

The Origin and Nature of the New Self



The Old Self and the New Self (Part 3)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again today as we continue to study together the Bible's portrait of the two natures that are so close to each other and yet so totally opposite, the old self and the new self.

In my two previous talks this week I've dealt with the origin and nature of the old self. Briefly I'll recapitulate the process of degeneration which produces the old self. The old self is the product of deception; that is, of Satan's lie, that which denies the truth of God's Word. Deception, in turn, produces lust; that is, perverted, harmful desires. Lust, when we yield to it, produces sin. And sin, when it takes its course, produces death. So that's the degenerative process of the old self. The old self has two distinctive marks. First of all, it's corrupt, spiritually, morally and physically. Secondly, it's a rebel.

Yesterday I explained that God's solution for the old self is execution! Paul says this in Romans 6:6:

> "Knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him [that is, Jesus], that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin..." (NAS)

That's the only way of escape from the slavery of sin, to realize that your old self was executed when Jesus died on the cross.

Now today we are going to look at the opposite side of the coin, the new man. I'm going to explain to you the nature and origin of the new man. We'll go back again to the passage in Ephesians 4:22-24, which pictures both the old self and the new self. Paul says:

> "That, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth." (NAS)

Now we're going to analyze that last phrase about the "new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth." This brings out four main aspects of the new self. First of all, it's produced by a creative act of God. It's not something that man can ever produce by his own efforts, by religion, or good works, or legalism, or anything of that nature. It depends on the creative act of God. Secondly, the creative act of God proceeds out of the truth; that is, the truth of God's Word. It's exactly opposite to the old self which is the product of Satan's lie. So we have lie and truth set in opposition to one another. Thirdly, the nature of the new self is described in the two words: righteousness and holiness. And fourthly, Paul says that it's in the likeness of God (the alternative reading for that in the margin is "according to the purpose of God"). Each is legitimate and I believe Paul includes both meanings. The new self is created according to God's original purpose for man and in the new self God's likeness is restored.

So let me just sum up those four aspects of the new man. First, he's produced by a creative act of God. Secondly, he's the product of the truth of God's Word as opposed to the deception of Satan's lie which produces the old self. Thirdly, the nature of the new self is summed up in the words righteousness and holiness. Fourthly, the new self fulfills God's original purpose in creation, which is to reproduce God's likeness.

We can compare with this what Paul says about the old self and the new self in Colossians 3:9-10:

> "Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, [Notice once again that lying is the primary manifestation of the old self. He's the product of the devil's lie and he's a liar by nature. But Paul goes on:] [you] have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him..." (NAS)

Let's look at the aspects of the new self which Paul brings out in this passage in Colossians. First of all, we notice as I've already said, that the old man is once again associated with lies. He's the product of the devil's lie and he's a liar. And lying is a mark of the old nature. Lying never proceeds from the new nature. You remember Jesus said that "Satan is the father of lies." Secondly, in this passage in Colossians Paul points out that the new man is being progressively renewed. In Ephesians he emphasized the act of creation, but in Colossians he emphasizes the process of being renewed. After creation there's an ongoing process of renewing. And then in Colossians, Paul states the two end purposes for the new self. First, the true knowledge of God, he's to come back into the true knowledge of God; and secondly, again he uses the word "the image" of his Creator, God's likeness.

Let's sum up those two aspects of the new self stated in Colossians. First of all, he's being progressively renewed. Secondly, he's fulfilling the two end purposes of God; that is, the true knowledge of God and the restoration of God's image or God's likeness.

