

STUDY XV
THE FOES AND BESETMENTS OF THE NEW
CREATION

"The Old Man"—The World as an Enemy of the New Creation—The Great Adversary—He Was a Liar and a Murderer from the Beginning—Satan's Associates in Evil—Legions of Demons—How Satan's First Lie is Perpetuated—Christian Science and Theosophy—"We Wrestle not [merely] with Flesh and Blood"—The Ministry of Evil—Besetments of the Adversary—"The Prayer of Faith Shall Save the Sick"—"If Satan Cast Out Satan" His Kingdom Wanes—Love Righteousness—Hate Iniquity—[Mark 16:9-20](#)—The Nominal Church as an Adversary to the New Creation—The Armor of God.

“The Old Man”

CHIEF amongst the foes of the New Creation is "the old man"—the old will. Let us avoid the mistake so commonly made respecting this subject. Let us not think of the New Creature as having two minds, two wills. "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways," ([James 1:8](#)) unsatisfactory to himself and unacceptable to the Lord. The New Creature is not double-minded. He has but the one mind, one spirit, one intention, one will; and that is the new will, the Spirit of Christ, the holy Spirit. Instead of partially accepting the mind of Christ and partially maintaining his own will, he made a full consecration of his old will to the Lord, and that old will was thereafter dead, and set aside from having control in his affairs. It was thus that he was accepted as a member of the body of Christ—to have no will of his own, but to permit the will of the Head to control him. It was thus that he became a New Creature in Christ Jesus, and found "old things passed away, all things become new." ([2 Cor. 5:17](#)) Those who have not made such a surrender have not become members of the *Ecclesia*, the body of Christ, though they may be members of "the household of faith," from which come all the members of the "body," the "elect."

But although the old will was thus renounced thoroughly and forever, and declared dead (by the Lord and by all who view matters from his standpoint), and while the flesh was reckoned dead, too, as respects sin, but alive toward God, quickened by the promises, and brought under the control of the new will ([Rom. 6:11; 8:11](#)), nevertheless this death of the flesh and its will, and this resurrection of the flesh as the servant of the new will, to serve the Lord, the Truth, under the Golden Rule, are only *reckoned matters*. The "dead" and "alive" conditions need continually to be maintained by opposition of the *new will* to any life or activity of the *old will* and its influence over the flesh. If the new will becomes indifferent and fails to use the mortal flesh continuously as its servant in higher and spiritual things, the flesh will very shortly reassert itself and have motions and desires of its own, antagonistic to the new mind, opposed to the interests of the New Creature. The latter must, therefore, be constantly on the alert for insurrections, and, as the Apostle expresses it, must keep down, keep dead, the old will, with its affections and its desires—must continually mortify, or put to death, the ambitions and desires of the flesh. The Apostle explains this, saying of himself, "I keep my body under [dead, as respects all control from the old, selfish will of the flesh], lest after having preached to others I

myself should become a castaway"—might fail to make my calling and election sure. [1 Cor. 9:27](#)

The inspired Word declares that "the [natural] heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" ([Jer. 17:9](#))—not the organ called the heart, but that which the heart represents in Scripture, viz., the natural affections. The New Creature gets a new heart, a new will, a new standard of affection, in which God and His righteousness and truth and plan and will are first; and in which all other things occupy a place of honor and love in proportion to their harmony with the Lord and His righteousness. To those possessing this new heart all the members of the New Creation are necessarily first and closest: hence, as the Apostle says, love of the brethren is one of the best tests of relationship to the Lord as New Creatures. But this, as already shown, must not interfere with a just recognition of obligations to others.

The New Creature, the new heart, with its new affections, is continually assailed by its enemies, the old heart, the old affections, the selfish disposition; and the latter, finding that the New Creature is bound by divine command to be considerate and generous toward others, frequently practices deceptions upon the new heart, and says in effect: Now you have reckoned me dead; you have put me out, and I am dead, as respects what I was. I am not the same old heart I was formerly; but you must give me some consideration. You must not treat me too rudely; you must concede that I have made considerable progress, and must not put too heavy a burden upon me; it would not be just. You ought to be selfish to a certain extent. You ought to look out for number one, and for your family; not—merely for their necessities, but much more—and should endeavor to give them wealth and social advantages. You should sacrifice yourself for them.

