

WAS THE OLD MAN DESTROYED WHEN I BELIEVED IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST?

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Dear ones in the hope of Christ,

As one of you mentioned a minister that expressed the thought that God took out of us the "Old Man," and put into us the "New Man," and he seemed to think the believer no longer had an "old man," I spent a few hours last night thinking on that thought instead of sleeping. I only have two sources to view such subjects: the first, is of course, the Scriptures; and the second is my own experience insofar as it is consistent with the Scriptures. Most of those I am acquainted with in Zion seem to have a common experience with me, in that I am very conscious of having a richly active "old man." I can't speak for the rest of them, but I am much more acquainted with my "old man" than I am with a "new man," because the "old man" plagues me sorely. I can't even conceive how a saint can go for years without a struggle against the "old man with his evil deeds." Equally, I can't conceive of someone that only has a "new man" while here on this earthly ball. I never have met a single one I could think was in such a state of existence. If such is a case, it must be "heaven below" for sure! What perpetual bliss that would be.

I am aware of the view the Missionary Baptists had when I labored among them and sat at their tables. They did not consider the relationship between the "old man" and the "outward man" [these are different] or think of these as the fleshly or carnal nature of Adam's prodigy. So if one had a different viewpoint on just what the "old man" was, he may have grounds to think the "old man" disappeared somewhere and sometime after the spiritual

birth. I am of the view that the Adamic creature born of mother and daddy is the "fleshly man," and the flesh has a corrupt nature that permeates every cell and DNA in his body; and that so long as he is in this "body" he will possess that corrupt nature in that body. Only at corporal death does he lose that corrupt nature. Another word for that fleshly nature is "carnal."

Unlike "carnal," the "old man" can be "put off" and the "new man" can be "put on." So what is this thing that a saint can "put off," and ought to put off? It has "wicked deeds" that the saint should put off. He is to "mortify the deeds of the body" if ever he is to live unto righteousness to the praise and glory of Christ. He can put off vile language, and cease talking in the vulgar as he was wont to do before grace became so precious. He should cease from lying, for liars cannot inherit the kingdom of God. It is a BAD theory that says "I can't help" cussing, lying, cheating, stealing, gossiping, and all the "works of the flesh" because I believe in predestination. If we are chosen that we "should be holy and without blame before Him in love," it seems that predestination would be of great help in making a child of grace graceful! I surmise that the "old man" is that which came first in our existence, becomes antiquated, worn out, and of no great benefit for us, hence the "works of the FLESH," or evil passions, such as covetousness, lusts, lasciviousness, etc., which all are unbecoming a professed child of God.

How many saints do you think do not still find these "works of the flesh" abiding with them, ready to be expressed that moment one's temper flares up! The very best of saints are at times embarrassed for a fellow saint to catch them "with their breeches down" so to speak.

My family has never heard me cuss. One day in class, a student said, "Mr. Phillips, do you ever get mad?" I said I did. "Do you cuss?" "I never have, I answered." "What do you do then when you get angry," one asked. I snapped my fingers. About five months later, the Principal called me over the intercom, "Mr. Phillips, you haven't signed your payroll card, yet"! I

snapped my fingers. The whole class instantly exclaimed, "Ah! Mr. Phillips!" I laughed and said if you could recall something that trivial, why do you fail my tests?"

The saints most often know how to "put off" the old man, at least in public! In fact, many a church member has dishonored himself, the church, and His blessed Redeemer by not "putting off" that "old man." But, on the other hand, to claim you have permanently got rid of him is being rather naïve. Truthfully, I don't believe anyone has.

A synopsis of this subject briefly put is as follows: In eternity past, the Father chose and gave to His Son an elect family. Undeveloped, they lay in seed-substance IN Christ until the appointed time of their development. The first recorded movement was the development of a habitation for them, and the creation of an antitype, Adam, who also possessed all his prodigy in his loins, and after he fell, he and his wife begin the populating of this earth. Most of his children were "vessels of dishonor." Some were to be "vessels of honor." At the appointed time Christ through His Spirit begat children and these children are the "vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory." But they in their flesh, are "as vessels of wrath even as others." Hence John Doe is born of Adam's race, and at God's appointed time, John Doe is born again of God. The first birth was of Adam, and of the flesh; the second birth was of God and of the Spirit. Hence, he now has TWO men, the one of Adam remains just exactly biologically as he was; and the second is a "new creature," a "new man," being spiritual. These two war against each other all the remaining days of their life, and this inward conflict every saint to some measure experiences. I am of the belief that this felt conflict is one of the best evidences that spiritual life exist within the struggling child of God.

Yours, Stan Phillips