

Death of 'The Old Man'

by Samuel Logan Brengle

The sermon emphasizes the importance of dealing with the 'old man', a sinful nature that remains in the heart of a believer, through obedient faith and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Scripture: Isaiah 53:5, Ezekiel 36:26, Romans 3:3, Romans 3:23, Ephesians 4:22, Hebrews 3:12-19, James 1:21, 1 John 1:7, 1 John 3:5, 1 John 3:8

Topics: "Overcoming Sin", "Sanctification"

Description

Samuel Logan Brengle emphasizes the transformative power of Jesus Christ in the sermon 'Death of The Old Man,' explaining that Christ came to take away our sins and destroy the works of the devil. He highlights the necessity of both justification and entire sanctification, asserting that believers must confront the 'old man' or 'carnal mind' that remains after conversion. Brengle encourages Christians to seek a deeper work of grace through obedient faith, which can lead to a complete cleansing from sin and the fruits of the Spirit. He passionately affirms that this salvation is not only possible but is a profound reality for those who trust in Jesus. The sermon concludes with a call to faith, urging believers to recognize the fullness of salvation available through Christ.

Transcript

The Son of God came into this world, and lived, and toiled, and taught, and suffered, and died and rose again in order to accomplish a twofold purpose. The Apostle John explains this twofold work. In I John iii. 5, speaking of Jesus, he says, 'Ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins. This is His justification, and regeneration, which are done for us and in us. In verse 8 he adds, 'For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.' That is entire sanctification, which is a work done in us. Now upon an examination of experience and scripture, we find this is exactly what man needs to have done for him.

First, he needs to get rid of his own sins, and have a new principle of life planted in him. 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Rom. iii. 23), and when any man comes to God, he comes burdened with a sense of his own wrongdoings and tempers. His sins condemn him; but, thank God, Jesus came to take away our sins. When a man comes with a penitent heart, acknowledging himself a sinner, and puts his trust in Jesus, he will find himself suddenly freed from his sins. The sense of guilt will vanish. The power of evil will be broken. The burden will roll away. Peace will fill his heart. He will see that his sins were laid on another, even on Jesus, and he will realize that 'with His stripes we are healed' (Isa.

liii. 5).

This is a result of that free pardon, that free justification for all past offenses, that God gives to every one who surrenders himself heartily to, and trusts in, Jesus. At the same time God plants in the man's heart a new life. The man is born of God, and receives what Paul calls the washing of regeneration, which washes away all the man's guilt, and all the sin for which he is responsible.

At this time, too, there will be planted in the man's heart love, joy, peace and the various fruits of the Spirit, and if his experience is very marked, as such experiences frequently are, he will probably think there is nothing more to be done. But, if he walks in 'humbleness of mind' (which, by the way, is a much-neglected fruit of the Spirit), if he speaks often and freely with those who love the Lord, and if he carefully searches the word of God and meditates therein day and night, he will soon find that sin's disease is deeper and more deadly than he thought, and that behind and below his own sins are the 'works of the devil,' that must also be destroyed before the work of grace in his soul can be complete.

He will find a big, dark something in him that wants to get mad when things are against him; something which will not be patient; something that is touchy and sensitive; something that wants to grumble and find fault; something that is proud and shuns the shame of the Cross; something that sometimes suggests hard thoughts against God; something that is self-willed and ugly and sinful. He hates this 'something' in him and wants to get rid of it, and probably condemns himself for it and maybe will feel that he is a greater sinner now than he ever was before he was converted. But he is not. In fact, he is not a sinner at all so long as he resists this something in himself.

Now, what is the trouble with the man? What is the name of this troublesome 'something'? Paul calls it by several names. In Rom. viii. 7 he calls it 'the carnal mind,' and he says it is 'enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.' You cannot fix it up. You cannot whitewash it over. You cannot make it better by culture or growth, or by any effort whatever. It is an enemy of God, and cannot be anything else.

In the seventh chapter (verse 24) he calls it 'the body of this death' and wonders how he can get deliverance from it. In Eph. iv. 22, and in Col. iii. 9, he calls it 'the old man.' In Gal. v.17, he calls it 'the flesh.' James calls it 'superfluity of naughtiness,' which is also well rendered, 'the remainder of iniquity' (Jas. i. 21).

John calls it 'sin,' as distinct from 'sins,' and the 'works of the devil.' In Ezek. xxxvi. 26 it is called a 'stony heart.' The theologians call it 'inbred sin,' 'original sin' and 'depravity.' Whatever you wish to call it, it is something evil and awful, that remains in the heart after a man has been converted.

