).