

The Old Man Put Off, and the New Man Put On

Preached at Gower Street Chapel, London, on Lord's Day morning, July 14, 1867

"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Ephesians 4:22, 23, 24

The precepts of the gospel are as much a substantial, integral part of divine revelation as the doctrines of the gospel or the promises of the gospel. We cry out loudly and not unjustly against men who slight, neglect, or ignore the doctrines of the gospel; but do not we, or at least some of us who profess and preach the doctrines of grace, err nearly as much in another direction, in slighting, neglecting, or ignoring the precepts of the gospel? There is, however, I willingly admit, this distinction between them and us, at least such of us as do neglect inculcating the precepts of the gospel, that they slight, neglect, and ignore the doctrines of the gospel from ignorance of them or enmity towards them; if we, or any of us, slight, neglect, or ignore the precepts of the gospel, it is either from a misconception of their nature, or from want of ability to handle them aright. I feel bound to offer this explanation, for I cannot bring myself to think that any true minister of Jesus Christ would willingly and wilfully set himself against the precepts of the gospel, or pass them wholly by in the ministry of the word, as if they were inconsistent with the grand doctrines of the gospel, or not necessary or proper to be preached; for to do so, would seem to imply that the veil of ignorance and unbelief was still upon his heart, or that he was not called to the work of the ministry. But a man may practically ignore what he would not

positively deny, and be guilty of neglect through misconception or human frailty, where he is not guilty of decided enmity or thorough ignorance.

Thus, some ministers seem to think that it is *legal* to bring forward the precepts of the New Testament; that the very nature of a precept, as requiring something to be done, savours of the covenant of works, and is connected with a "Do and live" system; and that, therefore, to enforce obedience to the precepts of the gospel, is, virtually, to enforce the demands of the law. They, therefore, declaim against all such preaching as obscuring, if not marring gospel doctrines, by adding to them the obligation of legal precepts. But may you not make doctrines legal and promises legal, as well as precepts? Are there not hundreds of ministers who legalise gospel doctrines, by twining around them man's ability to believe in him of whom they testify; or pervert gospel promises by handling them as if they were conditional and dependent for their fulfilment upon our obedience? There is, no doubt, a way in which you may so handle the precepts of the gospel, as to give them a legal sound, and so turn gospel into law. But if a man so handle gospel precepts and legalise them, the fault is not in the precepts themselves as revealed in the word, which are not legal, but pure gospel, aye, as pure as the doctrines on which they are based, and the promises by which they are accompanied, but in the men of a legal spirit who legalise them. If we do not know the sweet and blessed connection which the precepts of the New Testament have with the glorious truths of the everlasting gospel; if we have never seen or felt their inward sweetness; if we have never entered into the holy wisdom which shines through them and the kind, gracious directions conveyed by them; if they have never been "a lamp to our feet or a light to our path;" if by them we have never been held back from evil, or never strengthened and encouraged to do that which

is good; if we have never desired to be found walking in them for the glory of God and the comfort of our own souls, we need not wonder that we have found them what men call legal.

But there is another objection made to them, viz., that they are inconsistent with the liberty of the gospel, and therefore are what is termed *bondaging*. But perhaps what you call "bondaging" may be the lashings of a guilty conscience, and what you call the liberty of the gospel may really be a spirit of licentiousness. There must be liberty in the precept as well as liberty in the promise; for you cannot take a part of the gospel and say: "here is liberty;" and then take another part of it and say: "here is bondage." If once you admit that there are precepts in the gospel—and this you cannot well deny, when some of the epistles are well nigh half filled with them—and that the gospel is throughout a gospel of liberty, you must surely allow that there is as much liberty in gospel precepts as in gospel doctrines. David at least, did not think that there was any bondage in the precepts, for his words are: "I will walk at liberty, for I seek thy precepts." Do you not see how he connects together liberty and obedience? In fact, there is no walking in liberty if we neither seek the precepts nor do them; for what is the chief cause of that bondage of spirit which we often feel? Is it not generally because we have in some way or other acted contrary to the precepts of the gospel? This disobedience makes God hide his face from us; and that brings on doubt, fear, and bondage.

But let me bring forward a little illustration to show how the precepts of the gospel are compatible with the sweetest liberty. If you were going abroad, say to Paris at the present time*; and suppose that a kind father, when he put into your hand a sum of money to pay your expenses, were at the

same time to give you some directions as to the journey, and mingle with them some warnings and admonitions to take care of yourself in that abandoned city, should you think that these kind cautions and admonitions came from a different heart or hand than that which supplied you with the means of going, or interfered with your liberty of locomotion when you arrived there? Would you not see in them the same love and kindness which gave you the money, and would you not view them as meant to keep you from being entangled in snares into which you might otherwise fall? You would not think that they were meant to bring you into bondage, but to keep you from being entangled in such things as might bring bondage upon you. It is in this way, then, we are to view the precepts of the gospel as a part of the liberty of the gospel—a liberty from sin, not a liberty to sin.

* It was the time of the Paris Exhibition when a great number of persons were going to see it.

