

Media Notes

There is a Word of Witness video to be played before Joys and Concerns. For the sermon, there will be a sermon starter video and there are two scriptures to be on screen.



Key Questions, Metadata and Outline

What is this sermon about?

This sermon is about living as a new creation and starting today.

Why is this sermon important?

It is important because we sometimes feel that we are not worthy to start new and feel that we can put off until tomorrow what God invites us to today.

What is the context of this sermon?

This is the first sermon of a new year and a new series.

What are the next action steps?

The next action steps are to live as one of God's children, today and follow after God in all the days ahead.

What is the good news (bottom line)?

The good news is that God's mercy is renewed every morning. Today we can live as a new creation, one of God's own children.

Metadata

1. Topic(s)
 1. discipleship
2. Sermon Books of the Bible
 1. 2 Corinthians, Lamentations
3. Series
 1. Today
4. Speaker
 1. Andrew Conard
5. Tags
 1. new creation, today, discipleship, new, child of God, children of God, invitation,

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2 Corinthians 5:11-21, CEB

11 So we try to persuade people, since we know what it means to fear the Lord. We are well known by God, and I hope that in your heart we are well known by you as well. 12 We aren't trying to commend ourselves to you again. Instead, we are giving you an opportunity to be proud of us so that you could answer those who take pride in superficial appearance, and not in what is in the heart. 13 If we are crazy, it's for God's sake. If we are rational, it's for your sake. 14 The love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: one died for the sake of all; therefore, all died. 15 He died for the sake of all so that those who are alive should live not for themselves but for the one who died for them and was raised. 16 So then, from this point on we won't recognize people by human standards. Even though we used to know Christ by human standards, that isn't how we know him now. 17 So then, if anyone is in Christ, that person is part of the new creation. The old things have gone away, and look, new things have arrived! 18 All of these new things are from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and who gave us the ministry of reconciliation. 19 In other words, God was reconciling the world to himself through Christ, by not counting people's sins against them. He has trusted us with this message of reconciliation. 20 So we are ambassadors who represent Christ. God is negotiating with you through us. We beg you as Christ's representatives, "Be reconciled to God!" 21 God caused the one who didn't know sin to be sin for our sake so that through him we could become the righteousness of God.

Response to Scripture

One: The Word of God for the People of God.

All: Thanks be to God!

Introduction

Sermon Starter Video

Play sermon starter video.

*** Start Sermon Timer ***

How to Account for Your Time

It is really hard to account for your time in a detailed way.
How did you get to work or school two week ago?
Did you go your normal route or did you have to drop something off that morning? Did you drive or get a ride with someone else? Are you sure?
Did you go in any stores that day? If so, what did you buy? Who did you talk to?
The entire day, name every person you talked to.

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It's hard.
Now imagine you have to account for a day six weeks back.
What can you tell me about Monday November 24, 2014?

Serial Podcast

This was the set up from the first episode of the Serial Podcast. "Serial is a podcast from the creators of This American Life, and is hosted by Sarah Koenig. Serial tells one story - a true story - over the course of an entire season."¹

It began on October 3 and concluded on December 18. It told the story of a girl named Hae Min Lee who disappeared on January 13, 1999. A month later, her body turned up in a city park. ... Her 17-year-old ex-boyfriend, Adnan Syed, was arrested for the crime, and within a year, he was convicted and sentenced to spend the rest of his life in prison."² Serial became the most popular podcast ever and averaged more than 1.5 million listeners per episode.

Transition

The story centers around where a high school kid was for 21 minutes after school one day in 1999.

How do you account for your day?
What goes on for you that makes one day stand out from another?
How is your life different today than it was yesterday?
Will it be different tomorrow than it is today?

Series Review

This is the focus of our new worship series, Today.
Do you find yourself exhausted at the end of the day?
Do you remember what you did this morning?
Or even last week?

Over the next several weeks, we will examine some of the ways that we can live, today, the way that God intends. We will consider how to do the things that God wants us to do and be the person that God wants us to be.

Today.
We turn our attention to one of those themes in this sermon.
Today: I am a new creation.

Sermon Notes and Scripture Study

I invite you to open your bulletin to a place where you can take notes during the message today. Today, I hope that you will hear:

¹ <http://serialpodcast.org/about>

² <http://serialpodcast.org/about>

- Something new or find new questions
- Perspective on your life or something in your life that gives additional meaning to the message today.
- Guidance about how to live as a disciple of Jesus.

