Session 8: A New Creation

By Bryan Kessler

Beginning in Session 6 and continuing into Session 7, our main theme has been deliverance from sin and enslavement to righteousness. Or put another way, we have been looking at sanctification that results from radical obedience. Paul’s aim in Romans 6 is to produce consecrated bondservants who are sanctified through wholehearted obedience to Christ and the Word of God.

Though we are not justified by obedience, we are sanctified by obedience, and without sanctification, there is no eternal life and no one will see the Lord (Rom. 6:22; Heb. 12:14). This means that we are saved apart from obedience (justification) and that without obedience we are not saved (sanctification). Put another way, obedience certifies that our justification is real and demonstrates that we have saving faith (James 2:14-26). If we are not becoming a slave of righteousness, enslaved to God and striving for full obedience to the Word of God, then we are not likely on the road to sanctification nor the road to eternal life.

Seeing the vital importance and urgency of obedience, many respond by gritting their teeth with self-determination and striving in the power of their flesh to keep God’s commandments. Rather than letting the indwelling Spirit empower obedience, many use self-will and religious disciplines in an attempt to subdue sinful urges and temptations. This type of response only places us under the Law and leads to condemnation and death (2 Cor. 3:6-9).

Responding to the urgent call of obedience with willpower and religious discipline inevitably leads to self-righteousness, pride, and ultimately makes us Pharisees. Obedience through self-effort and trying harder places us under the Law, severs us from Christ, puts us under a curse, and cuts us off from the abundant supply of grace. When Paul admonished us to become slaves of obedience, he never wanted us to strive in our own power to keep God’s commands. That is why he outlined the path toward full, radical, and absolute obedience in Romans 6, which we have already looked at in Sessions 6-7.

A Review of Sessions 6-7

As a quick review, Paul revealed that deliverance from sin and enslavement to righteousness occurs by the following three changes:

1. A change of linage by death;
2. A change of heredity by resurrection;
3. A change of behavior by the obedience of faith.

We already looked at our change of linage by death and saw that deliverance from the old creation in Adam comes only by death, that we were included in Christ’s crucifixion, death, and burial, and that the experiences of Christ are now our experiences because we are in Him.

We also looked at our change of heredity by resurrection and saw that the imputation of Christ’s death positioned us for the impartation of Christ’s resurrection, that the resurrection of Christ was imparted to us and His life was engrafted in us, that our spirit was
resurrected—making us a new creation in Christ—and that our body of sin was made powerless by the resurrection of our spirit.

Then in Session 7 we looked at the change of behavior that comes from the obedience of faith and saw that there are four steps that lead to radical obedience. These are:

1. Knowing by revelation that we were included in the historic crucifixion and death of Jesus Christ;
2. Reckoning by meditation that we are dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus;
3. Presenting ourselves to God by consecration so that our unredeemed bodies are fully submitted to our resurrected spirit;
4. Walking in faith from our new creation (our resurrected spirit and circumcised heart) by the power of the indwelling Spirit.

Having covered Steps 1-3 extensively in Session 7, we will now spend the next three sessions focused on Step 4: Walking in faith from our new creation by the power of the indwelling Spirit. In this session, we will look at who we are as new creations in Christ, in the next session we will focus on the indwelling Spirit, and in Session 10 we will discuss walking in the Spirit.

The Law of the New Creation

In Romans 6, we have already seen where Paul described the need to know (6:3,9), reckon (6:11), and present (6:13,16). Now let's look at the fourth step of the obedience of faith—walking. Paul said, "Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4).

Studying Paul's epistles, you realize that Paul had a deep revelation of who we are as new creations in Christ (Gal. 6:15; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10). For example, Paul said, "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2 Cor. 5:17, NKJV). So when Paul exhorted us to walk in "newness of life," he was undoubtedly referring to who we are as new creations.

Because we have been united with Christ in His resurrection, the indestructible life of Jesus Christ has been engrafted into us and has raised our spirit from the dead, infused us with His very own righteousness, and has recreated our spirit in the likeness of God. We now have "newness of life" within us and are a completely new creation in Christ.

