

New Beginning—Out with the Old
Study Questions
2 Corinthians 5:16-21; Ephesians 4:21-27

Warm-up

1) The new year is often a time for a fresh start, for making a clean break with something from the past. **Have you recently cleaned out old things, changed habits, or made resolutions/goals? Explain.**

If not, what are some memorable things you've done around the New Year in the past?

A little deeper

2) [2 Corinthians 5:16-17] What does it mean that “the old has passed away, the new has come?”

What are some “old” things (ways of seeing or interacting with the world) that often pass away when someone starts a new life in Christ?

3) As we are made new, our old self passes away. This process begins immediately when we begin to follow Christ, but it is not complete. In verse 2 Corinthians 5:17, the Greek verb in the phrase “the new has come” is *gegonen*. It implies an ongoing transition from one point to another. Read Ephesians 4:21-24, which calls us to an active role in this transition.

What does it look like on a day-to-day basis to put off your old sinful nature, and put on your new nature? Be as specific as possible.

What if the old is not passing away and the new coming in as quickly as we would like? Or what if we find ourselves returning to the old sinful nature?

4) [2 Corinthians 5:18-21] What is our part in reconciling the world to God? What is God's part?

How do you feel about being an ambassador for Christ?

How can we support each other in this?

5) The Greek word for sin, used in verse 21, is *hamartia*. It's a complex word that implies three things: substitution, participation, and sacrifice.

1. Christ became our substitute as the object of God's wrath.
2. Christ participated in the human journey when He took on flesh.
3. Christ became a sacrifice for our sin.

To be clear, Christ never became a sinner, but He was so much more than a sin-offering. **What is your reaction to Christ's substitution, participation, and sacrifice? Why is this important?**

Bringing it home

6) As we begin a new year, and embrace an opportunity for a fresh start, what do you most need to “throw off” from your old nature?

What new thought, attitude, or habit do you most need to put on right now?

How will you rely on the Spirit and your community to move forward with this?