But there is a class of men who slight, ignore, and neglect the precepts of the gospel from other motives and under other influences. The men whom I have been speaking of do it unwittingly: the men I am now to speak of do it wittingly. Perhaps they are living in sin: how, then, can they preach the precepts? The sly drunkard, how can he say: "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit?" A man up to his neck in the world, can he say: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world?" The man scheming and speculating, full of business, with no thought but for mammon; can he consistently urge any precept that bids him "Come out of the world, and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing?"

Again, in a congregation, there will often be influential members, such as rich deacons, and other persons of wealth

and property, on whose support the cause very much rests, and who largely contribute, directly or indirectly, to the minister's maintenance. He, perhaps, is very poor, is burdened with a large family, has few popular gifts or acceptance out of the circle of his own people; and he knows that his very living, humanly speaking, depends upon the way in which he stands with these influential members. Now, what is the consequence if a man is not endowed with a spiritual knowledge of the truth, and is not delivered from the fear of man? Why, simply this: that he does not feel himself able to bring forward and urge the precepts of the gospel, lest they cut too close, lest his insisting upon practical godliness and the fruits of the Spirit, as manifested in the life and conversation, should offend the rich Mr. So-and-So, who likes well enough gospel doctrine on the Sunday, but never practices gospel precepts on the Monday or any other day; or the influential Mr. So-and-So, who is very fond of hearing the doctrine of election preached, but does not wish to hear enforced the precept of liberality, separation from the world, a life of faith and prayer, walking in the fear of God all the day long, and renouncing every practice, open or secret, inconsistent with the doctrine that is according to godliness. But how sad, O how worse than sad is it for a minister to be afraid of his congregation or of any one in it. How unfaithful to his trust, how unfit for his office, how unworthy to be a servant of God and to speak in the name of the King of kings! I am well satisfied, from what I have known and felt in this matter, that to preach the gospel faithfully, a man must have the fear of God only, in his heart, and know no other fear, if he is in any way to stand before the people with a single eye to his glory. What shall we say, then, of either the conscience or the ministry of any man who keeps back the precept for fear of offence, and dares not urge practical godliness, because it would touch the conscience of this rich deacon, or drive away this influential member of the

congregation? Let such a one know that he is keeping back a part of the price; and let him be aware of the sin and end of Ananias.

But I shall not occupy your thoughts and attention this morning any longer with laying before you the necessity and blessedness of the precept, for that is too plain to be denied by any who know the truth of God for themselves; but come at once to the text, which runs in a preceptive form, which I may add, has been the chief reason why I have thus dwelt upon the precept; and in handling the subject before us, I shall cast my thoughts upon it mainly under two leading divisions.

I.—*First*, I shall attempt to describe *the old man*, his character and condition, and show you how he is to be *put off*.

II.—*Secondly*, I shall in a similar manner paint *the new man*, with his character and condition, and how he is to be *put on*.

I.—You will find, if you look at the context, that the apostle is speaking of the Gentiles among whom the Ephesians had their conversation in times past, and speaks of them as "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;" adding, as a description of their habitual practice; "Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." Having in these forcible words described the character and conduct of the Gentile world, he contrasts with it the character and conduct of those to whom he writes, namely, the saints of God at Ephesus: "But ye have not so learned Christ." He has not been to you a cause of unrighteousness as their heathen gods have been to them,

nor has the religion which you have learnt of him encouraged or suffered you to abandon yourselves to lasciviousness to work all uncleanness with greediness, as theirs has done. "If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus." You will observe the holy caution and wise reservation with which the apostle speaks; and how with all his love to the Ephesian saints and his belief of their general Christian character, he still puts in an "if so be." It is as if he would thus speak: "If so be that ye are what I hope you are and what you profess to be,—saints and faithful in Christ Jesus; if so be that you have heard his blessed voice, and he has spoken with power to your soul; if so be that (O miracle of grace) ye have been taught by him as the truth is in Jesus;" that is the truth as connected with him and flowing out of him, the truth of which he is the vivifying power, the beginning and end, the sum and substance, the subject and object, the centre and circumference; now, what follows? "If ye have so learned Christ, if ye have so heard his voice, if ye have been so taught of Him, it is that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts."

i. Now, this is "the old man" whose character and condition I have undertaken to describe. Let us see, then, what is this old man, and why he bears that name? We will consider his name first, for that will serve to give us some idea of its character. Why is he called so? He is called "the old man" for various reasons.

1. The first is on account of his *great antiquity*, for sin is as old as the Adam-fall, and therefore in that sense older than our soul and older than our body. It is true that we were not possessed of the old man till we first had being, when, according to David's confession, we were shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin; but the old man existed in the world

ages before we were born, and was propagated to us by our parents, who themselves had received it in lineal succession from Adam. We may thus illustrate it. Here is the sewage of a large town, according to modern agricultural improvements, directing its course to a certain field; when it enters the field, then for the first time the field and it become acquainted. But the sewage came a long way before it reached the field; and yet is the same in the field as it was before it reached it. So the old man only reached us in our conception, only made itself manifest at our birth and grew with our growth and strengthened itself with our strength; but it existed in the loins of our ancestors many, many years before it personally reached us, just as the sewage comes down a long course before it reaches the individual field. Thus, in this sense, he is the oldest man in the world; and yet strange to say, never manifests the weakness of old age, or will ever die whilst a man lives beneath the sun.

