

Old Man vs New Man



Atonement
By Derek Prince

In our two previous sessions we've been dealing with what I call emotional wounds: the wound of shame and the wound of rejection. I've tried to show you directly from scripture that Jesus endured both of those wounds to the ultimate and He endured them that we might be healed from them. We've read the scripture several times "by his wounds we are healed." I believe that's true in the physical and in the emotional. There could be other emotional wounds that we've not dealt with but I believe if you'll accept the principle that healing is provided through the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus, you will be able to find healing for yourself and if you're in ministry or counseling, you'll have the privilege of leading others into healing. I don't think I've ever had any greater privilege than being able to see people healed from the wounds of shame and rejection. But I want to tell you God's remedy works. It's not just theory, it's not just theology; it works.

We are going to move shortly into another aspect of the work of the cross, we're going to deal with what the cross should be doing in us. Up till now we've been dealing with what the cross has done for us. Everybody is happy about that and many Christians just stop there. All they want is "gimme, gimme, gimme" and their Christianity becomes very shallow and unsatisfying because that's not the end.

What we're going to deal with today in this session now is God's dealing with what's called the old man. And this is both a substitutionary act of God and it's, as it were, the doorway to what we'll be dealing with in the remaining sessions, the next four sessions, which will be what the cross needs to do in you. So view this as a kind of transition from what the cross has done for us to what the cross needs to do in us. But here we're talking about the old man and God's way of dealing with the old man.

We need to form a clearer idea of what the old man is. It's not your father! The New Testament speaks, and we'll look at it in a little while, about two men: the old man, the new man. They're never named, they're never called George or Henry or Bill. But they're two of the most important characters in the New Testament. The old man, as I understand it, is the nature that we have inherited by our descent from Adam. Some people call it the old Adam which I think is legitimate. You see, Adam never had any children until he was a rebel. And every descendant of Adam is born with something in them that is a rebel. And it doesn't matter how good you are outside or how young you

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are or how old you are, there's a rebel inside every descendant of Adam.

I think you can see this with little children. I'm the adoptive father of a family of nine girls so I have a little experience in dealing with girls. Although, most of them were older than that. You will notice with little girls about the age of two, I mean, they're the sweetest, cutest things. You couldn't believe that ice cream would melt in their mouths. But, you say come here and what happens? They turn around and begin to walk in the opposite direction. Is that right? Just about age two I notice. What's that? That's the rebel manifesting himself.

I have a friend who said, "I could believe that little boys told lies but that little girls told lies," he said, "I couldn't believe it until my daughter told a frank blank lie and I knew it was a lie." But there's something in every one of us that's a rebel. And the Bible calls it the old man.

God's plan is to replace the old man with the new man. And so, I could say this:

> "On the cross our old man was put to death that the new man might come to life in us instead."

Let's look for a moment now in Matthew 3:10, which is the verse that really introduces the gospel. And the words are in the mouth of John the Baptist who was the forerunner sent to introduce Jesus. In Matthew 3:10, introducing the gospel, John says:

> "Even now the ax laid to the root of the trees..."

Do you know what the word radical means? Radical is derived from a Latin word "radix" which is the word for root. And radical means that which deals with the root. Now, of all the messages that have ever come to humanity, the most radical is the gospel. We need to bear that in mind. A lot of people have got a very superficial version of the gospel that doesn't deal with the root. But God deals with the root. He doesn't just chop off the branches, He doesn't even cut down the trunk; He deals with the root.

I learned in the ministry of deliverance, for instance, that I started with what were just little branches up at the top of the tree, things like smoking and alcohol and things like that. All the obvious sins that religious people don't like. But I realized that every addiction is a branch that grows on a bigger branch. And that if you only cut off the addiction branches you haven't dealt with the root problem. Now, my thinking, the basic problem of every addiction is a frustration. So, in order to deal with the addiction you've got to find out what is the frustration that caused the addiction to grow. However, even frustrations are only branches. If you want to really deal with humanity's problems you've got to go below the surface to the root. And that's what John said, "The ax is laid to the root of the tree." What is the root? The root is rebellion. The root is man's rebellion against God. Do you remember when we first started to look at Isaiah:

> "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him [Jesus] the rebellion of us all."

