Spring is coming quickly. A new life will appear over all of creation. The trees will begin to bud and produce leaves. Plants will begin to sprout and produce beautiful flowers. The grass will turn green and start to grow again. Signs of new life will be evident everywhere. There will be an evident change from the old to the new.

The Christian life is much the same. Read II Corinthians 5:14-17. When a person believes on Jesus Christ, the old life passes away. It dies or is gone. The old life is the life from birth until the point of becoming a believer in Jesus Christ. Notice all things become new. New means remade, better, or newly introduced.

There should be a noticeable change in a Christian’s life. A change from the inside out. It is almost like being recycled. You take what is old and useless and remake it to be reusable again. This is the Christian life, old things die and we become a newly introduced creature. But why? Why should there be a change in a Christian’s life? Romans 6:2 says, “How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” Read I Peter 4:1-6.
The Reason for a Changed Life (1-2)

Why should there be a change in a Christian’s life? 2 Corinthians 5:14 says, “For the love of Christ constraineth us.” Constrain means to urge or press upon us. Peter points to the suffering of Christ as the reason for a change in our life. The love of Christ is seen in His suffering. The love He displayed urges and compels us to live Christ-like.

It is through Christ’s suffering, His perfect sacrifice on the cross, that we even have the ability to change. The Holy Spirit gives the power to defeat the flesh and live a life according to His Word which is pleasing to God.

Verse one says, “arm yourselves likewise with the same mind.” Arm means to prepare oneself for a work. Peter reminds us that we must be prepared to suffer for Christ on earth. The cross is not a symbol of comfort and ease, but a symbol of torture and terror.

Are you ready and willing to suffer for Jesus Christ? We are called upon to bear the same cross that Jesus did. He reminds us that if people hated Him they will also hate His followers. We must remember that even the term “Christian” was given as a negative name for His followers.

Read Romans 12:1-2. Paul beseeches or begs believers to present their bodies as a living sacrifice. Think of that! A sacrifice was killed and completely given to God. We are to be a living sacrifice. We are to give all of ourselves to Him as a living sacrifice. Why? Paul says this is our reasonable service. This means it is the least we can do for what He has done for us. The love of Christ urges us to live a changed life.

The Result of a Changed Life (3-6)

A changed life is a decision you will have to make. God will not force you. There are two choices to make, live in the flesh to the lusts of men or live to the will of God. Read Galatians 5:16-23. We have two lists presented. The life lived in the flesh or a changed life lived in the Spirit. Look closely at the list given in 1 Peter and Galatians for the behaviors of living in the flesh and in the Spirit. What is the result of your changed life?

The fruits of the Spirit are available to a believer but must be put into practice. We cannot produce these fruits on our own, but the Holy Spirit that lives in the believer produces these. These fruits should represent your daily life. Read 1 Peter 1:15-16. God calls us to be holy as He is holy.

A changed life will produce new desires, motives, and actions. Notice in verse four that a changed life will make old friends wonder what has happened to you. It will cause those who you do not hang around and participate in their sins to speak evil of you.

You mean people will speak evil of me when I am trying to live right? Yes, people will speak evil of you. You not participating in their sin and lifestyle cast judgement on them in their minds. You saying no means to them you are saying they are wrong and you are right. This is hard and misunderstanding. A changed life is a strong testimony against the wicked. Your actions speak just as loud if not louder than the words you could speak.

This should challenge us to live according to God’s Word daily because of the condition of America.