

## **Cross-Dimensional Glasses**

*June 14, 2009*

(Pentecost 2 - Year B)

2 Corinthians 5:6-17

*St. Alban's Episcopal Church, Waco, Texas*

A few Sunday afternoons ago, our whole family went to see the movie called "Up."

The movie, Up, is an animated film, created by Pixar.

The movie is about the wild adventures of an old man, a young boy and a bunch of balloons.

It is really a very good movie, perfect for the whole family.

Now, the movie, Up, was designed to be viewed in two ways:

First, you can view the movie in a regular format, just like most films.

Or, in many movie theaters, you can view the film in 3 dimensions, also known as 3-D.

Yet when you go to see the movie in 3-D, the attendant at the box office sells you special eyeglasses.

The funky eyeglasses amazingly change the movie from a 2 dimensional experience, into a 3 dimensional experience.

When our family went to see the movie, Up, in 3-D, all of us put on our special 3-D glasses.

Occasionally during the movie, I would take my 3-D glasses off, so that I could see the difference.

Then, whenever I put the 3-D glasses back on, I was treated to a whole new experience - as the movie characters seemed to reach out to touch me, and as the scenery seemed more real.

Whenever I put on my 3-D glasses during the movie, everything became new.

The Apostle Paul sees the world in new and different dimensions, as well.

Paul writes to the people in the Christian community of Corinth about the new creation that we can see - once we put on our special glasses.

In the Second Letter to the Corinthians, Paul writes:

“From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view...

[Because] if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation:  
Everything old has passed away;  
See, everything has become new!”

According to the Apostle Paul, we used to see God’s people with regular glasses, from a human point of view.

But now that we are in Christ, we put on a whole new set of glasses. And with these new glasses, we see that the world is a new creation. Everything has become new!

When I put on 3-D glasses at the movies, my viewpoint definitely changes.

But when we are in Christ, what does the new creation look like?

The movie, *The Passion of the Christ*, came out in 2004.

The movie was directed by Mel Gibson.

In my opinion, *The Passion of the Christ* puts too much emphasis on the blood and gore of the death of Jesus.

But there is one scene in that movie that I find particularly moving.

In that scene from the movie, Jesus is carrying his cross through the streets of Jerusalem on Good Friday.

Crowds of people are all around Jesus.

And his mother, Mary, keeps weaving through the crowds to get a good view of her son.

Finally, Mary catches a glimpse of Jesus as he stumbles and falls under the weight of the cross.

Mary rushes to Jesus’ side.

And as she bends down to his face, Jesus looks at his mother, with blood streaming down his face, and says:

“See, mother, I make all things new.”

Now, in the Gospel accounts of Jesus’ death, Jesus never says:

“See, mother, I make all things new.”

However, in the Revelation of John, the risen Jesus, sitting on the throne of heaven, does say:

“See, I make all things new.”<sup>1</sup>

And in the Second Letter to the Corinthians, Paul does write:

“See, everything has become new.”

When we look at the Cross of Jesus, we put on new glasses and see that Jesus has made all things new.

And when we look through our new glasses, we do not see 3-dimensionally, but we do see *cross-dimensionally*.

Because God’s new creation is seen through the lens of Jesus’ Cross.

A few weeks ago, right before school was out, Susan went through her closet and cleaned out a bunch of her old clothes, clothes that didn’t fit or that were out of style.

Susan bundled all these clothes into large garbage bags, ready for me to take to Goodwill.

Last Thursday, I was feeling particularly helpful.

So I loaded all of these bags of clothes into the trunk of my car.

I drove down Hewitt Drive to the Goodwill to drop the clothes off at the donation center.

I pulled into the driveway and popped the trunk of my car open.

As I did, a young man came out the door to receive the donation.

While I was starting to unload the bags, I began to make small talk with the man.

I thought it was a little strange - and a bit rude - that he didn’t answer me back.

This is the South, by the way, where small talk about the weather is a given, even among total strangers.

While I rambled on, I looked up at the man, to see why it was that he was not answering me.

He looked me straight in the eyes - then, putting one hand up to his ear - and gesturing with hand motions - he said, in a garbled voice:

“I cannot hear - I am deaf.”

Immediately, it was as if I had put on 3-D glasses - and I saw the world

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<sup>1</sup> Revelation 21:5

in a whole new way.  
And as I put on my new glasses to view the Cross of Christ, I found myself no longer thinking about myself.  
But I found myself thinking about this deaf man, who could not hear music or the chirping of birds or the laughter of a child.  
I found myself thinking about how this man is serving others, by unloading green garbage bags full of 1990s fashions.

Before, I had regarded this man from a human point of view.  
Yet while I was rambling on about the summer weather, this man was stumbling under the weight of his cross.  
But I suddenly saw a new creation - where everything has become new.  
I suddenly saw that God's new creation does not revolve around me, but God's new creation revolves around other people.

The Apostle Paul writes to the Corinthians:  
"From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view..."

So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation:  
Everything old has passed away;  
See, everything has become new!"

This morning, I invite all of us to put on new glasses, so that we do not regard anyone from a human point of view.  
I invite all of us to put on new glasses, not 3-dimensional glasses,  
But cross-dimensional glasses, which bring the Cross into full view, so that we no longer think about just ourselves.  
Because when we see everything through the lens of the Cross,  
Then all things become new.

For when we put on our cross-dimensional glasses,  
We see that the man at Goodwill does not reply to small talk -  
Because he is deaf.

When we put on our cross-dimensional glasses,  
We see that the little boy throws a temper tantrum in the toy store -  
Because his father has just walked out on them.

When we put on our cross-dimensional glasses,  
We see that our co-worker wears heavy makeup on Mondays -  
Because she is hiding the scars of abuse.

When we put on our cross-dimensional glasses,  
We see the death row inmate from Nazareth stumbling in the streets,  
saying:  
See, mother,  
I make all things new.

AMEN.

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