2. But he is called the old man for another reason. Our old nature is of course *older than our new*. At whatever age God might have been pleased to quicken our soul, whether in boyhood, youth, or manhood, in every instance the old man must have been older than the new. In that sense, therefore, he is the old man, as having priority of birth in our heart. He is the Esau, whereas the new man is the Jacob; he is the Ishmael, whereas the new man is the Isaac; he is the Saul, whereas the new man is the David; he is the first who shall be the last, the elder who shall serve the younger.

3. But I think there is another reason why he may be justly called the old man. Is human nature ever so depraved as is manifested in a *depraved old man*? There is a wicked French proverb which I will not quote in the original, out of which the meaning may be freely rendered: "O if youth did but know; O if old age could but do;" in other words, "O that

youth had all the knowledge of sin that old age possesses; and O that old age possessed all the vigour of youth to carry this knowledge into practice." Woe to woman if such a being existed—a man uniting in himself all the attractiveness of youth with all the knowledge possessed by age of the avenues to the female heart. Excuse the illustration, which I have almost shrunk from giving, and yet it has often struck my mind as one of the most forcible descriptions in a few words of human depravity; though as a sentiment or as a wish it is almost more worthy of a demon than a man. But is not a depraved old man one of the most loathsome objects of our disgust and one of the vilest of all vile beings? How deeply rooted must sin be in his heart who is ever feeding his imagination with base lusts and living as it were upon the recollections of the past, painting to himself sins which he never will be likely or able to accomplish. How hardened, impenitent, obstinate, and unyielding, for the most part, is old age. Take a depraved old man: what argument, what appeal can influence a man hardened through a long succession of sin until he has reached old age, and in reaching old age has reached with it its almost proverbial obstinate adherence to old ways and old habits? We must not, we cannot limit the sovereignty of God, but to speak after the manner of men, our hope of success in reaching the consciences of those who are grown old seems well nigh desperate. Our hopes of a crop, our expectations of the blessing of God upon our ministry rest chiefly in the young; and sometimes the Lord is pleased to call by his grace those who are advancing into middle life; but I should say from what I have observed in my own ministry and that of others that it is a rare thing for the word to lay hold for the first time of the conscience of any one far advanced in life. This is a needful distinction to make, for old age is in itself no bar to the blessing of God upon the word. One may, having been called in early days, have sunk into great lethargy and

deadness of soul; and God may revive his work in old age, for he has promised that his people "shall still bring forth fruit in old age to show that the Lord is upright." This is one thing, but a distinct call by grace is another. Revivals and renewings are not quickenings. The bringing forth of the top stone with shoutings of "grace, grace unto it," is not the laying of the foundation stone. Excuse this digression. Taking, therefore, the old man in our text as descriptive of our corrupt nature, we may view it as inheriting everything which we see in a vile, lewd, covetous, fretful, wicked, and depraved old man.

Some of you will, perhaps, call me a corruption preacher because I speak in such strong language of what we are by nature; but do I go beyond either the language of Scripture or the observation of daily experience? Does not the Holy Ghost, describing the old man in our text, declare that he is "corrupt according to the deceitful lusts?" Am I wrong then if I express my conviction that he is rotten to the very core, and that there is not in him, as in some vile, sensual, depraved old man, one right feeling, one right principle, one single speck or spot of soundness? For what does "corrupt" mean? Rotten; and if rotten, rotten throughout, for it is "according to the deceitful lusts."

ii. Let us examine the meaning of these words. The corruption, then, of the old man is according to the measure of the deceitful lusts. This is the test whereby his corruption is to be weighed and measured. Take as an illustration two men, or rather two old men. Let both be thoroughly bad, but let one be more crafty, more designing, more deceitful, more false, and more lying than the other. Which is the worse of the two? Which is more to be guarded against, shunned, and abhorred? You will say at once "the falser, the one who is more crafty and deceitful than the other, for his deceit not

only adds to his sins, but makes him more dangerous." Now, apply this illustration to our subject. Your old man, my old man, is corrupt according to the measure of the deceitful lusts which it harbours, and which work in it and manifest themselves through it. Nor is there any worse character in our lusts than their deceitfulness. O how deceitful is lust in every shape and form! Whether it be of the flesh, or of the eyes, or a lusting after money, worldly advantage, prosperous circumstances, rising in life, doing well for ourselves or our families—whatever shape it takes, for indeed it wears a thousand forms, how deceitful it is! How gradually, if indulged, will it lead us into everything which is vile. How it blinds the eyes, hardens the conscience, perverts the judgment, entangles the affections, draws the feet aside from the strait and narrow path, buries and all but suffocates the life of God in the soul, till one scarcely knows what he is or where he is, and only knows that he is full of confusion, and burdened with guilt and fear and bondage. How deceitful, too, it is in ever promising what it never can perform. How it promises happiness and pleasure if we will but indulge and gratify it, and paints all sorts of pleasant pictures and charming prospects to entangle the thoughts and allure the affections. But if listened to and obeyed, what does it give us in the end? Alas! we find that as we sow so we reap, and that if we sow to the flesh we shall of the flesh reap corruption. Well, then, may the apostle describe lusts as "deceitful," and measure by them the corruption of the old man. Nor are these lusts few or small, for this old man of ours is full of them. There is not a passion, nor an inclination, nor a desire, nor a craving after any one earthly or sensual enjoyment; there is not a sin that ever has broken out in word or action in man or woman that is not deeply seated in our old man; for he is according to, in the measure of, and in proportion to our deceitful lusts. You need not wonder, then, that whether old or young, male or female, rich or poor,