Along the same line, notice what Paul taught the Galatians: "For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them" (Gal. 6:15-16). To better understand what Paul was teaching, think of circumcision as obedience to the Law in an attempt to be accepted by God. Basically, Paul was saying, "Don't try to obey your way into favor and acceptance with God. Rather, if you want to obey God, live from your new creation." In essence, Paul was teaching that Jesus did not come to make bad people good or immoral people moral; He came to make dead people alive and to give them a new spirit and a new heart.

Also take note of the word "walk" in Galatians 6:16—the same word that Paul used in Romans 6:4 to describe how we become slaves of obedience by walking in newness of life. What did he mean by the phrase, "Those who will walk by this rule"? What rule was Paul talking about? Before answering these questions, let's take a step back and look at the word for rule.
The Greek word for rule in this verse is *kanôn* and means "a rod or straight piece of rounded wood to which anything is fastened to keep it straight". This word was used for various purposes, such as a measuring rod, a carpenter's measuring tape, or the measure of a leap in the Olympic games and came to represent any rule, standard, principle, or law of investigating, judging, living, and acting. The English word canon is from this Greek word *kanôn*, and in music, is "a composition in which a given melody is the model for the formation of all the parts." In general, this word stands for "anything that regulates the actions of men."

In summary, the rule, guiding principle, or model that is to regulate our lives and keep us on the straight and narrow road of obedience is learning to live from our new creation. Paul was in essence saying, "Don't try to obey God in order to be accepted by Him and don't obey God in an attempt to become holy in your own willpower, self-determination, and religious discipline. Instead, I want to give you a principle of obedience that works every single time. Live from your new creation and you will naturally obey all of God's commandments. Let this rule guide you. Walk according to this regulation and you will remain on the straight and narrow path of obedience."

The law of the new creation works the same as the natural laws of gravity, aerodynamics, and thermodynamics. Take the law of gravity for example. If you jump off a two-hundred foot cliff or the balcony of a high-rise hotel, you will fall to the ground and die every single time. If an airplane manufacturer or pilot violates the laws of aerodynamics the plane will crash without fail. If you disregard the law of thermodynamics and touch a hot stove you will burn your hand every time you touch it. These natural laws are true one-hundred percent of the time without fail.

Just like the natural laws of gravity, aerodynamics, and thermodynamics, the law of the new creation is a principle of obedience that will transform us into slaves of righteousness one-hundred percent of the time. That is, if we learn to obey God's commandments, not by striving in our own self-effort and teeth-gritting-self-determination, but from a revelation of who we are as new creations, then obedience will be the natural result. Just as an apple tree produces apples and an orange tree produces oranges, obedience is the natural byproduct for those who learn to live as new creations in Christ.

**The Law of the New Creation Always Produces Obedience**

Living from our new creation is how the obedience of faith is produced within us, which ultimately results in us becoming slaves of righteousness. To prove it, compare Galatians 6:15 with Galatians 5:6:

> For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation (Gal. 6:15).

> For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love (Gal. 5:6).

Do you see the parallel between "a new creation" and "faith working through love"? Paul has basically substituted "new creation" with "faith working through love" in Galatians 5:6. What does this mean to us? It reveals that faith works through love naturally when we learn how to live from our new creation. Just like the laws of nature, the law of the new creation always produces faith working through love. Living from our new spirit and our new heart is a repeatable, infallible principle that yields faith working through love one-hundred percent of the time.
The phrase "faith working through love" is equivalent to "the obedience of faith," which as we have seen, was the goal of Paul's ministry (Rom. 1:5). James taught the same thing when he said, "You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected" (James 2:22).

When reading this verse, it is vital that we do not interpret "works" as religious works, such as feeding the homeless, giving our time to a charity, going to Nicaragua and building a church, or providing third-world nations with drinkable water. Of course all of these things are incredible acts of selfless love and we should do these types of works. But that is not what James is talking about when he used the word "works." How do we know? Reading the context of James 2:17-26, we see that James used a specific example to illustrate what he meant by the phrase "works." He referenced the time when God spoke to Abraham and commanded him to offer up his son Isaac as a sacrifice (Gen. 22). This was not just any type of religious work, such as us deciding to give to a charity or to help impoverished nations get mosquito nets. The works James had in mind was radical obedience to the commandments of God, whether the written word of God or the spoken word of God.

