

The 'Mystery' Revealed

by T. Austin-Sparks

T. Austin-Sparks reveals the profound mystery of the 'one new man' in Christ, emphasizing unity and transformation through the Holy Spirit.

Scripture: Romans 5:12, Ephesians 2:15

Topics: "Unity in Christ", "The New Creation"

Description

T. Austin-Sparks reveals the profound mystery of the 'One New Man' as articulated in Ephesians, emphasizing its significance in the context of biblical history and the nature of Christ. He explains how this concept encapsulates the essence of true Christianity, highlighting the transition from the old creation to the new creation in Christ, where distinctions are erased and unity is found in Him. Sparks draws connections between various scriptures, illustrating how the mystery of manhood according to Christ has been a governing theme throughout the Bible, culminating in the Church as the Body of Christ. He emphasizes the work of the Holy Spirit in forming this new man, which involves evangelism, spiritual growth, and the ultimate expression of Christ in the Church. The sermon culminates in the understanding that this revelation was hidden until now, showcasing God's eternal purpose for humanity.

Transcript

In the wonder and amazement of this unveiling we must be clear as to its exact nature and meaning. To do this we must put our finger upon key phrases which precisely embody and define it. We have found the statement which gives the ultimate and consummate issue: it is in Ephesians one, verse ten. Can we find in that same Letter a phrase which brings that end into history, that is, the operation leading to that end? I think that we can. It is a fragment in the section marked as verses thirteen to twenty-two of chapter two: "one new man." That whole section is an enlargement of that fragment and it should be carefully read as such. There have been hints of this in other Letters of Paul, but here he gathers all together, and not only so but--as we should expect if his mind was ranging the "ages" and the secret hidden in them--the whole Bible is comprehended.

As to other hints, we have such classic and impressive instances as Romans five, verses twelve through nineteen. Here the two generic and racial heads are set over against one another--the "one man" Adam, and the "one man" Christ; and the context shows the significance of each. Another tremendous instance is set in that chapter of amazing enlightenment, First Corinthians fifteen. It is at verse forty-five: "The first man Adam became a living soul. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit" (see the immediate context).

In "Ephesians" the Apostle first refers to the personal Christ, and then proceeds to the corporate "one new man." In an earlier passage both of these aspects have been mentioned: First Corinthians twelve, in verse three, "Jesus" and "Jesus is Lord" is personally mentioned; in verse twelve the phrase "so also is the Christ" (the article is in the original) makes the members and the Head identical for the practical purpose of expression (context): "Now ye are the body of Christ" (verse 27). The uniting is by the "One Spirit" on Head and members.

It is in "Ephesians" that this "One new man" is revealed fully. If this is "the mystery hid from ages and generations," although existent all the time, we can now see, in the light of "the making known," how this has been the governing concept all through the Bible, that is, Manhood according to Christ.

At the beginning God said, "Let us make man"--MAN. The Psalmist cried, "What is man?"--MAN? In the Incarnation Christ's favourite designation of Himself was "Son of Man." In redemption there is "one mediator also between God and men, Himself Man" (1 Tim. 2:5). In reconstitution there is the Pattern "Second Man" (1 Cor. 15:47). In exaltation and glory the Psalmist's question is answered in Jesus: "What is man?" (Psalm 8:4; Heb. 2:6). In consummation there is "One new man"--Man. There are foreshadowings in the Old Testament. Adam was "a figure of Him that was to come" (Rom. 5:14). "The man Moses" (Num. 12:3). David was "a man after God's heart" (Acts 13:22). These are only instances taken from many, and their character or function bears respectively features of Christ.

So, over all the Bible history, there is the shadow of a Man, both individually and corporately. The Divine concept of MAN governs all God's ways: in creation, Incarnation, mediation; in the Cross as setting aside one type of man to make way for another; in the resurrection as the New Man--the "firstborn from the dead"--accredited; in the exaltation of Jesus as the New Man instated; in the coming again of "The Son of Man" to remove the remnants of Christ-rejecting humanity and establishing the new order; in the Church in terms of corporate manhood, the vessel and vehicle of Christ's completeness and manifestation. All this is what Paul saw in "the face of Jesus."

