

"The Old and the New"

5/12/57
Nile
A.M.

Scripture Lesson:- Ephesians 4: 17 - 32.

Text:- Ephesians 4: 22 & 23.

Paul gives an exhortation in his epistle to the Ephesians to "put off that old man" and to "put on the new man". Eph: 4: 22, 24.

The old life as Paul saw it was one of sin. The new life means to be a follower of Jesus Christ. The old life is often given to the things of folly, which degrade the individual and bring harm to others. It is life without a purpose. It knows nottwhither it is going. It is like a piece of driftwood in a stream that moves only with the current with no purposeful goal.

The new life has a sense of direction like the ocean going stramer which has a chart and compass for its direction. The old life has the understanding darkened, as is described in Ephesians the fourth chapter, verse 18. "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart". The old life is lacking in discernment and understanding. Men fail to look ahead and see the results of sin. Many would turn from their wicked ways, if they only stopped to consider the end of their way.

I.

They are separated from God. The old life is separated from God. The instinctive cry of man in the hour of great extremity is for God. Some people want to make a convenience of God and call only on him in the hour of great peril. The man who waits until the hour of peril to pray, may find himself separated from God, and that prayers only mock him. In the day of prosperity we should draw nigh unto God, that in the hour of peril we may have the comfort of his presence and the understanding of his strength.

II.

Past feeling. The old life may come to a place where where it is past feeling. "Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." Eph:4:19. This is evidenced by the atrocious crimes which are committed daily. Men become so hardened that they can drench their souls with innocent blood, seemingly without so much as a pin prick of conscience. Wickedness hardens the heart of the evil doer. It causes men to spurn death and judgment. When some men boast that they are not afraid to die, it may be a sure sign that they are not prepared to die. A paralyzed body may be the forerunner of physical death. So a paralyzed soul may be the forerunner of that spiritual death which is eternal.

III.

Working at the old life. Men work at the old life. They give themselves with energy to the promotion of sin. A few years ago some men robbed the Brink. The crime was called the "Brink Robbery". The men who committed the robbery had worked on the case for about two years. Then they committed the robbery. After almost five years the authorities finally caught up with them, and they were arrested and tried. They had given themselves to the mastery of the crime and thought they would never be caught.

Great wealth often arrays itself on the side of sin and evil. The kingdom of evil is described as consisting of "principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high places". Take for an example Orrville E. Hodge. He stole millions of dollars from the State of Illinois. The rank and file of the people thought he was a millionaire who had been elected to the office of Auditor of the Treasury. Spiritual wickedness in high places.

Multiplied billions are spent annually for the promotion of atheistic communism, intemperance, narcotics, gambling, and profligate living.

The forces of evil are highly organized and financed. The servants of sin work at the job with a vengeance. They give unlimited energy and effort to pay a master whose pay check is death.

IV.

The New Life in Christ. Yes, the new life is in Christ. Our spiritual blessings in heavenly places are "in Christ." Eph 1:3.

An American was admiring the metal mirror of a skilled Japanese workman. The Japanese said: "The mirror is not for the reflection of your own likeness. Take it to the window and let the sun shine on it." This the American did, and to his surprise there was reflected on the wall the image of Buddha, the Japanese god. The workman had skillfully hammered the image of his god into the metal. The purpose of the new life is to reflect the image of God through Jesus Christ. As men see us, they should see reflected the image of God and the manner of life which God would have men live.

Jesus said: "I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly." John 10:10. There is "a putting off of the old and a putting on of the new, for the Christian in the process of his growth and development. Jesus had in mind such an experience for his disciples, when he commanded them to tarry for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. There was "a putting off of the old and a putting on of the new" for the disciples at Pentecost, whereby they could say with Paul: "I am crucified with Christ."

Many Christians live below their privilege for the more abundant life of which Jesus speaks. The old man of sin, with its carnal dispositions and besetments may be cleansed from the heart of the Christian through the power of the Holy Spirit, when we appropriate by faith the cleansing merits of the shed blood of Christ. In such a bold and daring stride of faith, we enter "life more abundantly."

Conclusion:- Have you, my friend, "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" Eph.4:24. Is it true that no corrupt communication proceeds out of your mouth, but only that which is good to the use of edifying that it may minister grace to the hearers" Eph. 29. Has all bitterness, and wrath and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking been put away from you" Are ye kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you" Eph. 4: 31& 32.

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