educated or uneducated, morally trained or running in childhood about the streets, lectured to and watched over by tender and gracious parents, or suffered to grow up without any restraint put upon you, deceitful lusts are ever moving in your breast. They were born with you, your family inheritance, and all that you can strictly call your own. You need not wonder, then, if the vilest thoughts, the basest ideas find a harbour, a resting place, and a nest in your corrupt bosom. I say this not to encourage you to cherish what should be your plague and torment, but as a word that may be suitable to some who are deeply exercised at finding in themselves such monstrous sins, and think that theirs is an unusual or exceptional case. If the old man is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; if he is incurably depraved, and never can be anything else, do what you will with him, try your very best, but a desperately wicked old man, need you wonder if he is continually manifesting his real character, showing his ugly face, and, if you are a vessel of mercy, is to you a continual grief, a plague and a torment? For I only say what I feel, that I do believe this old man is the greatest plague a child of God has or can have. I do believe that all our trials, afflictions, bereavements, and sorrows are not worthy to be compared with the trouble and exercise, sorrow and anguish, which have been caused by the plotting, the contriving and the working of this wicked old man in the various deceitful lusts by means of which he has at various times more or less, drawn us off the path of holiness and obedience into some of his crooked ways. You may fancy, though I fear it is too often a fact, and thus more than a fancy, in the ward of a London workhouse some vile old man hardened in sin and crime, glorying in iniquity, and taking an infernal pleasure in pouring his filthy conversation into any youthful ear which will listen to it. Now, is there not enough sin and depravity in that vile wretch to pollute the mind, inflame the passions, and harden the conscience of every

poor, miserable youth of whom he may get hold? But what a dreadful thing it would be, if that wicked old man were shut up in the ward of your heart, and were continually pouring his depraved thoughts into your mind. Have you never seen this old man's face? Have you never heard his foul whispers? Has he never suggested any schemes or plots of wickedness and crime? Has he never recounted any of his former villainies until you have felt shocked and distressed beyond measure, that you should have such a wretch about you and within you? I know that all this strong language will seem very shocking and dreadful to some of you; and if you have had little or no experience of what human nature is—I mean, of course, as to its workings, not its works; its inward dealings, not its outward doings; you will scarcely think it credible, that any one with a grain of godliness in his heart, should have such a corrupt, depraved inmate in his breast. And yet I am saying no more than some of the holiest, chastest, most circumspect, conscientious, and tender of the family of God have inwardly felt by painful and long experience. It is your mercy if this depraved old man's presence is your grief; his temptations your trial; and his movements and workings your sorrow and your burden. He will never do you any real harm so long as he is your plague and torment. As long as you sigh and cry under him and against him, and resist him even unto blood, striving against sin, he may tempt, but he will not prevail; he may fight against you, but he will not overcome you.

But this leads me to my next point, the *putting off* of this old man.

iii. You will observe that the apostle, though he recognises the presence and describes with wonderful force the character of the old man, bids us "put him off;" and you will observe also, that this exhortation is addressed to saints, not

to sinners; to those who have been made nigh by the blood of Christ and who are being builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit. Does not this clearly show that the saints of God still possess the old man; for if he had been destroyed at regeneration, as some talk, they would not be called upon to be ever putting him off? And you will observe also, the expression, "concerning the former conversation." Let us see, then, what instruction we may gather up from this precept of the apostle. I seem myself to gather from it two leading thoughts.

1. First, that the old man is to be put off much in the same way as we put off a *dirty garment*. How glad the workman is, say the mason or the bricklayer, at the end of a long, dusty, laborious week to get a thorough good wash on the Sunday morning, and put a clean shirt upon his back. How nice and fresh he feels with his clean skin and his clean shirt. Excuse the figure, for though homely it may not be the less true or less impressive. Our old man is like a shirt which has gone through all the dust and sweat and toils of the week. And he is put off when he is not allowed to stick any longer close to the skin, but is pulled off and thrown away with disgust as a dirty garment; worn unwillingly and put off gladly. The apostle, after speaking in another place, of some of the worst sins which have debased and disgraced human nature, adds: "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Cor. 6:11.) "Ye are washed:" there is the washing of the person in the bath, or rather in the fountain open for all sin and uncleanness; "ye are justified:" there is the white raiment all bright and clean put upon the washed person; "ye are sanctified:" there is the presence and power of God's grace, the comfort of being thus washed and dressed; and all this "in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God;" for it is only by

believing in his name, and by the power of the Spirit that there is any washing, any justification, or any sanctification. But remember this, you can only put him off for a time. He is put off from time to time in his workings, in his defilement, in his filth, but alas! he soon makes his appearance again, and you will never put him off altogether till he is put off in death.

