

Finishing Well 2022

Lesson #1 Old Gate: Take Off Your Grave Clothes Jan. 5, 2022

Jer. 6:16 Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and WALK THEREIN, and ye shall find rest for your souls.

Matt. 11:28-30 Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart:

and ye shall find rest unto your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

John 11:43-44 And when He thus had spoken, He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes:

and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

Spurgeon: Even though the dead man heard Jesus' voice and obeyed, he still came out enveloped with the shroud, the garment of a dead person. The man was wholly raised, but not wholly freed.

A.W. Tozer: "The devil makes it his business to keep Christians in bondage, bound and gagged, imprisoned by their own grave clothes.

Many Christians never take off their grave clothes and live their entire lives in these rotting, smelly clothes that represent the deadness and corruption of our old sin nature."

God's Word declares that every person born in this world is spiritually dead because of sin.

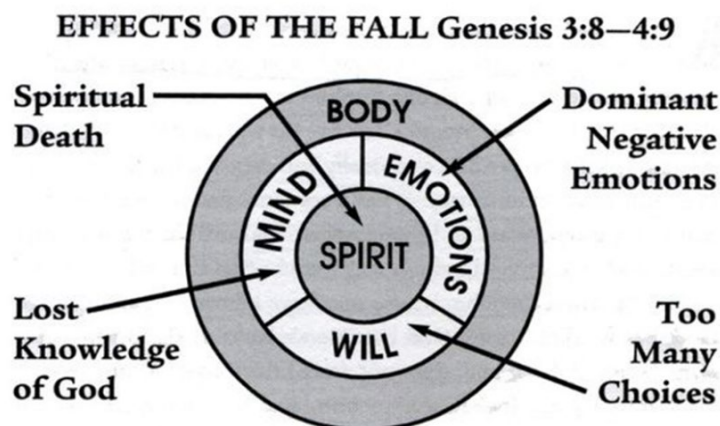
Romans 5:12 Therefore, as sin came into the world through one man, and death as the result of sin, so death spread to all men, [no one being able to stop it or to escape its power] because all men sinned. [Amplified]

➤ Fallen man is not sick and wounded. Fallen man is spiritually dead.

Adam and Eve were originally a threefold being of body, soul and spirit.

When they sinned, they died spiritually that instant.

They became body and soul cursed with death. Passed this sentence to their children.



When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, sin poured into their nature, causing them to miss the purpose and goal that God had designed for their lives. [Gen. 1:26-28]

A.W. Tozer: "Their entire relationship with God was defiled and disturbed as bitterness, hostility, separation, and enmity against God flowed into their nature like raw sewage or muddy contaminated waters. Adam and Eve now had a sin nature that was against God and His will having the dominant characteristic of continuously missing the standard of God, like a reckless archer who can never hit the target."

Jesus Christ has provided through His finished work on the cross and His resurrection a new set of clothes with the label "righteousness" and "holiness" that are glorious, pure, and beautiful and reflect the very heart of God.

A.W. Tozer: The modern-day Christian is not Christ-like. He is quick to defend his flaws, his weaknesses and defeats in fiery red-faced indignation...

- Why do we put on the brakes to a holy life?

The sin nature is inherently grounded in hostility against:

- walking with God, trusting God and relying on God as its only sufficiency.

One problem: Some of our grave clothes are so comfortable we don't want to take them off.

Grave clothes represent: Things we used to do when we were spiritually dead

- Addictions and worldly things we hold on to
- Things in our past we keep holding on to
- Patterns of thinking and living that are rooted in the sinful nature inherited from Adam.
- Our old worldly habits before we were born again.
- Our limited beliefs in what GOD can do in our lives.

Grave clothes that keep us bound

A. Religious and social traditions keep people in bondage.

Col. 2:8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

Col. 2:20-22 Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?"

B. Legalism keeps people in bondage.

Heb. 6:1 Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God.

Heb. 9:14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

- Believers can be bound by dead works.
- Anything we do to obtain or maintain our salvation.

Gal. 3:2-3 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

Truth: The just shall LIVE by faith. The Law is not based on faith.

