

# Not According to the Flesh

by Erlo Stegen

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*The sermon emphasizes the transformative power of being in Christ, urging believers to see beyond the flesh and embrace their new identity and relationships.*

**Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 5:16

**Topics:** "Spiritual Transformation", "New Creation in Christ"

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## Description

Erlo Stegen emphasizes that as believers, we should no longer view others or Christ according to the flesh, but rather through the lens of spiritual transformation. He highlights the importance of recognizing that true worth is not based on nationality, wealth, or appearance, but on the heart and the new creation we become in Christ. Stegen illustrates this with biblical examples, such as David's anointing and the transformative power of honoring one's parents. He encourages living according to God's Word, which leads to a complete renewal of thoughts, relationships, and behaviors. Ultimately, being in Christ means embracing a new identity that reflects His love and grace.

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## Transcript

Text: 2 Corinthians 5:16-17

"Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more"

We also don't know people according to the flesh anymore, saying this man is a German, or Zulu or Englishman. We also don't esteem a person according to his riches or wealth, or position.

Maybe when a rich man comes to you he gets the best treatment, but when a poor man comes to you, you treat him with disdain.

Such still know people according to the flesh.

That doesn't negate the Bible's clear teaching to give honour to whom honour is due. We need to respect those who is placed in authority over us and pray for them.

So too we don't know Christ according to the flesh as some try to portray Jesus with a beard, and tall and with a long nose etc. That's just people's imagination.

Some also say that since He was from the Middle East, He's not part of our people. So they say, "why should we forsake our ways?"

We don't know if He was tall or short or what other characteristics He had. Many people are very interested in those things. They look at a person's outer appearance and judge a person accordingly.

When Samuel came to anoint a king in the house of Jesse, the others did not even regard David or invited him when Samuel arrived. Yet God, who looks at the heart, chose David as king over Israel.

It's a known fact that those who live a high-risk life, like drinking, smoking, doing drugs and immorality, has a shorter life-expectancy than those who live a decent life and don't do the above things, according to life-expectancy studies.

However the best medication to live long is found in the Bible - honour your father and mother. Even if they are drunkards, you must hate their sin but honour them as God commands.

Live according to God's Word.

The story is told of a young man that hitch-hiked and a Christian man picked him up. He started to share the Gospel with him, but the young man said, "I'm sick and tired of all these rules and regulations. I'm at university now and want to enjoy my freedom." The man kept quiet and prayed for wisdom. As they entered town, the first traffic light turned red, and the man simply drove faster and went over the red light. The young man panicked, "you can't do that. You will kill us." Then the man said to him, "Well I'm also sick and tired of all the rules and regulations of the road that tells me when I must stop and what I'm not allowed to do. I want to be free and drive as I want." Then the penny dropped and the young man understood.

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new"

It starts with "therefore" referring to what was before.

We are pointed to the fact that we must now abide in Him. The old passed away. In Him we're a new creation.

When people wanted to put emphasis on circumcision, Paul said that in Christ, circumcision or not is not what counts, but being a new creation in Christ. (Gal 6:15)

We also read of Jesus making everything new in the last chapter of the Bible, Rev 21:4, 5.

Are all things new? When Jesus comes into your life He makes everything new. Even the evil things that you used to do, you don't do anymore. Your old goals and ambitions are gone and you have a new goal and ambition, to find and do God's will, to please Him in everything and not yourself.

When all things become new, even your thoughts are changed so that you don't think the evil things you used to think, but on things that are pure and honourable. (Phillip 4:8)

Even your friends will change. You cannot have the same friends that you used to have before you became a Christian. (2Cor 6:15)

If you're in Christ, everything changes. You as a wife won't speak in the same disrespectful way to your husband that you used to, so that even he will be amazed.

You can no longer carry grudges around. How can you criticize others and slander if Christ has changed everything and made all new!

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