With this mind, have a look again at what James said, but this time, read it with obedience substituted for works: "You see that faith was working with his obedience, and as a result of the obedience, faith was perfected." You see, faith is an internal conviction that always leads to an external action. And like James said, faith is perfected by obedience and without obedience faith is dead—it's meaningless and empty (James 2:26).

So like James, when Paul used the phrase "faith works through love," he meant that true faith is always accompanied by acts of obedience which are motivated by love for God and love for people. Therefore, "faith working through love" is basically love-motivated obedience to God's commandments rooted in faith in the finished work of the cross.

Recall from Session 5 the vast difference between obedience that precedes faith and the obedience that proceeds from faith. When our obedience precedes faith we obey to gain God's approval rather than obeying because we have God's approval. We obey to become righteous rather than because we are declared righteous. We obey for acceptance rather than from acceptance. We obey for favor rather than from favor. We obey to avoid condemnation rather than because there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. We obey so that God will love us rather than because God loves us.

The only obedience that pleases God is the kind that proceeds from faith or as Paul said, "faith working through love." Faith working is when we obey from the posture of confident assurance in the finished work of the cross—not as a means of gaining acceptance from God. And Paul showed us that the only way to produce this type of obedience was to live from our new creation, for the law of the new creation always produces love-motivated obedience rooted in faith in the finished work of the cross.

**An Overview of the New Creation**

When many believers hear the phrase "new creation," the full implications of this life-changing reality don't fully register with them. They might see this phrase on a Christian card, hear a preacher proclaim it, sing it in a worship song, or someone mentoring them might say, "You are a new creation in Christ."

Many who are born again know that "something" happened when they accepted Christ, but they struggle to identify and articulate exactly what transpired. Some describe a feeling of peace while others testify that their inward desires were transformed. Many who are born
again have a new hunger to read the Bible, to give to missions, or to pray and worship for hours.

What has transpired is that their once dead spirit has been resurrected and infused with Christ's indestructible life. Just as Jesus called for Lazarus to come forth from the grave, the same Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead called forth our spirit from the grave so that we can now walk in newness of life.

Not only that, but our once deceived, desperately sick heart has been cleansed and transformed (Acts 15:9; Rom. 2:29). The sinful nature, that prideful, rebellious, and independent disease that we inherited from Adam which corrupted our heart, has been removed by the indwelling Spirit. Our hearts are no longer desperately sick, no longer deceived, and no longer filled with pride, rebellion, and independence. In the new birth, the Holy Spirit has circumcised our heart and cleansed it (Acts 15:9; Rom. 2:29).

Over five-hundred years before Christ was born, Ezekiel prophesied what would transpire in the New Covenant when God would make new creations. Take note of what the Lord said through him: "Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances" (Ezek. 36:26-27). Wow! As Christians, we are guilty of reading swiftly through a powerful prophecy such as this and never fully grasping what was said. In essence, Ezekiel prophesied five-hundred years before the cross what God would do through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Ezekiel described hundreds of years in advance the new creation that God would make as a result of the finished work of the cross.

Ezekiel said that God would do four things in transforming us into new creations. Specifically, God promised to: 1) Put a new spirit within us; 2) Put His Spirit within us; 3) Remove our heart of stone; and 4) Give us a new heart that is soft and pliable.

Ezekiel outlined for us in a beautiful way what the new creation is all about. Because of the finished work of the cross, God has already removed our old, hard, deceived, desperately sick heart, He has already given to us a new, pliable, truth-loving, and cleansed heart, He has already given to us a new spirit, and He has already put His Spirit within us.

Our fundamental problem is not our heart or spirit. It is what we believe about our heart and spirit. So many Christians live as if they are still under the Old Covenant—as if Jesus never died and was resurrected—believing that their heart is still hard, sick, deceived, and wicked.

The miracle of being made new in Christ cannot be discerned through our five physical senses. We cannot see with our eyes, hear with our ears, smell with our nose, taste with our mouth, or feel with the members of our body the miraculous work that the Spirit of God has done in giving us a new spirit and a new heart. That is why we are in desperate need of a revelation of who we are as new creations in Christ, for when we really see that our spirit and heart are new and that the same Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead dwells inside of us, it changes everything.

