

Message Four

Being Renewed Day by Day with the Fresh Supply of the Resurrection Life to Replace Our Culture and to Become the One New Man in Reality by Becoming as New as the New Jerusalem

Scripture Reading: 2 Cor. 4:16; Eph. 2:15; 4:22-24; Col. 3:10-11

I. Ephesians 4:22 says, “Put off, as regards your former manner of life, the old man”:

- A. *The old man* refers to our natural life in our soul; the old man is our very being, which was created by God but became fallen through sin—Rom. 6:6:
 - 1. The old man with all that it includes is a damage to the church life; wherever the old man is, there can be no church; this means that what we are, what we have, and what we do make the church life an impossibility.
 - 2. If we continue to live according to the old man, the church life will be seriously damaged, even terminated; if we put off the old man with its former manner of life, we will have a marvelous church life, a church life that will be a miniature of the New Jerusalem; in such a church life it is impossible to have division.
- B. The words *manner of life* imply a great deal; in every country of the world and among every people there is a characteristic manner of life:
 - 1. The former manner of life includes everything related to us; we must put off whatever we are, whatever we do, and whatever we have; we are to put off our very way of living and our culture; the stronger our culture is, the more critical we will be of others—cf. Eph. 4:31-32; Col. 3:12-14.
 - 2. If we truly desire to be renewed, we need to put off the former manner of life, which involves our way of living and our culture; in the new man there is no possibility for Greek and Jew, barbarian and Scythian, slave and free man to exist, because the former manner of life found among these peoples has been put away.
 - 3. Whenever we return to the old manner of life, we will spontaneously sense that we are darkened within and estranged from God’s life—Eph. 4:17-19.
 - 4. In order to have the church life, people from different cultures and countries have to put off the old man embodied in their former manner of life; in the church life there is room only for Christ—Col. 3:10-11.
 - 5. How deplorable it is to see so-called churches formed according to nationality; instead of treasuring our heritage, we should disown it; we automatically prefer our old community life, but our way of life must become absolutely new in nature, manner, and practice.

II. Since the new man in Ephesians 2:15-16 is a corporate man, the new man in 4:24 must also be corporate; according to Ephesians 4:24, we need to put on the very new man that has already been created in Christ:

- A. In baptism we put off the old man, which was crucified with Christ and buried; it was also in baptism that we put on the new man—vv. 22-24; Rom. 6:6, 4.
- B. The putting off of the old man and the putting on of the new man are accomplished facts; now we must experience and realize these facts by being renewed in the spirit of our mind—Eph. 4:23:
 - 1. To put off the old man is to deny and renounce our old self by applying the cross to the self—v. 22; Matt. 16:24.

2. To put on the new man is to live and magnify Christ through the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:19-21a); this is to apply what Christ has accomplished in creating the new man (Eph. 2:15; 4:24).
- C. Our spirit mingled with the Spirit of God must become the spirit of our mind (v. 23); then all our living will be by the spirit, and whatever we do will be according to the spirit; as we are renewed by this spirit, we put on the new man.
- D. We need to walk according to the mingled spirit that is spreading into our mind and filling it; in this way the daily walk of the new man will be in the spirit of the mind; this is the secret of the church life—v. 23.
- E. The new man is in our spirit; the way to put on the new man is for our spirit (which is mingled with the Spirit), in which are found God, God's dwelling place, and the new man, to become the spirit of our mind—2:22; 4:23:
 1. For the spirit to become the spirit of our mind means that the spirit directs, controls, dominates, overrules, and possesses our mind (cf. 1 Cor. 2:15-16; 2 Cor. 2:13; 10:4-5); when the spirit directs our mind, our whole being is under the control of our spirit.
 2. How much we put on the new man depends on how much our spirit directs our being (1 Cor. 2:15); when our spirit dominates and directs us, there is no ground for culture, for opinions, or for ordinances; there is no room for our way because our whole being is dominated, controlled, governed, and directed by our spirit.
 3. The more the mingled spirit penetrates, saturates, and possesses our mind, the more we let Christ's mind become our mind—Phil. 2:5; 1 Cor. 2:16; Rom. 12:2.
- F. When we believed in the Lord Jesus, the life-giving Spirit came into our spirit, bringing with Him the new man as a finished product; now the new man must saturate and spread into every part of our being; this spreading is both the putting on of the new man and the renewing.
- G. We should not live according to the vanity of the mind but according to the spirit of the mind; this is the key to the daily living of the corporate one new man, the secret to having a church life filled with the character of God, the aroma of Christ, and the oneness of the Spirit—Eph. 4:3-4, 17-18, 23-24.
- H. By our loving the Lord and by the exercise of our spirit in prayer and in reading the Word day by day, our mind is filled with the mingled spirit; this changes and renews our mind; for us to be renewed in our mind is to get rid of all the old concepts concerning the things of the human life and be made new again by the teaching of the Holy Scriptures and the enlightening of the Holy Spirit—Psa. 119:105, 130; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Deut. 17:18-20.
- I. The only possibility of God's purpose being fulfilled in this age, to have the one new man in reality, is if we would all be willing to be renewed in the spirit of our mind.