C. Old sin habits keep people in bondage.

- Old wineskins, old habits, old sins, old thinking, old attitudes

D. Performance orientation keep many people in bondage.

Luke 10:40-42 But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

- Martha was trying to perform rather than choosing to fellowship with Jesus.

E. Failure to understand the exchanged life may keep one in bondage.

Watchman Nee: We think of the Christian life as a changed life, but it is not that. What God offers us is an exchanged life, a substituted life, and Christ is our substitute within.

Gal. 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.

What Do We Exchange?

What We Give Up	Reference	What We Receive
Our Sin	II Cor. 5:21	Christ's Righteousness
Wrath of God	Rom. 5:1	Peace With God
Condemnation; Hell	Eph. 2:6, 19	Father's House; Heaven
Death	Gal. 2:20	Life
The Old Man	II Cor. 5:17	The New Man
Law	Room. 7:4-6	Grace
Our Weakness	I Cor. 12:9-10	His Strength
Our Impurity	Heb. 10:21-22	His Purity
External Morality	Eph. 1:4	Holiness of God
Self-Strength	Isa. 40:31	God's Power
Tribulation	Eph. 2:14	Peace
Defeat	I Cor. 15:57	Victory
Sorrow	John 15:11	Joy

Satan will do ALL He can to thwart the plan and purpose of God in my life.

I John 2:28 And now, little children, abide in Him [KEY], that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.

Tozer: There is a limitless potential as a Christian in the new birth.

Christianity is an endless frontier so never pitch your tent. Take that step into the endless frontier and never stop moving forward with God. Pursue God more and more; pant after God; seek God with your whole heart. Go far more than what is normal for most Christians.

God is not honored by our arrested development. The New Testament teaches that we should go on to full maturity, that mediocrity is not the highest that Jesus offers...

➤ The word "mediocre" comes from two Latin words which mean "halfway to the peak." You can't be a baby all your life! God expects us to grow up into full maturity of God in us. Eph. 4:15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

Consider: NO believer EVER fell into maturity! - Even though he is COMPLETE in Christ!

"God gives us a choice to be in the intimate center of God, and to be his mighty men and heroes or to wallow aimlessly in our grave clothes. Never be satisfied to simply pitch your tent.

It is an absolute endless frontier with God. Press on into God. Today is an opportunity to grow."

What could a person really be like if he or she was orchestrated by the living God? Their life decreased every day for an increase of God Almighty in them. You do with me as you see fit! There is no limit to where God can take you, but you must take off your grave clothes.

- Grave clothes keep us entrenched in mediocrity in our Christian lives.
- They stink like death, they are rotting, they are polluted, they are dirty, and they are the apparel of the spiritually dead. There is no glory to God when we allow our sin nature to dominate our words, deeds, emotions, thoughts and character.

John MacArthur: Christians must dress themselves spiritually in accordance with their new identity. They have died with Christ and risen to new life.

Rom. 6:4 Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Eph. 4:22-24 That ye put off concerning the former conversation [behavior] the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; ²³ 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.

Salvation thus produces a two-sided obligation for believers.

1. Positively, they must put on the garments of the new man, righteousness & holiness.

I Thess. 4:3a For this is the will of God, even your sanctification,

Rom. 8:28-29 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. ²⁹ For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

- Sanctification is growing into the image of Christ by God's Holy Spirit and His Word.

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Col. 3:1-4 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. ² Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. ³ For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.

2. Negatively, they must throw off the garment of the old, sinful lifestyle.
 - God's Word defines these grave-like characteristics.
 - There is a listing of many of the traits of the old nature in Gal. 5; Eph. 4; Col. 3

Col 3:5a Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth;

The negative warnings and commands grow out of the positive truths of Christian doctrine.

This is why Paul wrote, "Mortify [put to death] therefore."

- The positive and the negative go together, and one without the other leads to imbalance.
- No amount of lecturing on beauty will produce a garden. The gardener has to pull weeds!

The word mortify means "put to death." Because we have died with Christ [Col. 3:3], we have the spiritual power to slay the earthly, fleshly desires that want to control us.