To keep it simple, when we think about ourselves as a new creation in Christ, there are three main realities:

1. Our spirit is new (We will look at this for the remainder of this session);
2. The Spirit of God lives inside of us (We will look at this in the next session);
3. Our heart is new (We will look at this in Session 10).
**We Have A New Spirit**

One of the main reasons why so many Christians live defeated lives is because they never think about their new spirit. Ask the typical believer about their spirit and they will probably respond with a blank stare. Perhaps the "mature" Christians will give chapter and verse about their spirit, but most never live from their born-again spirit on a day-to-day basis. The idea of their spirit being alive, new, and righteous sounds more theoretical than practical.

What about you? Do you ever think about your new spirit? Do you ever meditate on the reality that your spirit is alive from the dead, righteous, and created in the likeness of Christ? Or do most of your thoughts revolve around what you can see, hear, smell, taste, touch, think, feel, and want?

Others have no idea about the main functions of their spirit. They have no problem articulating the functions of their body or soul, but ask them about their spirit and you will either get silence or Sunday-school answers from those trying their best to reply to a question in which they have no practical experience.

Most of us know who we are in our soul. We know the main traits of our personality, such as whether we are introverted or extroverted, analytical or emotional, fun-loving or serious. We also know who we are in our body. We look in the mirror and see whether we are skinny, or as the Africans say, "prosperous." We see the color of our hair, eyes, and skin. We see whether we are tall or short, big-boned or petite. But when it comes to our spirit, most Christians don't have a clue who they are in their spirit.

The challenge is that we do not feel or discern our spirit. Our spirit is invisible and indiscernible, hidden from our five senses and unmeasurable by our rational thoughts and emotions. Because of the hidden nature of our spirit, many believers do not know who they are in their spirit. As a result of this ignorance, they live from the five senses of their body or from the thoughts, emotions, and volition of their soul.

Before we were born again, our spirit was so suppressed by our soul that it was virtually impossible for us to distinguish between our spirit and soul. As our mind, emotions, and will grew stronger, our spirit became increasingly subdued until it was indiscernible. That is why, after we were born again, it takes the living, active, anointed, and spoken Word of God to reveal, divide, and distinguish between the soul and spirit (Heb. 4:12).

For believers to experience ongoing victory over darkness and sin, we must be trained to live from our spirit rather than our body or soul. Think about this for a minute. We receive training on how to live correctly from our body by being educated on the importance of exercise, eating healthy, having good hygiene, and getting enough sleep. We also receive training on how to live correctly from our soul by being taught to think correctly, form habits that build good character, develop the ability to make good decisions, and overcome out of control emotions, such as anxiety, fear, and depression. In the same way that we receive training for our body and soul, we must also receive training for our spirit. This involves understanding the three main functions of our spirit and the seven main traits of our new spirit.
The Three Main Functions of Our Spirit

1. **Our spirit has a conscience that can discern between right and wrong.**

Our spirit has a deep inner knowing, unrelated to the influence of reasoning in the mind, that can distinguish between what is true from false, sinful from holy, and righteous from profane. This innate ability is known as our conscience.

Though our reasoning will often justify what our conscience discerns as true, our conscience is independent from rational thoughts. For example, when we are about to commit some type of sin, whether lust, gossip, or lying, our mind might justify our actions while our spirit shouts to us, "Don't do this; it is wrong."

A scriptural example of our conscience is when Paul went to Athens and "his spirit was being provoked" by the idols he observed (Acts 17:16). His spirit was distinguishing between the holy and the profane.

2. **Our spirit has an intuitive ability to know certain things that are beyond reasoning.**

Intuition is the ability of our spirit to sense or perceive things that are unknowable by the natural mind. Intuition is drastically different from what we know by our five senses or from what we might think, want, or feel. Intuition is a direct sensing of some truth independent of our body and soul.

For example, when Jesus healed the paralyzed man and forgave his sins, the scribes were reasoning in their hearts that He was committing blasphemy. The scribes did not even say anything, but Jesus was "aware in His spirit that they were reasoning that way within themselves" (Mark 2:8). Intuition is an awareness in our spirit of some reality which we could never know by our five senses or through reasoning, calculation, or intellect. We know through intuition and our mind merely helps us to understand what we perceive in our spirit.