III. The central point of Paul's word to the Colossians concerns the renewing of the mind unto the full knowledge of Christ, who is the image of God; the new man was created in our spirit and is being renewed in our mind unto full knowledge according to the image of Christ—Eph. 2:15; Col. 3:10-11:

- A. Because the new man was created with us who belong to the old creation, he needs to be renewed; this renewing takes place mainly in our mind, as indicated by the phrase *unto full knowledge*—v. 10.
- B. The creation of the new man according to God has already been completed, but in our experience the new man is being renewed unto full knowledge little by little; the more we put on the new man, the more we are renewed according to what God is, and the more we bear His image, the expression of what He is—v. 10.

- C. To be renewed is to have God's element added into our being to replace and discharge our old element—Rev. 21:5a; 2 Cor. 5:17; Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 4:16:
 - 1. Our natural and national mentality was educated and built up according to our racial and cultural background; this is the greatest hindrance to the practical existence of the new man.
 - 2. In order for the one new man to come into full existence, we must experience a thorough renewal of our mind, which has been built up according to our nationality and culture.
- D. Newness is God; therefore, to become new is to become God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead:
 - 1. God is forever new, and He infuses His ever-new essence into our being to renew our entire being—Rom. 12:2; Col. 3:10.
 - 2. The Spirit of God renews us by infusing our inward parts with God's attributes, which are forever new, can never become old, and are everlasting and unchanging—Rev. 21:5a.
 - 3. The renewing Spirit imparts the divine essence of the new man into our being to make us a new creation, the new man—Titus 3:5; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15.

IV. We need to be those who are being renewed day by day with the fresh supply of the resurrection life to replace our culture and to become the one new man in reality by becoming as new as the New Jerusalem—2 Cor. 4:16:

- A. Putting on the new man does not take place once for all; on the contrary, it is a lifelong matter, a gradual process that goes on throughout our Christian life.
- B. We, the regenerated believers, as parts of the new man, should walk in the newness of the divine life in resurrection and serve in newness of spirit—Rom. 6:4; 7:6.
- C. The believers should be renewed to be as new as the New Jerusalem since they all are becoming the New Jerusalem by walking in newness of life (6:4) and building the New Jerusalem by serving in newness of spirit (7:6).
- D. Our being renewed in the spirit of our mind is for our daily transformation into the image of Christ through the consuming of our outer man by the suffering in our environment for the renewing of our inner man—2 Cor. 4:16:
 - 1. While we are in the midst of suffering, we need to receive the renewing; otherwise, the suffering we pass through means nothing to us; within us there is a refuge—our spirit—Psa. 91:1; 27:5; 31:20; Isa. 32:2; 2 Tim. 4:22; Gal. 6:17-18.
 - 2. God arranges our environment so that little by little and day by day our outer man will be consumed and our inner man will be renewed by the fresh supply of the pneumatic Christ as the resurrection life—2 Cor. 4:16.
- E. In order to be renewed day by day, we need to be revived every morning—Matt. 13:43; Luke 1:78-79; Prov. 4:18; Judg. 5:31; 2 Cor. 4:16.
- F. We are renewed day by day through four items: the cross (vv. 10-12, 16-18); the Holy Spirit by which we are reconditioned, remade, and remodeled with the divine life (Titus 3:5); our mingled spirit (Eph. 4:23); and the holy word of God (5:26).
- G. We need to come to the Lord's table in newness (Matt. 26:29); the Lord never takes an old table; we need to be renewed by learning to say, "I'm sorry; forgive me."

V. The renewing of the new man depends on our seeking the things which are above—Col. 3:1-2; Eph. 2:5-6:

- A. To seek the things which are above is to respond to and reflect Christ's activities in His heavenly ministry—Heb. 2:17; 4:14; 7:26; 8:1-2; Rev. 5:6; Col. 3:1-2:

1. There is a transmission taking place from Christ in heaven to us on earth by means of the all-inclusive Spirit in our spirit—Eph. 1:19, 22-23; 2:22:
 - a. Our spirit is the receiving end of the divine transmission, whereas the throne of God in heaven is the transmitting end—Rev. 5:6.
 - b. By turning to our spirit, we are lifted into heaven; because of the transmission from the throne of God in heaven into our spirit, when we experience and enjoy Christ here on earth, we are simultaneously in heaven—4:1-2.
 2. In His heavenly ministry Christ is shepherding people, and we need to cooperate with Him by shepherding people; if this fellowship is received by us, there will be a big revival on the earth to bring the Lord back—1 Pet. 5:1-4; cf. Matt. 9:36; 10:1-6; John 21:15-17; 1 Pet. 2:25; Heb. 13:20.
- B. If we turn to the heavenly Christ with all His activities and set our mind on these things, the renewing of the new man will take place spontaneously—8:1-2; 12:2; Col. 3:2.
- C. This consummates God's intention in making the believers the new man as the new creation to consummate in the New Jerusalem; the new man as the masterpiece of God's work is an absolutely new item in the universe, a new invention of God—vv. 10-11; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15-17; Eph. 2:10, 15.
- D. God's goal is to have the one new man that ultimately will consummate in the New Jerusalem, which will be the final consummation of the one new man.