2. The other leading thought which strikes my mind as an interpretation of the exhortation to put off the old man is, to put him off *his seat of authority and power*. He is put off, then, when he is not suffered to have dominion. Put him, then, off the throne; don't let him reign and rule. Thrust him from sitting at the head of the table and occupying the arm chair; let him not be the master of the house. Get him into the place where Bishop Bonner thrust the martyrs—into the coal cellar. Mortify him, fast him, set your foot upon him, keep him down, and gag his mouth when he would vent his blasphemies and try to stir up deceitful lusts. He is to be put off; he is not to be cuddled and indulged, put in the best chair, fed upon the best meat, kept close and warm by the fireside, handsomely dressed, and made the pet of the whole house. He is to be treated with great rigour. The word of God bids us crucify him, and pronounces a sweeping sentence, which, if we take as a description of all who truly belong to Christ, cuts off thousands of splendid professors: "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Not they are going to do it, think about doing it, mean to do it some day or other, hope they shall do it before they die, but "*have crucified* the flesh;" that is, have already nailed it to Christ's cross. This is indeed a putting off the old man, for it is taking it and fixing it to the cross of Jesus. Now, crucifixion was a painful and lingering death. We cannot expect, therefore, to crucify the old man without his crying out against his crucifier. And yet the pleasure to the new man is greater than the pain to the old man, for we may rest

well satisfied that the more we are enabled to mortify, crucify, and put off the corrupt old man, with his deceitful lusts, the more happy we shall be, the less cause there will be for compunction and sorrow, and the more we shall walk at liberty as seeking God's precepts. Let me here appeal to your personal experience on this point. What has caused you thousands of sighs and cries and groans? What has darkened your evidences and obscured your hopes of heaven? What has put stumbling blocks in your way, and strewed thorns and briars in your path? Has it not been this old man, and because you have not crucified him, but instead of doing so have been secretly indulging him and letting him have his own way? And have you not found how deceitful all his lusts have been, how fair they have promised and how foully they have performed? What vexation, what sorrow, what bondage, what grief, what a burden has been often brought upon your back by giving way to deceitful lusts. O, if I could read the heart of some here, or listen to their words when they are secretly confessing their sins before God, how many a heart should I see lacerated and bleeding through the guilt and shame of having given way to deceitful lusts. What confessions I should hear if I listened sometimes at your bedroom door; and I might see, if I looked in, tears running down your cheek, and hear sobs and sighs vented from your loaded bosom. And why? Because these vile, deceitful, and damnable lusts have often entangled and drawn you aside, got hold of you, promised much and performed nothing, and left behind them nothing but bitter, bitter reflections, and sad, sad remembrances of how you have fallen by their secret power. O for grace to be ever putting off this old man, to have no more to do with him than we would have to do with a depraved wretch whose character for profligacy is generally known, and whom we would not let darken the door of our house. O that we could say to our old man as we could say to him if he had gained admission into our house,—

"There is the door; get out of it, and never show your face here again." But this, alas, we cannot do with our old man, for he is a tenant for life, has a claim upon the house, was once its master, and will never leave it till it falls to pieces. If, then, we must have him in our house, we must say to him, "You shall not be master here; you have had your own way too long, have corrupted the household, and turned what should have been the house of God into a den of thieves. As, therefore, I have his warrant and authority for so doing, I shall degrade you to the lowest place. No head seat at the table for you; no arm-chair, no chimney corner, no best cut of the meat, no finest of the wine. You are here, I know, in fixed and firm possession, and happy should I be if I never saw your face or heard your voice again. But as you are tied to me, as I cannot get rid of you, I hope I may starve you, not feed you; be your enemy, not your friend; your master, not your servant; and, therefore, never suffer you to exercise power over me, for I know what you would do if you could. It is not once, nor twice, nor ten times that you have imposed upon me by your deceitful ways and your oily lips. God grant I may never listen to your wily tongue again, but may hate you and be enabled to view you as God's enemy and my enemy—as well knowing that if I were overcome by you I should sin against the best of friends and the dearest of masters." Now, if you could meet the old man with this language, and encounter him with this holy boldness, he would hang his head down. It is your giving him an inch that makes him take an ell; it is your listening to him that makes him talk so flatteringly—like a weak woman who gives way when she ought to resist, and falls by giving way. "Resist the devil and he will flee from you." Put off the old man with his deeds and you will not fall into condemnation.

iv. But you will observe that the apostle's words are "*concerning the former conversation;*" implying that we put

off the old man when our life, conduct, and conversation are so changed that our former conversation—that is, the way in which we formerly lived and acted—is fully renounced. A change of heart will always produce a change of life. If sin is repented of, it will be forsaken; if the old man is crucified inwardly, he will show but little strength outwardly. Nail him to the cross and he will have no feet to walk with, no hands to work with. His strength is ended when his crucifixion begins. He loses heart at the sight of the cross; and that which gives to the soul its life, gives him his death blow. And as he dies, and the soul lives, what follows? Godliness of life as well as godliness of heart. Make the tree good and you make its fruit good; let there be a good treasure in the heart and good things will come out of it. It is useless, and worse than useless, to talk about religion unless it be manifested by our lives.