All of the deep things of God, revelation of spiritual truths, and hearing the voice of the indwelling Spirit come by intuition in our spirit (1 Cor. 2:10-13; 1 John 2:20, 27).

3. **Our spirit has the ability to commune with God.**

Our spirit has the innate ability to fellowship with the Holy Spirit and to worship God in truth. We cannot know God through reasoning, intellect, or emotions. God is only apprehended by our spirit.

With our spirit, we rejoice in God (Luke 1:47), worship the Father in truth (John 4:23), serve God (Rom. 1:9), fellowship with the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:17), receive the grace of God (Gal. 6:18), and sing (1 Cor. 14:15).
Seven Traits of Our New Spirit

1. Our spirit has been raised from the dead and is now alive.

Paul said to "consider yourselves to be... alive to God in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 6:11) and to "present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead" (Rom. 6:13). Elaborating further, Paul said that "when we were dead in our transgressions" God "made us alive together with Christ" and that "when [we] were dead in transgressions and the uncircumcision of [our] flesh" God "made [us] alive together with Him" (Eph. 2:5; Col. 2:13).

In what way are we now "alive to God" and "alive from the dead"? Paul answered this question for us in Romans 8:10: "If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness." The very moment we were born again, in some unexplainable, invisible, and mysterious way, the Holy Spirit raised our once dark and dead spirit up from the grave by His resurrection power. Our old spirit died and our new spirit was resurrected.

When we think about our spirit, we need to know that our spirit is now alive because of the impartation of Christ's resurrection life. Our once sinful, depraved, dark, and dead spirit has been raised from the dead by the infusion of Christ's righteousness and is now alive because the same Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead lives inside of us.

2. Our spirit has been born again.

Jesus told Nicodemus, a respected religious leader, "Unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). In today's secular, humanistic, post-modern world, the term "born again" has been mocked, defamed, and desecrated. Even Nicodemus, thinking that the term born-again was a little unreasonable, questioned Jesus, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" (John 3:4).

The church must not let the devil, through humanistic and sophisticated intellectuals who mock the concept of being born again, steal this vital term. We must recover the term "born again" and we must fully understand what Jesus meant by it.

In today's church world, we so often brand someone as a "Christian" while their lifestyle testifies loudly against it. We say the president is a Christian, yet he endorses homosexual marriage and abortion. We say a celebrity or athlete is a Christian, yet he lives an idolatrous and adulterous lifestyle. Rather than branding everyone a Christian who claims belief in Jesus Christ, the real question we should ask is, "Have they been born again?"

What did Jesus mean when He said that we must be born again? To answer this question, look at how Jesus answered Nicodemus: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:5). To be born of the flesh is the first birth, when we were born into this world with a sin nature inherited from Adam. To be born of the Spirit is the second birth, when the Holy Spirit gives us a brand new spirit, for "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Make sure that you understand this vital point: Our spirit is the part of our being affected by the second birth.

When we are born again, we don't just become better people, but fundamentally different people with a brand new, recreated spirit. Just as the recipient of a heart or kidney transplant has an entirely different heart or kidney, when we were born again, we received an entirely different spirit—we received a spirit transplant. We are fundamentally new creations in Christ, and as a result, our lives are completely transformed.
Throughout the book of 1 John, the Apostle John outlined the results of those truly born of God. He said that those born of God practice righteousness (2:29), do not continue in sin (3:9; 5:18), love God and others (4:7), know God (4:7), and overcome the world (5:4). Just as naturally as we took our first breath when we came out of the womb, the natural byproducts of the second birth are obedience, righteousness, overcoming sin, and loving God and others.

3. **Our spirit has been recreated in the likeness of God.**

Paul said, "Put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth" (Eph. 4:24). What is the "new self" that Paul exhorted us to put on? It is our new creation—our born-again spirit. Notice that Paul said that our new spirit "has been created" in the "likeness of God." The New Living Translation states, "Put on your new nature, created to be like God."

This idea of being created in the image and likeness of God takes us immediately back to the garden when God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness" (Gen. 1:26).

