

In What Ways are Christians Changed?

Metamorphoo – to remodel, to change into another form – also used to describe Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17:2, Mark 9:2)

- Romans 12:2 “Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”
 - This transformation is of the mind rather than of the body.
 - In the description that follows, the transformation appears to depend on gifts from God (v 3, 6 – 18).
- 2 Corinthians 3:18 “But we, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, from the Spirit of the Lord.”
 - The change is cause by the Holy Spirit
 - The transformation is summed up as glory: a parade of godly character traits.
 - The following two chapters expand of these characteristics and their resulting behaviors.

Metaschematizo – to change the outward appearance

- 1 Corinthians 4:6 “Now these things I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos, for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you be puffed up on behalf of one against another.”
 - The illustrations, in 3:7 – 22, used agricultural and construction metaphors to explain how Paul and Apollos were working differently yet in harmony.
- 2 Corinthians 11:13 – 15 “For such [those who wanted to appropriate the stature of an apostle] are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore, it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.”
 - This type of transformation is on the outside only, not from the inside out.

Kainos – what was not here before, what has only just appeared

- 2 Corinthians 5:17 “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold all things have become new.”
 - Preceding this are two chapters (starting around 3:7) of ways a Christian adopts new traits and how those traits change how they live. A sampling of the conclusions:
 - (5:9) Comprehending the unseen results in endeavoring to be well pleasing to Him as an outgrowth of our “other centered” viewpoint and the other characteristics of faith.
 - (5:10 – 11) Knowing that Judgment is inevitable, we persuade others, again based on the characteristics of our faith listed above.
 - (5:12 – 13) One could interpret Paul’s examples as boasting. But, seen properly, Paul is giving the Christians of Corinth something to boast about to unbelievers in Corinth; the important thing is heart, not appearance.
 - (5:14 – 15) “That those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them” “The love of Christ compels us.”

- (5:16) We no longer see physical people but spirits.
- Galatians 6:15 “For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation.”
 - This newness is inward, not outward.
- Ephesians 4:24 “...put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.”
 - From the previous paragraph, the old ways fall away; the spirit of the mind is renewed.
 - This renewed spirit results in righteous and holy behavior.

Neos – what is new and distinctive in terms of time or origin, perhaps immature

- Colossians 3:10 “...put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him.”
 - The primary new characteristic is knowledge (understanding).
 - The application in this place is ethnic equality.
 - Other character traits are listed in the following four verses.
- 1 Corinthians 5:7 “Therefore, purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed, Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed.”
 - From the context, the primary focus is to overcome cultural norms by consciously seeking them out and removing their influence from ourselves.

Anyone can transform the façade. Our transformation is on the inside, a character renewed by the Spirit. Our outlooks are not just reconditioned but new and distinctive. Our newness is like starting over as a child in understanding.