That's our root problem. And there is a rebel inside every one of us. Sometimes he's a communist rebel. Sometimes he's an alcoholic rebel. But sometimes he's a nice religious rebel but he's still a rebel. And God has only got one remedy for the rebel. Do you know what it is? He doesn't send him to church, doesn't send him to Sunday School, doesn't teach him the golden rule or teach him to memorize scripture. What does He do. He executes him. Execution is God's solution. Shall we say that? "Execution is God's solution." But the message of mercy is that the execution took place in Jesus on the cross.

Let's look in Romans 6:6. We may read a little further.

> "Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin."

The problem with many Christians is they don't know it. You see, we're not talking now about the forgiveness of your past sins. We're talking about dealing with the rebel that's inside you. You can go to church and say a prayer and maybe get your sins forgiven. But if you walk out of the church with a rebel inside you, what are you going to go on doing? Sinning. The rebel is going to go on sinning. So in order to be free from slavery to sin we have to have more than the forgiveness of our past sins. We have to have the rebel inside us dealt with. And it's dealt with through the death of Jesus on the cross. Our old man was crucified with Him.

Now, that's a historical fact. It's true whether you know it or whether you believe it. But, it won't work in your life until you know it and believe it. That's what releases it in your life. Let's read on a little there.

> "Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him [Jesus], that the body of sin..."

That's the sinful nature. That's not our physical body but it's the nature that we got with our physical body by descent from Adam.

> "...that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin..."

And anybody in whom the old man has not been dealt with is still a slave of sin.

> "...for he who has died has been justified from sin."

This says freed but the Greek says justified. Once you've paid the final penalty there's no more penalty to pay, you see? The law can demand nothing more from you after you're dead.

> "Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dies no more; death has no more dominion over him. For the death that he died he died to sin once for all; the life that he lives he lives to God."

Now, here's the application, this is the fact:

> "Likewise, you also reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

So now you've got the facts, you have to apply them. Our old man was crucified. God did that. But you've got to reckon yourself dead with Jesus. That's faith. That's where it works. Until you do that you'll be the slave of your old man.

What does it mean to be dead to sin? In one of my books, my Foundation Series, it gives a little illustration. We choose the worst man, the kind of man that churchgoers just can't abide. He swears, he drinks whiskey, he smokes cigars, he curses, he's unkind to his wife and children, and he watches all sorts of bad things on television. But his wife and his children have become believers. And so, Sunday evening they sneak out to the local gospel service. And as they go out they see him there sitting in his armchair watching things that he oughtn't to watch on video and a cigar in his mouth, glass of whiskey on the table beside him. He swears at them as they go out. He's bad. All right. Well, they have a wonderful evening in the gospel service and they come back singing choruses, walk into the room and suddenly realize he's going to swear at them. But he doesn't swear. They look. The cigar is in the ashtray, the smoke is curling up but he's not smoking. The whiskey is in the glass but he's not drinking. He's not even watching what's on the television. Why? Guess what happened? He had a heart attack and died. And now he's dead to sin. Dead to whiskey. Dead to cigars. Dead to the television. Dead to swearing. All right? Put it this way. Sin has no more attraction for him. All right? Sin produces no more reaction from him. He's dead.

Now, the Bible says likewise reckon yourselves to be dead to sin. What does that mean? Sin has no more attraction for you. Sin has no more reaction from you. Sin has no more power over you. Is that what it means? It can't mean anything else. How? By faith. By faith in what? By faith in what Jesus did on the cross. Our old man, that criminal, was executed.

Years ago, I really can't tell this story in detail but it's one of the ways God dealt with me, I had a vivid dream in which I saw a man preaching in an open air street meeting in London. I was doing that regularly three times a week at that time. As I looked, he was doing a good job of preaching and there was a crowd of people standing around him; but he had a club foot and he was just somehow twisted and crooked. I didn't think much more about the dream. I said to myself, "I wonder who that man is?" But about two weeks later I had precisely the same dream. I thought to myself God must be trying to tell me something and I said, "I wonder who the man is?" His preaching was all right but there was something crooked about him. And as I was wondering that, God said to me just what Nathan said to David, "Thou art the man." And I realized that God was exposing to me the old man in me. I'd been saved and I was in the ministry at the time. And then I began to study the scripture and I saw that the remedy was crucifixion.

It was about Easter time and I had a mental picture in my mind of three crosses on the hill of Golgotha. The middle cross was taller than the other two. As I was meditating on this, the Holy Spirit spoke to me and He said, "Now tell me.

