

Week 2: Jesus, the New Adam Who Makes Us a New Creation

This week we will focus on how Jesus breaks us out of old ways of thinking and makes us a new creation.

Supplies:

- For optional opening activity – Either paper and colored pencils/markers or butterfly-shaped sugar cookies, white frosting, colored sprinkles, plastic knives for spreading frosting
- Blank nametags for each person in the group and a second set of nametags with the word “Beloved” written on them ahead of time. (If you don’t have any, labels or Post-it notes will do.)
- Tissues for when the tears flow

Optional Opening Activity as People Arrive: Either invite people to frost a butterfly sugar cookie that represents who they are as a new creation or draw one on a piece of paper. Before people eat their cookie, have them share with the group how it (or their drawing) represents who they are in Christ as a new creation.

Prayer: Invite the Holy Spirit to come and lead us into a deeper revelation of Jesus who enables us to be a new creation.

Worship: Play the song “Dancing on the Waves” by Bethel Music featuring We the Kingdom. (A link can be found on the worship playlist at the bottom of the Puzzle Piece 1 page at TillingMinistries.com.) Listen with your eyes closed, picturing God the Father singing this over you. The purpose of these opening visualizations is to recondition our imagination to see what God is doing. We’re consecrating our imagination to the Lord, inviting the Holy Spirit to open our spiritual eyes so we can receive pictures from him.

Remaining in the Word: Encourage people to have their Bible open as you read.

1. **Read 2 Corinthians 5:14-17.** *“Since we believe that Christ died for all, we also believe that we have all died to our old life. ¹⁵ He died for everyone so that those who receive his new life will no longer live for themselves. Instead, they will live for Christ, who died and was raised for them. ¹⁶ So we have stopped evaluating others from a human point of view. At one time we thought of Christ merely from a human point of view. How differently we know him now! ¹⁷ This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!” (NLT).*

Discuss: Why do you think God wants us to see our old life as something that has died, having no more power over us? How do we stop “evaluating others from a human point of view,” and partner with the Holy Spirit to think differently about others?

2. **Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-7.** *“If I could speak all the languages of earth and of angels, but didn’t love others, I would only be a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ² If I had the gift of prophecy, and if I understood all of God’s secret plans and possessed all knowledge, and if I had such faith that I could move mountains, but didn’t love others, I would be nothing. ³ If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it, but if I didn’t love others, I would have gained nothing. ⁴ Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud ⁵ or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. ⁶ It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. ⁷ Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.”*

Discuss: Jesus said the world would know we're his disciples by our love. How does love, as defined by this passage, inform how we view people and speak to people?

Prayer: Break into small groups of three and ask the Holy Spirit to give you revelation of how he sees the other two people in your group. Simply ask the Lord, "What do you love about (person's name)?" Then wait on the Lord with expectation that he will bring a picture to mind, drop a word or scripture into your spirit, or even give you his emotions toward each person as you lift them up to the Lord. (If you feel a surge of emotion, like anger, perhaps that is God's justice welling up within you over an injustice in that person's life. Ask the Holy Spirit for understanding when he shows you something.) We are practicing seeing one another as Christ sees us, no longer regarding each other from a human point of view.

Activity: Through this activity we will practice loving each other as Christ has loved us by removing old labels connected to the past and declaring us to be a new creation. We are establishing a precedent that when we feel moved with compassion, it is okay to stop what we're doing and respond to someone who is in pain. Too often, people share deep pain in small groups, then we move on to the next person without responding. Jesus was moved with compassion to act, so when he shows up, we agree to move with him and love people. (If you have a large group, break into smaller groups of 3-5.)

- **Hand each person a blank nametag to put somewhere on them that represents a false identity or negative label that has either been applied to you by someone else or that you have given yourself.** A label might be true about your past without being THE truth about you. You may be talkative, but a negative label might be "Talks too much" which is meant to shut down something God has put in you. A false identity is when a temporary state or disposition becomes an identity that doesn't line up with scripture. For example, a person who has made a mistake might receive a false identity of "Failure" which is meant to rob you of hope and prevent you from moving forward.
- **Share:** Ask each person, if they're comfortable, to share what's on their imaginary label. (Have tissues handy because these kinds of statements often come out with tears.) **Before you do this, however, read the next section to the group so you can be ready to respond after each person shares.**
- **Respond:** We often need help from people in the body of Christ to remove false identities and labels because they were usually put onto us by people and, thus, need to be removed by people. After each person shares, wait on the Lord and ask Jesus to come and demonstrate his compassion through you, his body on the earth. Whoever feels the compassion of Jesus moving them to respond can then go to the person and remove their label, adding whatever words of comfort that the Comforter brings to mind. (If this feels intimidating, a simple, "I'm so sorry you were made to feel that way because that's not how God sees you" will suffice.)
- **Leader:** After everyone has shared and had false labels removed, go to each person and apply a nametag that you have prepared in advance that says, "Beloved" on it, and declare this as their primary identity in Christ along with any other words of encouragement the Spirit gives you.

Closing Prayer: In small groups of three, share prayer requests. As each person shares, listen to the Holy Spirit and ask him to show you how to pray with faith over each other as new creations in Christ, declaring that the old has gone and the new has come.