The Church itself is not the "Mystery" revealed to Paul, but the Church as the Body of Christ--The One New Man--in which all distinctions other than Christ are non-existent; this was the revelation. It had to be a revelation from heaven for such a rabid, committed, fanatical Jew, with all his ancestry, descent, "birth," tradition, training and "blood" to come genuinely to the place where he could say with conviction 'where there is neither Greek nor Jew, etc.; where all walls of partition are broken down; where there is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision; where there are no "children" and "dogs," but "all are one in Christ Jesus" (Greek: "One person in Christ Jesus"--the gender is masculine).

How very much of the New Testament is illuminated in the light of this "New Man" concept! Indeed, it covers all of the meaning of true Christianity. It gives the real meaning to the new birth (John 3). It explains the Person and character and work of Christ. It is what the Apostle meant when he said, "If any man is in Christ, there is a new creation" (2 Cor. 5:17; R.V. margin). And it explains those consummate words in Romans eight and verse twenty-nine: "...foreordained to be conformed to the image of His Son;" and Ephesians one and verse five: "...foreordained unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ." All this and much more indicates what is the specific purpose, work and nature of this present dispensation. The work in the "groaning creation" is with a view to "the manifestation of the sons of God" (Rom. 8:19-23).

Comprehensively, the Spirit of God Who 'brooded upon the face of the waters' (Gen. 1:2) is now at work upon a "new creation in Christ." But with a profound and significant difference. In the old creation

everything began and proceeded from the outside toward the centre--Man. In the new creation everything begins and proceeds from the inside, and the "outer man," the body, is the final phase of redemption and new creation: "The redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:23; 1 Cor. 15, etc.).

The work of the Spirit of God has four aspects in this dispensation.

1. The securing of the new man. This is the evangelizing and apprehending of the individuals. In evangelism the ultimate purpose should ever be kept in mind, otherwise there will be weakness in the "converts" due to an inadequate motive.

2. Through the securing, the rebuilding of the new man. In the old creation God built up the man--"formed out of the dust of the earth." ("The first... is of the earth, earthy"--1 Cor. 15:47). In the new creation God begins with the spirit of man, proceeds to the soul and completes with the body. Everything in the new creation is basically and essentially spiritual. See First Corinthians, chapter two. The "inward man" is the renewed --born anew--spirit of man, to be "renewed day by day." Here enters all the teaching on the Holy Spirit and the believer's life in the Spirit, as having been "born of the Spirit," and "is spirit" (John 3:6).

3. Then follows all the discipline, training and growth of the new man. The Spirit of God works to a Pattern--"the image of His Son"; "until Christ be (fully) formed in you" (Gal. 4:19); "God dealeth with you as with sons" (Heb. 12:7). It is a long and hard transition from the "old man" to the "new," but the end governs all God's dealings and ways with His own, namely the "image" or "likeness" which was the primal concept in man's creation. "Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness" (Gen. 1:26); "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness" (Ps. 17:15).

4. Then, finally and fully, the Spirit of God is working to constitute the "one new man," Christ corporately expressed; "the body of Christ," "the fulness (complement) of Him"; "the measure of the stature of Christ," "the fullgrown man."

All this comes out at last in full and clear revelation in that Letter of finality, "Ephesians." It is the Man concept from eternity to eternity, and that concept has, like a shadow, been over all God's history with man and man's history with God. Hidden from their eyes in all the strange, inexplicable and mysterious ways of God in individual men of faith and a peculiar people and nation, it has now been revealed to the sons of men, in Christ, that

"God having foreseen some better thing concerning us... apart from us they should not be made perfect (complete)" (Heb. 11:40).

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/t-austin-sparks/the-mystery-revealed/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net