For whom was the middle cross made? But," He said, "think before you answer." So I thought for a moment and I said, "It was made for Barabbas." He said, "That's right." Then He said, "But Jesus took the place of Barabbas." You realize that's the historical truth. So then He said, "But I thought Jesus took your place." I said, "Yes, He did." Then He said, "You must be Barabbas." I never argue with people but at that moment I saw it. I was the criminal for whom the cross was made. It fitted me exactly. It was my due destination. But Jesus took my place. My old man was crucified in Him.

Now let's look for a moment at the picture of the new and the old man. Ephesians 4:20–22. I can't go into the background. Paul is talking to Christians. Notice Christians, not unbelievers.

> "That you put off concerning your former conduct the old man which grows corrupt according to deceitful lusts; be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and you put on the new man which was created according to God in righteousness and true holiness."

Now notice he was talking about people who were already saved. There's no question they were saved but he said remember you've got to put off the old man and put on the new man. That's not something that happens when we're saved, it's something to which we are led after we're saved. Put off the old man, put on the new.

And he describes them. He says, and I'll give you the Prince version of this:

> "The old man is experiencing corruption because of the lusts of deception."

All right? The old man is experiencing progressive corruption because of the lusts of deception that are in it. Verse 24:

> "But the new man was created according to God's pattern in righteousness and holiness of the truth."

This doesn't come out in any of the translations. The two contrasts are deception and truth. The old man is the product of the devil's lie. It's the nature that came when Adam and Eve believed the lie of the devil. The new man is created afresh by God, it's the new creation in Christ which is the product of the truth of God's word and produces righteousness and holiness. That's complicated, let me try and say it again. The old man is the product of the devil's lie. What did the devil say? You'll be like God, you will not die. They believed him and it created in them a corrupt nature. I wouldn't say created, it corrupted their nature. The key word to describe the old man is the word corrupt.

Now, God's remedy is to crucify the old man in Christ, let it be applied in us and God creates in us a new man which is the product of the truth. Notice, the difference is between the devil's lie and God's truth. And God's truth, through the new creation, produces in us righteousness and holiness. That's the transition.

But you need to grasp this fact that the old man, the key word is corrupt. He's morally corrupt, physically corrupt, emotionally corrupt, he is corrupt.

God showed me something years back which is significant. Corruption is irreversible. You cannot turn it back. Once it comes in there's no way to turn corruption back. You can slow it down but you can't reverse it. Take, for instance, a beautiful piece of fruit like an apple or a peach. It's just perfect. You can't see anything wrong with it but it's corrupt. You leave it on the dining room table for a week and you come back, it's yellow, shriveled and unattractive. Because, corruption was in it. The modern solution is put it in the refrigerator. But the refrigerator doesn't reverse corruption, it just slows it down.

In my opinion, many churches are like the refrigerator. They don't change corruption, they just slow it down a little bit. All right? The only way to change is a new creation. God doesn't patch up the old man, He doesn't reform the old man, He doesn't improve him, He doesn't educate him; He puts him to death. And in his place there comes forth a new creation which is the product of God's truth.

Let's look briefly in closing at the nature of the new creation. 1 Peter 1:23, writing to born again Christians Peter says:

> "You have been born again not of corruptible seed but incorruptible through the word of God which lives and abides forever."

What is the seed that brings forth the new man? It's the seed of God's word. What's the key word that describes it? It is incorruptible. All right? Now, in all nature, in fact the whole universe as far as I know, the nature of the seed determines the nature of that which comes out of it. So if you sow an orange pit you don't get an apple. If you sow an apple pit you don't get an orange. The nature of the seed

determines the kind of life that comes out of it. So if you're born again as you are as a natural person of corruptible seed, you'll have a corruptible life, a life which is subject to the process of corruption. But if you're born again of incorruptible seed, what kind of life will you have? An incorruptible life. It is impossible for incorruptible seed to produce a corruptible life. You understand? So what's the nature of the new man that comes out of the seed of God in one word? It is incorruptible. Incorruptible. What causes it to be incorruptible? The seed of God's word.

Now, look on with me in James 1:18 for a moment very quickly. James 1:18, speaking about God:

> "Of his own will he brought us forth [or begot us again] by the word of truth."

Notice the new man is the product of what? The truth. The truth of God's words begets in us an incorruptible nature.

Now go to 1 John 3:9:

> "Whoever has been born of God does not sin..."

Why not?