Now, as we are enabled—and I am sure nothing but the grace of God, and a very powerful measure of his grace, can enable us, to put off the old man—we are in a posture of soul to listen to the other part of the precept, which brings us to the second leading division of my discourse, in which I proposed to show the character of the new man and how he must be put on. But you will observe, that the apostle previously says: "And be renewed in the spirit of your mind," which I must, therefore, notice.

v. We see from his words that as the old man goes down the new man begins to rise, and as he lifts up his head there springs up at the same time a renewing in the spirit of our mind. As long as we are under the power and dominion of the old man there are no sweet renewals, blessed revivals, or comforting visitations of God's presence. There is either a giving way to the old man or else the consequence of giving way to him—either sin indulged or sin mourned over; sin

practised or sin confessed; pleasing lusts or painful remorse. But when we are enabled to put off this old man, then there is a being renewed in the spirit of our mind. There are droppings in of the forgiving mercy of God; and this produces a renewal of faith and hope, with love and every grace. This, therefore, leads us on to our next point;

II.—The *putting on of the new man*, in handling which, we shall, as in the case of the old man, first describe his character, and then show how he is to be put on. "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

We see from this exhortation that as there is a putting off, so there is a putting on; and as there is an old man, so there is a new. And see how different is their character as described by the Holy Ghost. The old man, is "corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;" the new man "is after God created in righteousness and true holiness." What a contrast, what an antithesis, what an antipodes between them. Are heaven and hell further from each other, light or darkness, Christ or Belial?

i. But why is he called "the new man?" You will observe that both are called men, and doubtless for this reason, that they have, both of them, the parts, members and qualities of a man. But every part and quality of the two men are totally different, or, if they have similar members, they use them for different purposes. The old man has eyes, but eyes full of adultery. The old man has ears, but ears to drink in every lie and every foolish word which can feed his lusts. He has lips which he calls his own, but the poison of asps is under them. He has a tongue, but with it he uses deceit. He has hands, but these hands are always on the stretch to grasp what is evil. And he has feet, but these feet are swift to shed blood.

Every member and every faculty of the old man is for sin, to serve and indulge it. Now, the new man has the members also, and the faculties of a man as the old man has. He has eyes, and by these eyes he sees Jesus; he has ears, and with those ears he hears the gospel of salvation and drinks in the precious sound; he has lips, and with these lips he blesses God; he has a tongue, and with his tongue he praises the name of the Lord, speaks of the glory of his kingdom, and talks of his power; or if a minister, instructs, comforts, admonishes, or warns the church of God; he has hands which are open to bestow liberally on the poor and needy; and he has feet which are swift to walk, yea, to run at times, in the way of God's commandments when he has enlarged his heart. Thus the old man employs every member in the service of sin, and the new man employs every member in the service of God. Now, as when we are under the influence of the old man, we do, or at least we are tempted to do, what he may suggest, so when we are under the influence of the new man, then we gladly do what he inclines us to do according to the will and word of God.

ii. But we have in our text a blessed *description* of what the new man is. Of course you know it is the spirit which is born of the Spirit, the new man of grace, that is meant by the term, and that he is called new as being of a newer birth than the old man, and as coming also from him who said: "Behold, I make all things new." The possession of this new nature is the chief evidence of our interest in Christ; for "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his," and "if any man be in Christ he is a new creature."

1. But he is *young* as well as new; for as the old man is always old, so the new man is always young. He has, therefore, all the vigour of youth, the feelings of youth, the tenderness, the susceptibility, the impressibility of youth, and

all that is lovely in youth. As the old man is a picture of depraved old age, so the new man has every feature that we admire in the young; everything that is tender and teachable, impressible and affectionate, warm, active, and vigorous. All we admire in youth is seen in the new man; all we loathe in depraved old age we see in the old man. And, indeed, he must be a beautiful man, not only from his youth and freshness, tenderness and vigour, his strong arm, his manly bearing, his modest, yet firm look; but he is supernaturally beautiful as being God's own creation, for you will observe that he is not born, but created. God himself created him by the power of his Spirit in the day of regeneration.

2. There is, therefore, another reason why he is so beautiful. He is created *after the image of God*. We find the apostle speaking in almost similar language (Col. 3:10):—"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image [of him] that created him." When God first created man, he created him in his own image, after his own likeness. That image was lost by sin; but that it might not be wholly lost, lost for ever, God creates in his people a new man, after his own image and his own likeness. So that man is restored and placed upon a higher pinnacle than that from which he fell; for he is put into possession of a new man which is created by the power of God, after the very image and likeness of God, in righteousness and true holiness. Let us examine this point a little more closely, and notice a few features of this divinely impressed image. Is God a Spirit? The new man is spiritual, so as in this respect to be like the image of God. Is God holy? So is the new man, for he is "created in righteousness and true holiness." Is God heavenly, as dwelling in the highest heavens? So the new man is heavenly, as having heavenly feelings, heavenly desires, and heavenly aspirations. Is God in name and