I invite you to write down some of the things that you hear in the sermon today and take your bulletin home as a tool to grow in your faith outside of worship. You can reflect on what you heard today, pray for people of our congregation and read scripture to prepare for worship next week.

Prayer

Will you pray with me? O God, use these words to speak good news so that as individuals and as a congregation we will fear nothing but sin, desire nothing but you and live as part of your kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

New Year Resolutions

Did you make New Year resolutions?

Have you considered the ways that you might live differently in 2015?

It is pretty common for us to consider the ways that we might be made new by starting, stopping or paying attention to a wide variety of areas of our life.

What is it for you?

What will be new for you in 2015?

Finances

You may be looking for a new start to your financial life. There could be a practice which you start this year that will transform the way you relate to money. It may be:

- start to budget
- take a financial class
- get a mentor
- cut up your credit cards

Your finances could be brand new by the end of the year. It could start today.

Priorities

You may be looking to set new priorities in your life because you realize the way that you have been living, just isn't working. You might reset:

- how much time you spend at work
- the time you spend with your family
- the way you connect with community organizations
- how you are involved in the life of the church.

The way that you spend your days and weeks could be brand new.

It could start today.

Body

You may be looking for a new body this year. The way you feel and the way that you think about yourself maybe impacting your life in not so pleasant ways. You might be looking for change by:

- eating differently
 - becoming more active
 - getting enough rest
- You could look and feel brand new.
It could start today.

Faith

You may be looking for a new or renewed relationship with God this year. The way that you worship, grow, give, serve and share your faith could be different if you decide to:

- pray every day
- read your bible
- joined a group to grow in your faith with others

Transition

The first of the year is a natural time for us to consider questions like this about our life.

Am I the person that I want to be?

How would I like the future to be different than the past?

What about the last year would I like to change?

This connects us with the scripture passage and our theme for today.

I am a new creation.

I am a new creation.

Here again these words from 2 Corinthians 15:17:

17 So then, if anyone is in Christ, that person is part of the new creation. The old things have gone away, and look, new things have arrived!

When we are in Christ, we are part of the new creation.

The old is gone and the new is here.

We can live as part of God's new creation.

New Creation in Death

I have officiated at three funerals over the past three weeks. Part of the good news which I have shared at each of those services for Marge, Martha and Alta – what I share at every service of death and resurrection – is that our hope as Christians is that death is not the end. We can look forward to a day when there will be a new heaven

and a new earth and God “will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more. There will be no mourning, crying, or pain anymore, for the former things have passed away. Then the one seated on the throne said, “Look! I’m making all things new.”³

New Creation in Life

We also have the opportunity to live as a part of God’s kingdom while we are still on this earth. We can live as a new creation today. Through Jesus Christ, God adopts us as one of God’s own children, washes us clean and makes us new. We can follow after God all of our days. This is what God offers us, today.

Conclusion

Yet, we may not feel that this makes sense for us. God knows what I have done and said in all of the yesterdays in my life. How could it be possible for me to be a new creation today? The writer of Lamentations reminds us in Lamentations 3:22-23:

“Certainly the faithful love of the Lord hasn’t ended; certainly God’s compassion isn’t through! They are renewed every morning. Great is your faithfulness.”

Good News

The good news is that God’s mercy is renewed every morning. Today we can live as a new creation, one of God’s own children.

Call to Action

God knows your name. The God who created the universe, the God whose only son is Jesus Christ, the God who breathes the Holy Spirit, this God knows all of who you are – the scars from the past, the things that you wish no one would know.

God still offers forgiveness and love, no matter how worthy or unworthy we may feel. For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly, for you and for me. God proves God’s love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us.

Live as one of God’s children, today and follow after God in all the days ahead.

Invitation

Will you live as a new creation, today?

Let’s pray.

As we pray today, I will say a few words and I invite you to pray them quietly under your breath. Pray with me.

³ Revelation 21:4-5, CEB.

Epiphany Sunday
Today - I am a new creation.
First United Methodist Church of El Dorado
Text Online at <http://j.mp/1AiunnX>

January 4, 2015
2 Corinthians 5:11-21
Preaching Target Word Count: 2,447
Video is not available online

Closing Prayer

Jesus, I want to follow you. I recognize the things that I have done wrong in the past and I am sorry. Thank you for loving me. Wash me clean and make me a new creation. Help me live as you want me to live, today. I offer myself to you, in Jesus name, Amen.

	8:30 AM	11:00 AM
Sermon Time		