How deceitful is this old heart! How specious are its false reasonings! How many have proven this to their sorrow! How many have been inveigled and had the new mind captivated by the old! How many have found themselves brought into bondage by the deceitfulness of the old heart! One of the favorite arguments is that the New Creation is commanded, "So far as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." ([Rom. 12:18](#)) This general advice of the Apostle it seeks to exalt far above his design, and to make it superior to the divine command (1) that we shall love and serve, honor and obey, the Lord with all our heart and all our mind, soul and strength; and (2) that we shall love our neighbors as ourselves. ([Matt. 22:37-39; Mark 12:30-31; Luke 10:27](#)) This does not permit of peace at any price. If the old heart, the old mind, the old will, can get the new one to make a *compromise* of truth or duty for the sake of peace, there will be no end to the demands it will make; and the result will be that the New Creature would soon, in the interest of peace, be violating the very essence of his covenant with the Lord, and be fully submitting himself to the old will, although it desires not to do so—indeed striving against the old will, but led captive by it through its deceitfulness, and its skillful misinterpretations of the divine Word.

When thus assailed, the new will should freely declare that while peace is desirable in the home and everywhere, yet peace is not the primary condition, according to the Lord's promise. Indeed, the Lord has warned those of the New Creation that so surely as they will live godly they must suffer persecution ([2 Tim. 3:12](#))—and persecution does not signify peace with all, but the reverse. He has assured them that so surely as they let the light shine out, the darkness will hate the light and combat it, and, if possible, induce the owner of the light to put it under a bushel, to hide it; and that in order to induce this hiding of the light the darkness will wage a warfare which will mean anything else than peace. But the Lord assures us that these are

tests for the New Creature—that he must determine that the peace which is of greatest importance to him is, not the peace of the flesh, but the peace of heart, "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding."—[Phil. 4:7](#)

The New Creature must learn that he may have this peace of God, which passeth all understanding, to rule in his heart, even while outward conditions are the reverse of peaceful; but that the condition of full harmony with the Lord is a reward for faithfulness to Him, whatever the cost, whatever the sacrifice. Hence, when appealed to by the cravings of the flesh, and the arguments of those who are near and dear through earthly ties, the New Creature must first of all consider his primary obligation, viz., that he shall love and serve the Lord with all his heart, mind, being, strength, and that all dealings with family or flesh or neighbors must be subject to this primary law of obedience to God.

On the other hand, the New Creature is to avoid fanaticism—to avoid doing things merely because they are unpleasant to himself or to others; to avoid judging the mind of the Lord to be always the reverse of his own inclinations. It requires earnest and patient study of the divine Word, and the spirit and principles underlying the divine requirements, to enable the New Creature properly to apply the directions of the Word to all the daily affairs of life. But few in comparison are tempted along these lines. The majority are tempted more to gratification of the flesh, and have, therefore, need of special care along that line—lest they walk after the flesh, gratifying it, serving it, submitting to it, and thus walk in the opposite direction to that in which they consecrated to go. Or if they do not walk after the flesh, in the sense of following it and its service, they have need to be specially on guard lest the flesh shall keep them from walking after the Spirit, from making progress in spiritual things—shall endeavor to bring their spiritual progress to a standstill, and thus hinder their fruitfulness, growth and development in usefulness, and ultimately prevent their overcoming and gaining the great prize of joint-heirship with Christ in the Kingdom as members of the little flock.

The thought that should always be borne in mind is that the New Creatures have consecrated all of their earthly, fleshly interests to sacrifice; and that nothing short of sacrifice of these will permit them, as New Creatures, to have full development and to be "made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light"—for a share in the first resurrection to glory, honor and immortality, as members of the body of Christ. The only restriction we are to recognize in this direction of full sacrifice, is where the interests of other lives are interwoven with ours, and where the Golden Rule would place its limitations upon the sacrificing, and insist that reasonable allowance must be made for our dear ones according to the flesh who have not joined with us in its consecration to sacrifice.