nature, love? So the new man dwelleth in love, and thus dwelleth in God, and God in him. (1 John 4:16.) Is God merciful? So those in whom the new man dwells are bidden to be merciful as their Father also is merciful. He is therefore said in our text to be "created after God," which as explained by the almost similar passage (Col. 3:10), means after the image of God. Thus, when God looks down from heaven his dwelling place into the breasts of his people, he sees there with one glance both what he hates and what he loves. He sees the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and he loathes and despises his image. He sees also in the same breast a copy of himself, his own image, his own likeness, in the new man that he has created by his grace. And his all-seeing eye can discern between the old and the other, which we often cannot. The old man is so deceitful, often creates such a hubbub, there is so much dust attending his movements, and he is so noisy, that the calm, still, quiet face of the new man seems almost lost out of sight. It is like a family in which there is a quarrelsome, loud-tongue, contentious master, and a quiet, peaceable, amiable, submissive mistress. The master rants and raves, tears and swears, and would turn, if he could, the very house out of the windows. None can please him. His patient wife, obedient children, attentive servants, try their best, but try in vain. Do what they will, they cannot satisfy him. He is a plague to the whole family. The wife goes about the house calm, peaceful, submissive, trying to alleviate her husband's temper, but generally unsuccessfully; every now and then she drops a tear, gets away to her room and weeps, but still bears all with uncomplaining patience. Such is a picture of the old man; such of the new. The old man we see and feel to be tearing about, raving and ranting, making a hubbub in us, creating nothing but confusion. The new man we see and feel to be quiet, humble, submissive, and retiring, now and then venting a sigh and a cry; now and then putting up a secret

groan or inward prayer; now and then looking out for the Lord's appearing, and getting away as far as he can from this noisy depraved old man. Now need you wonder what a house you have in your bosom, when you have two such different inmates in it? I may almost compare it to a lodging-house where there is a noisy lodger and a quiet one. Need you wonder then that your house sometimes is such a scene of confusion that you can scarcely hear the quiet accents of the mild lodger, or even believe that he is in his room when the house resounds with the rant and roar, noise and strife of the unruly lodger? But this is your happiness, that you detest the confusion, hate the hubbub; are not like a drunkard in a tap-room—the more the noise, the merrier the company. You want quiet; solitude suits you, the companionship of your own thoughts, and the pouring out of your heart before the Lord, the dropping in of his presence and the blessed visitation of his smile. So you see with all the confusion, the hubbub, and noise, which often makes you feel like poor Job, full of confusion, yet that there is some good thing in you which God has wrought by his Spirit and grace. This, then, is the new man, which has been created by the breath of God in your soul, and that "in righteousness," which means here uprightness, "and true holiness," not mock, not legal, not fleshly, nor self-imposed, but such holiness as is wrought by the power of the blessed Spirit.

iii. Now this new man is to be "*put on*" in a somewhat similar way as we put off the old. I showed you that the old man was put off mainly in two ways. 1. As we put off a dirty garment. 2. As we put off from his seat the former master of the house. Now carry this analogy into putting on the new man. We put him on as our clean and comely dress, or when we wear him—to use a Scripture figure, "as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." We read of "the beauties of

holiness;" and the promise given to the Lord, was, that "his people should be willing in the day of his power, in the beauties of holiness." What a beautiful description is given in the Canticles of the Church; when, "like Jerusalem the holy city," in the prophet (Isai. 52:1;) she has "put on her beautiful garments;" and how, as if struck with surprise, the beloved says to her: "Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah,—comely as Jerusalem;" and asks as it were the question, "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?" In Ezekiel 16, we have a description of the church as washed, clothed and decked with ornaments; and then the Lord explains why she was so beautiful: "Thy beauty was perfect through my comeliness which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God."

1. The new man, then, is put on when we *put on the graces* that belong to him. I observed, that the new man is called so, as having the members of a man. These members are the various graces which he is enabled to exercise; and the new man may be said to be put on when these graces act under a divine influence and power. When, for instance, we are enabled by the grace of God to believe in his dear Son, to receive the truth in the love of it, to feel the power of his word upon our heart—this is putting on the new man, for it is putting on a very essential member of the new man, which is *faith*. Again, when in the exercise of a good hope through grace, we can look up and look out, and thus expect and wait for better days, if not now in the enjoyment of them, we may be said to put on the new man, for *hope* is a very conspicuous and active member of him. So when we can feel a little going forth of love and affection towards the Lord, to his word, to his people, his ways, and all that is connected with him; this may be also said to be putting on of the new man; for *love* is one of his most distinguishing features and

most marked characteristics. So with patience, humility, repentance, and godly sorrow for sin, spirituality of mind, a spirit of prayer and of supplication, resignation to the will of God, liberality to God's people, earnest desires to walk in godly fear, to live to the praise and glory of God, to do the things that are pleasing in his sight, and live under his approving smile,—to be blessed with all this is to put on the new man.