Rom. 6:11 Likewise reckon [consider] ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

MacArthur: God does not grant permission to live in the flesh. He supplies the power to live in the Spirit.

Gal. 5:16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

Col. 3:5a Paul warns against Sensual sins: Mortify or Put To Death:

- Fornication refers to sexual immorality in general.
- Uncleaness means "lustful impurity that is connected with luxury and loose living."
- Inordinate affection describes a state of mind that excites sexual impurity.
The person who cultivates this kind of appetite can always find opportunity to satisfy it.
- Evil concupiscence means "base, evil desires."

It is clear that desire leads to deeds & appetites lead to actions. If we would purify our actions, then we must first purify our minds and hearts. What we desire usually determines what we do.

Ps. 51:10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. [my prayer]

Mark 7:21-23 It is out of the heart that evil desires come.

After the sensual sins, Paul adds:

Col. 3:5b and covetousness, which is idolatry.

Covetousness is the sin of always wanting more, whether it be more things or more pleasures.

Covetousness puts things in the place of God. 1st nine commandments are action oriented.

10th Commandment: "Thou shalt not covet." [Ex. 20:17]. This sin can make us break the other nine. A covetous person will dishonor God, take God's name in vain, lie, steal, and commit every other sin in order to satisfy his sinful desires.

Col. 3:6-7 For it is because of these things that the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them.

Danger of Social Sins: G. Campbell Morgan > "the sins in good standing"

Col. 3:8-9 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another,

We are so accustomed to anger, critical attitudes, lying, and coarse humor among believers that we are no longer upset or convicted about these sins.

We would be shocked to see a church member commit some sensual sin, but we will watch him lose his temper in a business meeting and call it "righteous indignation." [Warren Wiersbe]
Key Point: The believer is not completely free from sin. Putting to death the deeds of the body is a continual process that the believer must engage in on a daily basis.

Col. 3:9-10 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him:

- The picture: A person changing clothes: "Put off ... put on."
- Relates to the resurrection of Jesus Christ [Col. 3:1]. When He arose from the dead, Jesus Christ left the graveclothes behind [John 20:1-10]. He had entered into a glorious resurrection life and had no need for the graveclothes.
- Likewise, when Lazarus was raised from the dead, Jesus instructed them to "loose him, and let him go." The graveclothes represent the old life with its sinful deeds.

Sins Of Sexual Attitude	Sins of Speech	Signs of Love
Shameful Desires	Anger/ Rage	Mercy
Sexual Immorality	Malicious Behavior	Kindness
Impurity	Slander	Humility
Lust	Dirty Language	Gentleness
Greed	Lying	Patience; Forgiveness

Col. 3:5 Put to death the things found in list 1. Destructive To Individual/Group

Col. 3:8-9 Rid ourselves of the things found in list 2. Relationship Breakers

Col. 3:13 Clothe ourselves with the things in list 3. Relationship Builders

New life in Christ Walk "in newness of life" by putting off the old deeds and desires

Alive in Christ Seek the things that are above.

Died with Christ Put off the things that belong to the earthly life of past sin.

The result We can become like Jesus Christ!

God wants to renew us and make us into the image of His Son! The Greek verbs translated "put off" and "put on" indicate a once-for-all action. When we trust Christ, we put off the old life and put on the new. The old man has been buried, and the new man is now in control.

But the verb translated "renewed" is a present participle — "who is constantly being renewed."

Justification [salvation] leads to the process of sanctification, becoming more like Jesus Christ.

Old Gate - Jeshanah Gate > Stands for Truth

- Pivotal 'Corner Gate' located at the northwest corner > the entry for the old paths.

Paradox: The Old Gate led into the New Quarter

Truth: It is from the Old that we derive the New.

If we abandon the Old, there can be nothing new.

Neh. 3:6 "The Jeshanah [Old] Gate was repaired by Joiada son of Paseah and Meshullam son of Besodeiah. They laid its beams and put its doors and bolts and bars in place.

