

Optional Study Suggestions for the 1962 London Closed Class
Session 7: Recording 490A:
“Putting Off the Old Man and Rebirth”

Review and Reflection

A Short Review of Recording 490A and Points for Reflection

The purpose of The Infinite Way message is to enable us to die to the old man and be completely reborn of the Spirit, putting on a whole new consciousness—“that mind that was in Christ Jesus.”

This rebirth does not come through knowledge or even through human goodness. It comes by grace when you are emptied of the personal self, and you realize that any good that you may show forth is the Spirit of God working through and as you.

From the first moment you started reading or hearing truth, the “old man” began to die, and the “new man” began to reveal Itself. Every time you add some truth to your awareness, you increase the measure of the new man and decrease the measure of the old. The experience is cumulative, and you get out of it what you put into it. In other words, “As ye sow, so shall ye reap.” Everything you do NOW is building your future.

Joel says that we have no real way of knowing what progress we are making, because these truths are being stored up in our consciousness, and until something brings them forth, we may not even realize they are there. Every bit of truth that we take into our consciousness is renewing and transforming us inwardly. Yet even though Joel says that we have no way of knowing what our progress is, by contrasting the “old man” with the “new man,” he suggests a few clues that tell us whether we are “putting off the old man.”

Old Man	New Man
Gives power to externals. “The weather is terrible! I will get sick”	Realizes the one power. “There is no power in weather or germs.”
Believes that evil is personal. “That person is really evil.”	Knows that evil is impersonal. “Evil is impersonal. Every man is born of God.”
Fears, judges, criticizes, condemns.	Lives by truth, by spiritual principles, without fear, judgment, criticism, or condemnation

Old Man (continued)	New Man (continued)
Sows to the flesh by giving power to material things and conditions; relies on people or circumstances for his good.	Sows to the Spirit by transferring power from the outer to the inner. Relies on the indwelling Christ for his good. "My <i>consciousness</i> is my supply, my health, my every good. I have meat the world knows not of." Abides in the Word and lets the Word abide in him.
Sees sin, disease, lack or accident and accepts the appearance.	Sees sin, disease, lack or accident and does not accept the appearance. Applies a specific truth: "I must not accept appearances. I must accept God as Omnipresence."
In family life, allows himself to be irritated by people and conditions and responds with complaints.	Does not react to the appearances. Recognizes the truth of individual being. "There is an indwelling Christ in him or her, just as It is in me."
Reacts to the news with fear—fears bad news, fears a government administration, fears economic events, fears for his health and safety.	Does not react with fear; recognizes the nature of the human scene. Knows that life depends on God, not on man. Knows that his experience depends on his state of consciousness, not on external events.
Is not under the law of God.	Has his being in Christ and lives by the Christ.
Looks back and does not see much change in his life over the years.	Looks back and can see parts of him that have died.

How can we continue to develop our spiritual consciousness toward the goal of putting off the old man and letting the new man be revealed? Joel poses an important question for us to consider:

"To what extent do you permit spiritual truth to occupy your consciousness?"

He does not mean just reading. Reading alone will not develop consciousness; it is what you DO with what you read. Are you applying the spiritual principles you learn? He says that you may read a whole chapter of a wonderful book, but then if you witness some form of sin, or disease, or false appetite, and you pass it by without ministering to it, without applying the truth you have learned, you are losing the opportunity to develop the new man in you and let the old man die. If you accept the appearance, the old man is still living in you.

Joel's counsel continues:

“We are passing [from the old man to the new man] in proportion to the effort, the time, the devotion that we give to our spiritual studies, meditations, and practice.

He says that there is only one thing that you can measure, and that is your integrity. You know whether you are skimping on time, effort, and devotion to your spiritual studies. You know whether you are spending too much time on other things, when you could be engaged in spiritual studies, meditations, and practice.

If we are willing to take stock of ourselves in this way, we can remind ourselves, “As I sow, so will I reap. What I do NOW determines what will come forth from my consciousness next week, next month, next year, and ten years from now. If I really want to die to that old man—even if I am not seeing the fruitage right now—I must stay with my message.”

A Second Lesson on the Same Topic

Joel gave another valuable lesson that elaborates on this same topic of dying to the old man and being reborn. If you would like to pursue this subject further, that second recording is posted below for listening. It is Recording 497A, from the 1962 Stockholm Closed Class, titled “Sowing to the Spirit – Or to the Flesh.”

To listen by telephone, call **1-641-715-3900** and enter **514376#**.

Related Bible References

After hearing Joel's interpretation of “putting off the old man and putting on the new,” you may enjoy reading and contemplating scriptural passages that speak to that idea.

Joel has said that the King James Version of the Bible is his personal favorite, but he has also said that reading two or three different translations can be quite helpful: *“I find it very interesting to turn to these other versions, to see how they present it, and sometimes from one version or another, you get quite a different slant. And so, just for comparison or just for clarification, I often find it handy to refer to these other versions to get their view. And I have, on many occasions, caught something worthwhile in doing that.”*

Here are a just a few selections relating to putting off the old and putting on the new. You may know of or discover others to contemplate as well.

- Ephesians 4:22-24
- 2 Corinthians 5:17-21
- John 3: 1-21
- Colossians 3:1-17
- 1 Corinthians 15:45-53