

## The Old Nature in the Successful Christian Life

### Introduction

- A. It is imperative that the Christian understand how profoundly and in what way the Fall of Man and his own sinful deeds have affected him. If he does not understand this his repentance, renunciation, restitution, resistance of the enemy and the world and appropriation of the provision in Jesus Christ will be limited.
- B. The believer's old sinful nature is the source of a great deal of his spiritual trouble. Biblical clarity about the old nature and the provision God has made for us will result in a great deal of freedom – if the Biblical admonitions are obeyed.

### I. The Biblical Description of the Old Nature and its Sinful Effects.

- A. The old nature defiles the believer and is a source of evil thoughts, Mark 7:21-23.

For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile the man.

Observation: What a cesspool the human heart is. Note, however, that the presence of the old nature is not necessarily defiling – it is when the old nature is allowed to manifest itself in "evil thoughts, etc."

- B. The old nature hinders, weakens and enslaves the believer, Romans 7:15,19,23,24.

For that which I do I allow not, for what I would, that do I not, but what I hate, that do I . . . For the good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do. . . But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me . . . .

Observation: The old sinful nature, unless Biblically dealt with, will continue to limit the freedom and power of the Christian.

- C. The old nature is a contradictory element in the believer, Galatians 5:17.

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

Observation: All Christians recognize this "contrary" element within. We find the presence of thoughts, feelings and bodily desires that are out of harmony with our spiritual goals.

- D. The old nature is a source of sinful actions in the believer, Gal. 5:19-21.

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like, of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do (practice) such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.

Observation: This description of the old nature's activity forces the believer to recognize that he may not allow his sinful nature to manifest itself in any way in his daily life.

### II. The Provision of God Concerning the Old Nature.

Knowing this, that our old man (the sinful nature) is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed (paralyzed), that henceforth we should not serve sin. Romans 6:6

Observation: This is God's provision – death. This is also what God thinks of the old nature – He crucified it in His Son.

III. The Exhortation of God Concerning the Old Nature.

That ye put off concerning the former conversation (life) the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts. Ephesians 4:22

Observation: A better translation may be "Having put off" or "Put off once for all". This reminds us that the work was really accomplished when we became believers. This attitude of "Having put off" must be daily maintained by a constant choice. We must be very honest and practical with how the old nature manifests itself in our life. Reject, by faith, the manifestation of the old nature and choose **the** corresponding virtue.

IV. The Instruction of God Concerning the **Old Nature**.

A. Daily count on the provision of God, Romans 6:11.

Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

B. Daily choose to say "No" to sin and refuse temptation, Romans 6:12.

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

C. Daily choose to obey God and trust Him for deliverance, Romans 6:13.

. . . Yield yourselves unto God . . . .

Conclusion: We must make a choice!

|                 |              |                 |          |          |
|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|----------|----------|
| The Old Nature: | Selfishness  | The New Nature: | Love     |          |
|                 | Despair      |                 | Joy      |          |
| Results:        | Anxiety      |                 | Peace    | Results: |
| Bitterness      | Hopelessness |                 | Hope     | Freedom  |
| Tension         | Lust         |                 | Purity   |          |
| Bondage         | Pretense     |                 | Honesty  |          |
| Passivity       | Pride        |                 | Humility |          |
|                 | Unbelief     |                 | Faith    |          |

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