- NO Building! Only Repair: had beams, doors, bolts and bars
- Repair: Strong's 2388 chazaq > to be or grow firm or strong, strengthen *hold firmly to, devote oneself to, restore to strength*

The meaning of the names of those directly involved in the repairing of this gate [which stands for TRUTH] are significant and reveal the aspects of God's 'logos' Word.

Joiada = 'Jehovah known' > God's Word is His intention; His knowledge that we can know.

Jeshanah comes from the Hebrew root word shanan. Verb שָׁנַן *shanan* = *to sharpen*

Sharpening is achieved by removing material by repeatedly stroking a blade against a whetstone; the sense of sharpening a mind by repeating the same exercise.

To change or create a difference —

- of one's mind, or one's clothes, and this mostly through repetition.

Rom. 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Key: The Word of God Will Fill You

Jeshanah, Old Gate, has meanings of old and storage.

Study the Word of God and "store away" as much as we can while we are in this early, joyful, hungry state of our Christian journey.

Ps. 119:11 Thy Word have I hid [stored up] in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

Col. 2:7-10 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, So Walk Ye In Him:

⁷ Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

⁸ Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.⁹ For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power:

In Ephesians, Paul uses the word "walk" 8x. "to order one's behavior" - Christian conduct

Eph. 4:1-2 I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to WALK WORTHY of the CALLING with which you were called, with all lowliness [humility] and meekness with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love,

Eph. 4:17, 20, 23 This is to say...that you NO LONGER WALK as the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind... BUT...that you BE RENEWED in the Spirit of your mind.

Eph. 5:2 WALK IN LOVE, even as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for you.

Eph. 5:8-10 WALK as CHILDREN OF LIGHT...proving what is WELL-PLEASING to the Lord.

Eph. 5:14 Don't walk in your sleep! Wake up! Open your eyes!

Eph. 5:15-18 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

- Circumspect = looking around with precision and accuracy; exactness
- Opposite = walking carelessly and without proper guidance and forethought

Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Wherefore be ye not unwise but understanding what the will of the Lord is.¹⁸ And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled [continuously filled] with the Spirit;

Eph. 5:19-20 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,²⁰ giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Col. 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

- We are to with all wisdom, teach and admonish one another.
- Teach = to communicate and impart truth
- Admonish = to caution and warn away from error

World: It's okay to believe whatever we want provided we are sincere. No one knows THE truth.
Warren Weirsbe "Many saved people cannot honestly say that God's Word dwells in their hearts richly because they do not take the time to read, study, and memorize it."

We have a responsibility to our fellow Christians to take the Word of God seriously and to teach and preach the truth and warn against error. This undertaking should not be taken lightly. Paul says we are to do this joyfully, "singing with thankfulness in [our] hearts to God."

- Studying the Word, teaching it, and warning others against error is an act of worship.
- God's Word should be at the heart of our worship, our Bible studies, and our sermons.
- Failing to impart God's truth is failing to meet our responsibilities to one other!

Key: The Word of God Will Fulfill You

Paseah = 'to leap and skip for joy;" great joy in knowing and living in God's general Word

Jer. 15:16 Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.

Swindoll: There is no counsel like God's counsel. No comfort like His comfort. No wisdom more profound than the wisdom of the Scriptures.

Key: The Word of God Fathers You

Meshullam = Allied or Friend = Our relationship with God as we keep His Word

Beodeiah = Counsel of Jehovah = God's Word gives His perfect counsel and guidance

John Newman "Fear not that your life will come to an end, but rather that it shall never have a beginning."

Norman Douty: If I am to be like Him, then God in His grace must do it. The sooner I come to recognize it, the sooner I will be delivered from another form of bondage. Throw down every endeavor and say, I cannot do it; the more I try the farther I get from His likeness. What shall I do? The Holy Spirit says: You cannot do it. You have been in the arena, you have been endeavoring and you are a failure. Come and sit down. Behold Jesus and be occupied with Him.

Truth: ALL spiritual experience and growth begins from my resting or abiding in Him.

Chambers: The proof that your old life is dead, having been "crucified with Christ," is the amazing ease with which the life of God in you now enables you to obey the voice of Jesus Christ.

Eph. 3:20-21 Now unto Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.