Some say that it is dealt with at conversion, but I never saw any people who found it so, and John Wesley, who was a much wiser man than I am, and who had a far wider range of observation, examined thousands of people on this very point, and he said he never knew of one who got rid of this troublesome thing at conversion.

Some people say that growing in grace is the remedy. Others say you never get rid of it while you live. It will remain in you and war against you till you die. They are not altogether prophets of despair, for they say the new life in you will overcome it and keep it down, but that you will have to stand on guard and watch it, club and repress it, as you would a maniac, till death relieves you.

Personally, this subject once gave me great concern. These warring opinions perplexed me, while the 'old man' made increasing war against all my holy desires and purposes. But while I found man's teachings and theories were perplexing, God's teachings were plain and light as day.

1. God does not admit that we get rid of this at conversion, for all His teachings and exhortations concerning it are addressed to Christians. And those who hold this doctrine will have to admit one of two things either that it is not removed at conversion, or that a great number of earnest professors who claim to be converted have never been converted at all. Personally, I cannot admit the latter for an instant.

2. God does, by the mouth of Peter, exhort us to grow in grace, but that simply means to grow in favor with God, by obedience and faith, and does not touch the subject in hand. Corn may grow beautifully and delight the farmer, but all its growth will not rid the field of weeds, and the farmer will have to look to some other method to get rid of those troublesome things.

3. Neither does God anywhere teach that this thing need be bothering us till death, or that death will destroy it.

4. Nor do I find any warrant in the whole Bible for purgatorial fires being the deliverer from this evil.

5. But I do find that God teaches very plainly how we are to get rid of it. Paul says, 'Put off . . . the old man' (Eph. iv. 22). James says, ' . . . lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness' (Jas. i. 21). John says, ' . . . the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin' (1 John i. 7), not part or some, sin, but 'all sin.'

And again, John says, Jesus 'was manifested' to 'destroy the works of the devil'; (1 John iii. 8), and God says through Ezekiel, 'I will take away the stony heart' (Ezek. xxxvi. 26).

All these passages teach that we are to get rid of something that bothers us and hinders our spiritual life and show plainly that this work is not to be a slow, evolutionary process, but an instantaneous work, wrought in the heart of the humble believer by the Holy Ghost. Blessed be God! And the Bible further teaches that the one thing needful on our part to secure this operation of the Holy Spirit is an obedient faith that laughs at impossibilities, and cries "It shall be done."

If this Bible teaching is true, then it is a matter that can be proved by experience. If one man proves it to be so, that establishes the Bible testimony against all the doubters in the world. All men used to believe the world was flat. Columbus rose up and said it was round, and he proved it against them all. There may be some ignorant old fogies yet who believe the world is flat, but they can prove it to be round, if they will take the trouble, and whether they prove it or not, their purblind unbelief does not change the fact.

Just so, the greater part of mankind believe that 'the old man' is destined to live to the end. But as Paul asks, ' . . . shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?' (Rom. iii. 3) and humble men and women are rising up every day to declare it is possible, and that all men can prove that he can be destroyed, if they will meet the conditions.

Oh, that we could get men to understand this! Oh, that we could get them to take counsel with faith and not with unbelief! Oh, that we could get them to see what Jesus really came to do!

I proved this fifteen years ago, and ever since I have been walking in a day that has no setting sun, and everlasting joy and gladness have been on my head and in my heart. Glory be to God!

It is no little salvation that Jesus Christ came to work out for us. It is a 'great salvation,' and it saves. Hallelujah! It is not a pretense. It is not a 'make believe.' It is a real salvation from all sin and uncleanness; from all doubt and fear; from all guile and hypocrisy; from all malice and wrath. Bless God!

When I begin to consider it and to write about it, I want to fill the page with praises to God. The hallelujahs of heaven begin to ring all through my soul, and my heart cries out with those four mystical beasts before the throne, 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty,' (Rev. iv. 8) and in spirit I fall down with 'the four and twenty elders,' and worship Him that liveth for ever and ever, who has taken away my sins and destroyed the works of the devil out of my heart, and come to dwell in me.

Finally, 'Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief ' 'And to whom sware He that they should not enter into His rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.' 'For we which have believed do enter into rest' (Heb. iii. 12, 18, 19, and iv. 3).

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