After Adam sinned, his nature was drastically different from the image and likeness of God. His nature—and ours in him—descended to the nature of Satan, filled with pride, independence, rebellion, and self-centeredness. Once created in the likeness of God, man was diabolically transformed into the likeness of Satan and became a hostile enemy of God.

Nevertheless, at the new birth, the Spirit of God refashioned our spirit back into the image of God. Though our body and unrenewed soul are still in the likeness of Satan, our spirit has been refashioned into the exact image of the living God.

Paul made a similar statement in Colossians 3:10, stating that the "new man" is "renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him" (NKJV). Looking at the Greek words for "renewed" and "knowledge," the more literal translation is our spirit has been "made new and changed into a new state based on precise and correct knowledge of God."

When you think about your spirit, know this: Your spirit has been recreated and refashioned into an entirely new state that is patterned exactly after the precise and correct knowledge of God. Therefore, we need to spend more time meditating upon the glorious truth that our spirit was instantaneously reborn in the likeness and image of Jesus Christ.

4. **Our spirit is righteous and holy.**

When the Spirit of God recreated our spirit, He did so in perfect righteousness. Paul said, "If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness" (Rom. 8:10).

The righteousness that Christ imparted to our spirit can never be improved. Amazingly, God is not more righteous than the righteousness He freely imparts into our spirit at new birth. By His Spirit, God has deposited one-hundred percent of His righteousness into our spirit the moment that we were saved and regenerated. Though our body is dead because of sin, our spirit has been recreated and is alive because of His imparted righteousness.

A million years from now as we worship before the throne of God in eternity, our spirit will not be more righteous than it is the moment we were born again. The righteousness that God imparts into our spirit at new birth cannot be improved or enhanced. It Christ's perfect righteousness, His divine nature.
Along the same lines, Paul also exhorted us to "put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth." As we saw earlier, the new self is another way of saying our new spirit. When the Spirit of God refashioned our spirit and gave us a spirit transplant, He created our spirit "in true righteousness and holiness" (NKJV). Our spirit is as righteous and holy as Christ Himself.

Thirty-seven times from Romans to Philemon, Paul called believers "saints," undoubtedly a reference to believers as new creations in Christ. Make no mistake about it—if you are born again, you are no longer a wretched sinner struggling to live a holy life; you are a saint with a righteous spirit who occasionally sins.

When you hear the word "saint," especially if you were raised as a Catholic, you might think of the very special Christians throughout history, such as Saint Paul, Saint John, or Saint Peter. Though Paul, John, and Peter are great pillars of the faith, every born-again believer is a saint because their spirit has been recreated in true righteousness and holiness.

The Greek word for saint is hagios and means a "most holy thing." If you are born again, your spirit is one-hundred percent righteous and holy. Your spirit is pure, free from carnality, and cleansed from defilement.

5. Our spirit was recreated in perfection.

As stated previously, a million years from now as we worship before the throne of God in eternity, our spirit will not be more righteous than it is the moment we were born again, for our spirit was recreated in righteous perfection. Think for a moment about the implications of this statement. This is a bold declaration that undoubtedly makes some very well-meaning Christians uneasy. Some even protest that our spirits are not yet perfect and will not be until we get to heaven.

But if God is righteous and perfect, would He create anything that is less than righteous and perfect? Would God recreate our spirit with a little unrighteousness in it? Would God refashion our spirit with some defilement or impurities in it? No—of course not! How could God create our spirit less than righteous or imperfect? He can't.

Everything that God creates is righteous and perfect, for it is impossible for Him to do otherwise. That means God has created our new spirit in a state of righteous perfection. Hebrews 12:22-23 validates this: "But you have come to...the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect."

Some read this verse and argue that the author is talking about heaven; therefore, they say, our spirit will not be perfect until we get to heaven. However, the context alternates between heaven and earth to emphasize the portal which the church on earth has into heaven. The author specifically stated that we have come to the church which is enrolled in heaven, not to the church which is in heaven. Therefore, the author of Hebrews is most likely highlighting what transpired at the new birth when God recreated our spirit in perfect righteousness, for why would the perfect God recreate us imperfectly?

