

Valley Bible Church
Sermon Notes for July 4, 2010

“Viewing People Properly”
2 Corinthians 5:16-17

What do we learn about Paul and how he viewed people in 2 Corinthians 5:16-17?

Paul, after his conversion, no longer viewed people according to the flesh (2 Corinthians 5:16).

When Paul said that he recognized no one according to his flesh, he simply meant that after his conversion he no longer viewed people based on worldly distinctions or expectations.

When Paul said that he had “known Christ according to the flesh,” he was referring to a period of time prior to his conversion when he, based on worldly distinctions and expectations, had rejected Christ.

Paul, prior to his conversion, having known Christ according to the flesh, had rejected Him, but after his conversion he no longer viewed Him as a fraud but as God incarnate, the Savior of the world.

Paul, after his conversion, not only stopped viewing people according to the flesh, but more specifically he began to view Christians as new creatures in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17).

The phrase “in Christ” succinctly and profoundly summarizes all the rich blessings of salvation (cf. Romans 8:1; 16:3, 7; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 1:1; Philippians 1:1; 4:21; Colossians 1:2, 28; Philemon 23).

When Paul declared that for Christians old things had passed away, the tense of the verb (aorist) points back to a definite moment or event, namely, the experience of new birth.

The tense of the verb translated “have come” (GINOMAI) indicates a past act with continuing results in the present.

The passing of the old and the coming of the new was most likely meant by Paul to call to mind the old and new covenants that Paul has already repeatedly contrasted earlier in the epistle (2 Corinthians 3:6).

May God give us the grace to view people, whether they are saved or unsaved, as God views people, and may we respond accordingly.