

WESTERN WISDOM BIBLE STUDY

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"Put on the New Man"



Put off . . . the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

And be renewed in the spirit of your mind.

. . . put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Ephesians 4:22-24.

In his eagerness to encourage the zeal of the early converts to Christianity as they endeavored to follow the sublime precepts taught by Christ Jesus, the apostle Paul frequently advised them concerning the putting aside of numerous traits of character which impeded their spiritual progress. The followers of the new doctrine were in need of practical instruction and encouragement in overcoming the ways of the carnal self, for many of them were "weak in the faith." St. Paul, having been through intense suffering to gain his high degree of attainment, knew from experience the nature of the inner trials and agony necessary for the laying aside of the "old man" and putting on the "new man," and could advise lovingly and understandingly.

But just what constitutes becoming "new" in the spiritual sense used by St. Paul? First of all, there must be an acknowledgement that the higher way of life is preferable, and then a definite dedication to living according to the spiritual precepts given us by Christ Jesus. There follow certain definite scientific procedures (as outlined in the Western Wisdom Teachings) for us to embrace, in training the mind and mastering the desire nature, would we become "new" spiritually.

To invite the newness of spirit into our being requires constant use of the

will in restraining hasty, destructive thought and speech, and in substituting friendliness, good-will, consideration, love, and service, for selfishness, intolerance, jealousy, hatred, and indifference. In short, we conquer the lower desires, become selfless, and thus permit an inflow of *spirit*—the essence of newness and progress. Thus we become new men ready for the imminent new age of brotherhood.

Today, on the material plane, the old is passing rapidly. The new is just as rapidly taking its place. With the coming into our possession of increasing understanding concerning the forces of nature, climaxed by the secret of unleashing atomic energy, we have been brought face to face with the questions, "Are we ready to handle such power? Are we fit custodians?" All over the world leading thinkers are endeavoring to answer these questions, and the majority are doubtful as to our readiness. Before his passing Thomas A. Edison pointed out that the next step for mankind must be a spiritual one.

Each day, each week, each month brings us new opportunities for progress into the newness of spirit by careful control of our thoughts, words, and deeds. Certainly each New Year brings us an inviting new book of unwritten pages, whereon we may make the blots of the "old man," or we may inscribe upon them indelible records of efforts to achieve new spiritual heights. *Now* is a propitious time to meditate upon these inspired words of the inimitable St. Paul, seeking renewal of our minds in the spirit, building with love and service the golden wedding garment of those "in Christ," and thus "put on the new man."