The Greek word for "made perfect" is teleioō and means "to make perfect, complete, to carry through completely, to accomplish, finish, bring to an end." The work of salvation in your spirit is perfectly complete. It is finished. Your spirit has been saved. There is no more work that needs to be done to your spirit. God's goal for your spirit has been accomplished. His work in your spirit has been brought to finality. God recreated your spirit in perfection once-and-for-all the moment you were born again. In Christ, our spirit has already been.
perfected and is as perfect now as it will ever be—even billions of years from now in eternity.

Along the same lines, Hebrews 10:14 states, "For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified" (NKJV). "Perfected forever" relates to our born-again spirit that is righteous, holy, alive, and refashioned in the likeness of God. "Being sanctified" relates to our soul progressively being conformed into the image of Christ.

By the one sacrifice of Jesus, we have been perfected forever! Not will be perfect one day. Perfected already. You may not feel perfect. Most likely you still sin in ways that grieve the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, your spirit has been perfected by the work of the Spirit of Christ.

Take a bold step of faith and declare out loud, "My spirit was recreated in perfect righteousness. My spirit was refashioned and perfected forever. My spirit is as righteous right now as it will be one million years from now in eternity. The perfectly righteous God has recreated my spirit in perfect righteousness." Make it a habit to regularly confess the truth about your born-again, righteous, holy, and perfected spirit.

6. **Our spirit is one with the Holy Spirit.**

When God saved us and put His Spirit within us, our spirit was joined to the Holy Spirit. Paul said, "But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him" (1 Cor. 6:17). Pause for a moment and meditate upon the fact that we are one spirit with the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the One in Genesis who executed the commands of Jesus to create the heavens and the earth (Gen. 1:2; Col. 1:15-16). He is the One who formed the sun, the moon, and the stars out of nothing in obedience to the Son's directives. He created the dry land, the oceans, the mountains, and the rivers. He made the earth and the universe in stunning beauty. This same Spirit who created the earth and the galaxies lives within every born-again believer. The same Spirit who impregnated the virgin Mary and raised Jesus from the dead dwells inside of us. Our spirit is now one with the Holy Spirit.

Recall from Session 4 the coffee analogy. When the individual ingredients of coffee granules, hot water, sugar, and half-and-half are blended together they become permanently one, making it impossible to separate the ingredients ever again. Likewise, our spirit became one with the Holy Spirit when we were born again, so that now it is impossible to separate our spirit from Him. We are inseparably joined, spirit-to-Spirit, to the God who created the universe, impregnated a virgin, and raised the Son of God from the dead.

In Romans 7, Paul used the analogy of a husband and wife to make the point that we have been joined to Christ spirit-to-Spirit, stating, "Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God" (Rom. 7:4). Just as the covenant of marriage joins two people together as one, we have been joined to Christ spirit-to-Spirit when we were born again.

Recall from Session 6 how the life of Christ has been engrafted into us. We looked at Romans 6:5 and saw that we have been united with Christ in His death and resurrection. Remember that the Greek word for united can mean "born together with" or "grow together with" and has the meaning of engrafted.

In the same way shoots from a fruitful tree are engrafted to shoots from an unfruitful tree in order to produce luscious, juicy, large, and tasteful fruit, the Spirit of Christ was engrafted to our spirit so that we might bear fruit for God. Like a rotten fruit tree, apart from Christ we can only produce sinful fruit that is hostile to God and unpleasing to Him.
Nevertheless, in salvation, God joined our spirit to His Spirit and implanted the very nature of His Son within us. Now we can produce the luscious fruit of the Spirit—the fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control (Gal. 5:22-23).

New birth is all about my spirit being joined to Christ's Spirit and His indestructible life being grafted into me. Righteousness that I did not possess is now grafted into me. Holiness that I did not possess is now grafted into me. Resurrection life that I did not possess is now grafted into me. Christ's divine nature that I did not possess is now grafted into me.

Because our spirit is one with the Holy Spirit, we are like a branch that is already connected to the vine. That means we don't have to struggle to abide in Christ. We don't have to strive to be connected to Christ. We don't have to strain all of our emotional energy to have intimacy with Him. At new birth, we were vitally connected to Christ the Vine by the indwelling Spirit.