> "...because his seed remains in him and he cannot sin because he has been born of God."

Now, Derek Prince was born of God about 48 years ago. Does that mean that Derek Prince cannot sin? I'll tell you for sure it doesn't. Does it mean that Derek Prince never sinned after that? I'll tell you for sure it doesn't. But it says he that is born of God, not that he does not sin but cannot sin. My conclusion is that it's not talking about the individual, it's talking about the new man in the individual. The new man is incapable of sinning. Okay? Because he's born of incorruptible seed.

If you look in 1 John 5:4:

> "For whatever is born of God overcomes the world."

It's both a whoever and a whatever. It's not talking about James or Bill or George or Mary or Jane. It's talking about the new man that's produced in us by the word of God. Incorruptible seed produces an incorruptible nature. Does that mean that once we're born again we can never sin? No. Because it all depends on which nature is allowed to control us. See? The old man cannot help sinning. The new man cannot sin. What you will do depends on who is in control of you.

See, a person who has never been born again cannot help sinning, his nature causes him to sin. A person who has been born again has an option. If we allow the new nature to remain in control, we do not sin. But if we allow the old nature to reassert itself, then we sin. See, this is very appropriate because in our next four sessions we're going to speak about what the cross is designed to do in us. And whether we sin or don't sin, whether we have victory or defeat will depend on the measure in which we allow the cross to do its work in us.

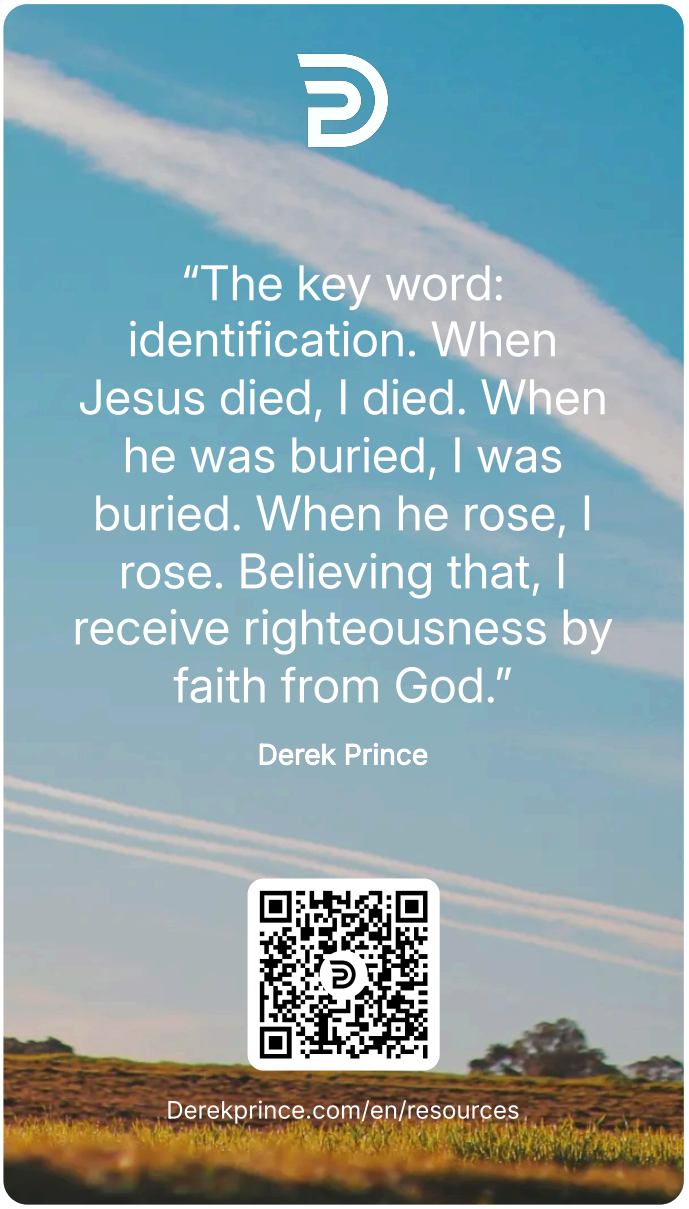
But, God's solution is this:

> "Our old man [the rebel, the corrupt one] was crucified in Jesus that we might be delivered from that evil/corrupt nature and a new nature might come into us through the word of God and take control."

But whatever you do, don't try to make the old man behave religious because it doesn't work.

Sermon

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