



*Old things pass
away and
all things
become
new.*

I
used to know a
girl who had black hair, but
she thought blonde was bet-
ter, so she bleached it. The
trouble was, as her hair

CHANGED

LESSON 96 → Ephesians 2:1-8; 1 John 1:9



JESUS FORGAVE ME.

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.
— Titus 2:11

kept on growing, most of it was blond but the roots were black. She could make some people think she was a blond, but not for long, because she really wasn't.

Sometimes people do try to change things they don't like about themselves. Do you know anyone who has stopped smoking? Maybe they realized that it was a harmful, dirty habit and quit. Maybe they went to a class to learn how to stop. Once, my brother saw a picture of what a smoker's lungs looked like, and that was enough for him! He never touched another cigarette.

Now, suppose sinners made a list of everything they were doing that was sinful: smoking, drinking, lying, cheating, stealing, swearing, and anything else they could name. Then suppose that they could stop doing all of them. Right away. Without any help.

They might tell themselves that now they are all right—as good as any Christian, and they might fool some people for a while. They changed the outside. But just as my friend who bleached her hair, they haven't changed anything on the inside.

The devil still has control of their hearts. Even though on the surface their lives might be different, the evil desires and

thoughts are still on the inside. And just like my friend's black hair, they will show up again.

A change on the inside? What does that mean?

We call it salvation. It is an act of God's grace by which we receive forgiveness for our sins. Sometimes we call it receiving a new heart. We read in 1 Samuel 10:9 that God gave a young man, named Saul, "another heart."

Today doctors can actually take out a person's heart and exchange it for the healthy heart of someone who died in an accident. But the Bible was talking about something more than the pump in your chest which circulates blood through your veins.

When God changes the heart, the person is completely different. The Bible tells us that old things pass away and all things become new. The sinful things in your life will be gone.

One man tells that when he was a little boy, he would say bad things about people he didn't like. When his mother would find out, she would make him go to that person and say he was sorry. He would do it, because he had to. But all the punishment in the world couldn't make him like the person he hated, even if he wanted

to. He could say over and over again, "I like that person, I like that person," but he still hated him.

But God took that hate out, and put love there instead. That was a real change, and change is what salvation is all about.

Is salvation hard to get? Is it expensive? No! The Bible tells us it is the gift of God. God has given the gift of salvation to men who had barely a cent to their names—people living on the streets. He has given salvation to children who had nothing but a few pennies in a piggybank. He has also given salvation to moral people. God doesn't look at what a man has or doesn't have. He looks at the heart.

How do we get salvation? We ask. We confess our sins to God, and promise to turn away from sin. When He sees that we are truly sorry and determined never to have any part with evil again, He will change us—take away the old heart full of sin and give us a new one full of righteousness.

In 1 John 1:9 we read, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Try it. It really works.

A NEW BEGINNING

Salvation is a new beginning — the most important beginning of all. Below are some sentences with a word hidden in each. All of the hidden words are listed

for you. They are things we gain and things we are rid of when we are born again. We've found the first one for you. Have fun finding the others.

FAITH

HATE

LOVE

ANGER

PEACE

SINS

JOY

FEAR

GREED

HOPE

1. All of the activity is in school and not at home.
2. That horse loves grain but alfalfa it hates.
3. We all agree Diane is beautiful.
4. She was told that everyone had gone home.
5. A real oven will get hot but not a toy one.
6. Why did Mom tape a cereal coupon to her purse?
7. Bring your stuff early or you'll be left behind.
8. That frog would hop everywhere if we let it.
9. There is nothing more yucky than germs.
10. The clerk told us that if we went down aisle J, oysters would be on the left.

Next, divide the words and write them in the appropriate space below.

GAIN

RID

**PARDONED,
PREPARED, AND
POWERFUL**