So many Christians are striving and struggling to connect themselves to Christ without realizing that they were connected to Him the very moment they were born again. The key to the abiding life, therefore, is having a revelation that we are already united, joined, and connected to Christ spirit-to-Spirit the moment we were saved. John said, "By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit" (1 John 4:13).

Because our spirit is one with the indwelling Spirit, we are already abiding in Christ and are connected to Him just like a branch is connected to the vine. Therefore, we don't have to struggle or strive to produce fruit; we simply have to know by revelation that we are already connected to Christ and let Him live through us.

7. Our spirit is a partaker of the divine nature.

When Paul said that "we have become united with Him" (Rom. 6:5), we saw in Session 6 that the Greek word for "united" has an additional meaning of "implanted by birth or nature, of joint origin, innate, congenital."

If we take each of these definitions and substitute them into this verse, here is what it means:

- We have Christ's nature implanted into us by new birth;
- We are of joint origin with Christ by new birth;
- We have Christ's nature as part of our innate spiritual nature;
- We have Christ's spiritual heredity and genetics inherently within our spirit at new birth.

When we were born of the Spirit, we became recipients of a genetic transmission and are now partakers of Christ's very own spiritual DNA. The moment we were born again, our spirit inherited the same traits and characteristics of Christ. Peter said that we are "partakers of the divine nature" in Christ (2 Peter 1:4). This means if it was possible to do a DNA test of our born-again spirit it would be an exact match with Jesus. Amazingly, our born-again spirit is identical to Jesus in righteousness and holiness.

John said, "As He is, so also are we in this world" (1 John 4:17). John didn't say that we will be like Him; he said that we are like him. This is a such powerful revelation that has the potential to transform your entire life. Think about this for a moment: In your spirit you are exactly like Jesus. Jesus' indestructible life, Jesus' resurrection life, Jesus' righteousness, Jesus' holiness, Jesus' divine nature—all that Christ is in His divinity—has been engrafted into your spirit and now you are partaker of His divine nature.
Imagine for a moment that the DNA of Steve Jobs or Bill Gates were imparted to you. All of a sudden, your ability to innovate, create, envision, market, and act as an entrepreneur in the software industry would increase exponentially. As you can imagine, it probably would be only a few years before you became a millionaire from the revolutionary ideas that naturally started coming into your mind.

Or what would happen if the DNA of Michael Jordan were imparted to you. Your ability to play basketball would be completely transformed. You would be able to jump, run, and shoot a basketball like never before.

As born-again Christians, we have something far superior than the DNA of Steve Jobs, Bill Gates, or Michael Jordan within our spirit. We have the exact nature of the divinity of Jesus engrafted into us. All of His traits, characteristics, life, love, holiness, and righteousness has been imparted into our spirit. Please grasp this: You have the full nature of Jesus Christ in your born-again spirit. Having the divine nature of Christ within our spirit is almost incomprehensible. Having the innate and essential qualities of the God-Man in our inner man almost defies belief.

Peter said, "For you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God" (1 Peter 1:23). A seed has all the innate qualities of its parent plant. In fact, a seed is actually a plant within a shell, created in the image of what formed it. With this in mind, Peter said that the seed planted within us is the Word of God. Who is the Word of God? Scripture reveals that Jesus Himself is the Word of God (John 1:1). So the incorruptible seed that was planted within us at new birth is Christ Himself. Christ is in us, we are in Christ, and all that makes Christ who He is was implanted within our spirit when we were born again.

So many believers view themselves as struggling sinners who are merely forgiven rather than realizing that their spirit has been refashioned into the exact likeness of Christ by His very own seed. Yes, they believe that someday they will be like Christ, but now on earth, they are limping through life blinded to the glorious reality of what God has done in their spirit.

Knowing that we have the seed of Christ within our spirit and possess His divine nature, the idea of us being the offspring of God makes perfect sense. John said, "Beloved, now we are children of God" (1 John 3:2). This is not about sometime in the future or when we arrive in heaven, but now. If we are born of God, then we have the seed of Christ and His divine nature in our spirit, making us His children with the same essential qualities of Jesus Christ.

To live in ongoing victory over sin, we must meditate on the truth that our born-again spirit is alive from the dead, regenerated, recreated in the likeness of God, righteous and holy, perfect, one with the Holy Spirit, and is a partaker of the divine nature.

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2 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