2. But I observed, that we put on the new man when we put him *into his right place*—when he is made the head and master of the house, and rules the soul with his sweet and prevailing influence. It is just the contrary to what we saw was the power and influence of the old man. And O how softening, humbling, and spiritualizing is the influence of the new. Do you not feel yourself at times subject to two very distinct kinds of influence? Does not something at various times come over your soul which carries with it a certain efficacious power—what I call an influence for want of a better word? You know, painfully know, what it is to be influenced by pride, covetousness, worldly mindedness, fretfulness, peevishness, and many other evils. You know the influence of a bad temper, of a hasty disposition, of a quarrelsome spirit, of a contentious mind, of covetousness, or any other evil that seems to press itself upon you as a power that exercises dominion over you. Now see if you cannot find also in your bosom some other kind of influence. Does nothing ever break in upon your soul like a sunbeam to communicate light to your understanding, life to your soul, feeling to your heart, love to your affections? In reading the word, in hearing the gospel, in conversation with the dear family of God, upon your knees in secret prayer, or as you are engaged it may be through the day, does not a sweet, soft, secret influence steal at times gently over your breast, like the wind over a bank of violets, which seems as if to

influence your mind to what is heavenly, holy, spiritual, and divine? In the night season, or at various times during the day, does there not come a secret, indescribable power, which softens, melts, and humbles your heart, raising up prayer and supplication, making you confess your sins, drawing up a thousand longing desires after the Lord and making you, for the time at least, spiritually and heavenly minded? Here is the new man put on. You take the new man thus, as it were, into your arms, as a mother takes her babe, and bring him near to your breast, and you put him on as yours, as you thus put on his graces, his influences, his operations, and what he has created after the image of God in righteousness and true holiness.

iv. Now, as you thus put on the new man, he spreads his influence also over your life, walk, conduct, and conversation; for these secret influences will manifest themselves openly, and the tree being made inwardly good, will bring forth outwardly good fruit. True religion will be always manifested by a man's life and conduct. In your families, in your business, in your daily conversation, it will be manifested under what influence you are. If you put off the old man, you put off with him peevishness, rebellion, evil temper, pride, covetousness, worldly-mindedness, harshness, fretfulness, obstinacy, and self-righteousness. If you put on the new man, you put on bowels of mercy towards God's people, kindness and compassion to those who are in difficulty and sorrow, tenderness of conscience, godly fear, strictness of life, circumspection of walk, and uprightness of conduct; and thus you make manifest who you are and whom you serve.

But the more you know of these two men, the more you will hate the one and the more you will love the other; at least, I am very sure that the more you know of the new man, the

more you will love him. Do you not sometimes feel as if you never would part with him, for he is so like Christ? Is not Christ the image of God? And if the new man is created after the image of God, it is Christ in you the hope of glory. The new man, therefore, as being created after the image of God, is a copy of the Lord Jesus Christ himself. He, therefore, speaks for Jesus, testifies for Jesus, and is, so to speak, a representation of the mind and image of Jesus. O what a mercy would it be for us, as we go about and go into the world, to be ever putting on the new man, and no more leave the house without him than we should without our coat or gown. How he would guard your conduct; keep you from lightness and frivolity, and make you watchful over every word and almost every look. You would not, then, drop into every idle conversation, in the omnibus, in the railway, in the shop, in the street; it would not be to every one "hail, fellow, well met." There would be a sobriety, a consistency, a godliness, a separation of spirit—a something to mark you as distinct from the profane and the professing.

Many persons, I well know, would think this a very gloomy religion, and rebel against being tied up as it were to such restraints. But it is because they know not the sweetness and blessedness of putting on the new man. In copy-books, boys write sometimes, "Virtue is its own reward." I will give you a copy to write upon your heart; "Godliness is its own reward;" or I will set you a copy out of David's book and in his best hand, "In keeping of them there is great reward." As to bondage and constraint, and all that idle talk, you would find it just the contrary; and that, in proportion as you were enabled to put off the old man, you would enjoy more liberty of soul, more access to God, more sweetness in religion, more blessedness in the Bible, more access to the throne of grace, and clearer and brighter prospects of heaven. And you would find also no bondage in this. I will tell you where the

bondage is: *Sin*. The bondage is in sin, and the law which is the strength of sin. There is no bondage in the gospel. It is pure liberty. "Stand fast in the liberty with which Christ has made you free." There is no bondage in the new man. He is all liberty; he is free as Christ is, as holy as God is. There is no wrath, no enmity, no bondage, no guilt, no shame, no fear in the new man. He walks at liberty, and therefore for men to say, "we must not look at the precepts; we shall get into bondage;" or for a minister to say: "I am not going to be legal this morning; I shan't take the precepts and give you a lecture out of them, to bring your soul into bondage;"—why the man does not know what he is talking about. He has never felt the beauty and preciousness of these kind admonitions and gracious cautions, the blessedness of keeping God's word, of walking in God's ways, and knowing his will and doing it. It is sin that brings the bondage. There is no bondage in obedience, no bondage in walking in the ways of the Lord, no bondage in serving God and doing his will. The glorious gospel of the grace of God is free in its doctrines, free in its promises, free in its precepts; and this is its marked characteristic, that it makes free as well as is free. For this is the promise. "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." But when men want to be made free *from* the precept, and not *in* the precept; when they want to be indulged with liberty to walk in forbidden ways, and hug the doctrines of the gospel while they despise and trample upon the precepts of the gospel; let them know that their hearts are not right before God, and that as they sow so will they reap; for he that sows to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, and he that sows to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.