Now I'm going to deal with the question: How is the new man produced? First of all, he's produced "by a birth." John 1:12-13, we read these words:

> "But as many as received Him [that's Jesus], to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (NAS)

We take the key phrase in the last verse, it is "born of God." That's the first statement about the origin of the new man. He's born of God. In John 3:5, Jesus says this:

> "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (NAS)

There the birth is described as being "born of water and of the Spirit." And then in 1 Peter 1:23, Peter says this:

> "For you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and abiding word of God." (NAS)

So we see that the new self is the product of a birth, he's born of God, through being born of water and of the Spirit and through receiving the imperishable seed of God's Word. We can sum it up this way: "As we receive God's Word by faith and obey it, God's Spirit brings forth within us the very nature of God: divine, incorruptible, eternal. The seed was divine, incorruptible, and eternal. The seed of God's Word, the nature which brings it forth, is likewise divine, incorruptible and eternal. We can take this just one step further. In Scripture, Jesus Himself is called "the Word of God." In John 1:1, this title is used three times in the one verse:

> "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (NAS)

To whom does that refer? It refers to the One that was manifested in time and in human flesh as Jesus of Nazareth. Again, in Revelation 19:13 we have a description of Jesus returning to the earth in glory and power to reign and this is what it says:

> "And He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of God." (NAS)

So Jesus is the Word of God. The gospel of the Scripture is the Word of God. The gospel is the preached word. Jesus is the living Word. And there's a direct relationship between the two. When we receive and believe and obey the preached Word, the gospel, the Scripture, it's a seed. That seed brings forth in us, by an operation of the Holy Spirit through our obedience, a new nature. The new self. And this nature is like the seed which brought it forth. It's divine, it's eternal, it's imperishable or incorruptible. You'll see here the basic difference. The old self is essentially corrupt. The new self is incorruptible. It's the very nature of God coming out of the seed of God's Word. And that seed of the preached Word of God, received and believed in our hearts, brings forth the nature and ultimately the very person of the living Word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. This is so clearly expressed by Paul in Galatians 2:20 where he says:

> "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me..." (NAS)

There we see both sides of the coin. God's program for the old self and God's program for the new self. First of all, the old self has to be executed, but he was executed when Christ died on the cross. Our old self was crucified with Him! So Paul states this as an accomplished fact of history, "I have been crucified with Christ, I, my old self. But," he says, "I continue to live, but it's no longer I, the old self, that's living in me, but it's the new self. It's the very nature and person of Jesus reproduced in me as I believed and received the preached Word of God, the divine, eternal, incorruptible seed of God's Word that produces in me the very nature of God's Son, Jesus."

All right. Our time is up for today but I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this time. Tomorrow I'll continue with this theme of the new self. I'll explain how to cultivate the new self.

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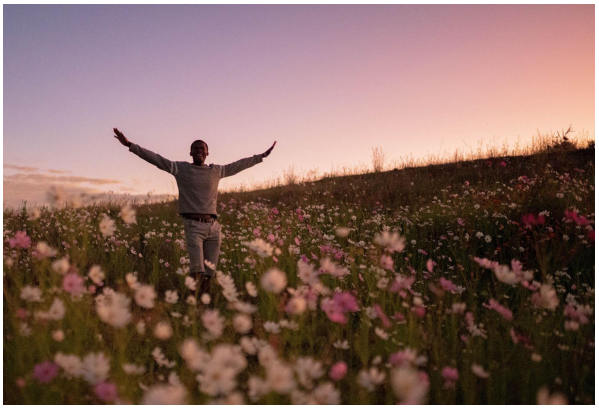

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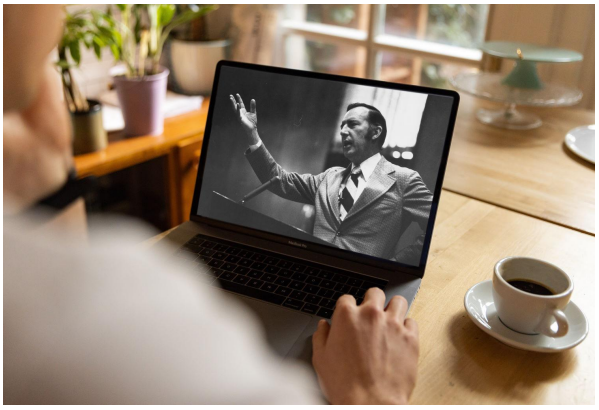

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